



First Session — Thirty-Fourth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

37 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fourth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIBERAL
ANGUS, John	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BURRELL, Parker	Swan River	PC
CARR, James	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIBERAL
CHARLES, Gwen	Selkirk	LIBERAL
CHEEMA, Gulzar	Kildonan	LIBERAL
CHORNOPYSKI, William	Burrows	LIBERAL
CONNERY, Edward Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
COWAN, Jay	Churchill	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James Hon.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Emerson	PC
DRIEDGER, Herold, L.	Niakwa	LIBERAL
DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIBERAL
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Laurie	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
EVANS, Leonard	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen Hon.	Virden	PC
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Ellice	LIBERAL
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HEMPHILL, Maureen	Logan	NDP
KOZAK, Richard, J.	Transcona	LIBERAL
LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.	Inkster	LIBERAL
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANDRAKE, Ed	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
McCRAE, James Hon.	Brandon West	PC
MINENKO, Mark	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
OLESON, Charlotte Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald Hon.	Pembina	PC
PANKRATZ, Helmut	La Verendrye	PC
PATTERSON, Allan	Radisson	LIBERAL
PENNER, Jack, Hon.	Rhineland	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
ROCH, Gilles	Springfield	LIBERAL
ROSE, Bob	St. Vital	LIBERAL
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
TAYLOR, Harold	Wolseley	LIBERAL
URUSKI, Bill	Interlake	NDP
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
YEO, Iva	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, October 11, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): It gives me great pleasure to table the report on the Rafferty-Alameda Dams Project.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, Hear!

* (1335)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BILL NO. 32—THE MANITOBA INSTITUTE OF THE PURCHASING MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF CANADA ACT

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 32, The Manitoba Institute of The Purchasing Management Association of Canada Act; Loi sur l'institut manitobain de l'association canadienne de gestion des achats.

BILL NO. 31—THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 31, The Child and Family Services Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Storie: As is customary, I would like to make a few remarks prior to it being received for first reading.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that this amendment is required. I think Members on both sides of the House recognize the fact that when The Child and Family Services Act was introduced, it was introduced after serious consultation with many different groups in our society, with the singular purpose of preventing abusive situations from arising in our society, generally, and to put the onus for reporting such abuses on the appropriate people in charge and care of children in our society.

We have recently seen an example where that reporting mechanism has failed a couple of individuals, young people, in our society, and I believe it is important that we respond immediately to prevent those kinds of unfortunate incidents from occurring again in the future. The import of the legislation that I have introduced today is to ensure that the reporting of abuse, where the abuse, sexual or otherwise, is

occurring by a third party, will also be mandatory so that we can assure ourselves that situations such as the one that developed at the St. Charles Academy does not occur again or that its likelihood of occurring in the future is severely limited.

Mr. Speaker, I think we all recognize that the obligations upon the professional staff in our schools, private or public, are serious. We have to be assured that all understand the obligations, and this should not be viewed as an amendment directed at private schools versus public schools. I believe that in line with what Mr. Kulyk, the President of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, said, it is unlikely that these kinds of situations will develop frequently in the public system. We need to have that assurance that they will not develop in any system.

The amendments are minor in that I do not believe it would take very long for this Chamber to approve them. I believe they are significant enough and serious enough that they demand the approval of this Legislature immediately.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the gallery, where we have with us today Dr. Oleksandr Bilodid, Professor of Philology at the Kiev State University. We also have Reverend Sozont Chobych, a candidate in Theology at Moscow Theological Academy, and Mr. Vladamir Chuchko, representative of the Ukrainian Society in Kiev.

These gentlemen are in Winnipeg lecturing at the Universities of Winnipeg and Manitoba as part of the celebration commemorating the Millennium of Christianity in the Ukraine.

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

* (1340)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Care Emergency Services

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Psychiatric patients spending days in emergency wards without any treatment, certainly no counselling; children who cannot receive speech therapy for up to 18 months; the elderly and infirm being told to look after themselves; and patients at the Health Sciences Centre lying around on mattresses on the floor—it is quite evident that we have a crisis in health care in Manitoba, a crisis the Minister recognized when he was in Opposition but does not seem willing to do anything about now that he is in Government. Can the

Minister tell this House specifically what action he has taken since Friday to ensure the coordination of emergency services in our hospitals in the City of Winnipeg?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me correct some of the inaccuracies in the preamble of my honourable friend, the Leader of the Opposition's (Mrs. Carstairs) questions. First of all, she ought not to necessarily follow hook, line and sinker that the policy of home care has changed in her allegation that people are being cut off the program wholesale. That is simply not a factual statement. I would beg her to investigate further before making those kinds of loose accusations which serve no other purpose than to raise unwarranted, unfounded fears amongst those receiving home care.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of speech therapy, which was another area of concern mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), that is an area in which we do not have adequate resources to care for preschool children. We have tended to concentrate our resources post entry to school. That issue is under discussion, as I have mentioned on earlier questions from Members of the Opposition, with the Association of Speech Therapists of Manitoba as well as the department.

In terms of the specific concern raised by the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), regarding the events at the Health Sciences Centre Emergency Ward, I want to indicate to my honourable friend, the Leader of the Liberal Opposition, that within the Department of Health there is a committee struck to determine what the problem was on Friday because there were accusations and counteraccusations flying between the hospitals. That simply does not allow us to make reasoned decisions. A committee has been struck between the hospitals to determine what was the problem and how do we go about rectifying that problem.

Acute Care Beds

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a supplementary question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Will the Minister tell the House, in that it is obvious we have a shortage of acute care hospital beds, what he is doing to ensure the most effective use of those acute care beds?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): The use of acute care hospital beds is, first and foremost, determined within the hospital system by the management of those hospital systems. What we attempt to do as Government, and I do not believe that this circumstance has changed significantly over the past number of years, is we attempt, through the normal budgeting process, to allow for sufficient budgeting of our hospitals so that the administration, the medical staff and others within the hospital environment can be reasonably assured that they can carry out their mandate of delivery of acute care. That process, Mr. Speaker, has not changed; it continues to be the process by which budgeting decisions are made and use of acute care beds are determined.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) tell this House today how many chronic care patients in Manitoba are presently occupying acute care beds?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I cannot give my honourable friend the exact numbers today. I could provide that information when I request it from the department.

What has been established for the past number of years has been a certain number of beds in all our acute care institutions in Winnipeg, our hospitals in Winnipeg, as well as throughout rural Manitoba—certain designated spots where those patients who are panelled for personal care home placement and for whom a bed in a personal care home is not readily available, and should those individuals not be able to remain in their homes, even with the support of home care, that they remain in the hospitals until the available personal care home bed is ready for them to occupy.

I can give my honourable friend those numbers as soon as I am provided them from the department.

* (1345)

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the Minister tell this House, in that two separate families got in touch with me this weekend to indicate that the only reason their family member is occupying a bed in hospital is because there is not home care services available for them, how many of those patients are presently occupying beds in the Province of Manitoba, acute care beds, when these people could go home if there was home care service?

Mr. Orchard: I cannot give that answer to that specific question today either.

As I indicated to my honourable friend in my previous answer, there are panelled patients throughout the Province of Manitoba—I suppose some 1,200 if my memory serves me correctly—who are awaiting personal care home placement. Some of those individuals are in hospitals awaiting personal care home placement. Some indeed are at home, supported in their home by the home care services as has been the tradition over the last number of years. The system always has a blend of both.

I cannot concur with my honourable friend, the Leader of the Opposition that two individuals are there specifically because home care services does not exist. That, Mr. Speaker, is not necessarily the case, because both circumstances exist.

Home Care System Housekeeping Services

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With another question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Joe Cels, a member of the Civil Service, said that there was only one project in all of Manitoba established for non-profit homemaking services. Can the Minister tell this House how all of those presently receiving home care services for housekeeping purposes are going to continue to receive it when there is only one such project in all of Manitoba?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I am pleased to answer that question. I was going to do it after Question Period, but I might just as well do it now whilst the question is directly to the non-profit community-based home care services.

Mr. Cels is quite correct, the ADM in Community Services, in that one, through ARC Industries in Beausejour, is currently providing not-for-profit housekeeping services to which, as per policy, etc., individuals accessing home care for house cleaning services or homemaking services are referred. That is the only such system funded out of Community Services.

I erred on Friday, October 7, when I indicated that the development of not-for-profit home cleaning services was funded through Community Services. I should have indicated that it is funded through Support Services to Seniors, which is a program within the Department of Health and through which, I believe, some 21 not-for-profit homemaking services are available throughout the Province of Manitoba, including the City of Winnipeg.

Health Advisory Network Member List Request

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): We were hoping from this Government that there would be some new initiatives in health care, but unfortunately there appear to be none.

In its Throne Speech, this Government promised to establish a Health Advisory Network. Can the Minister inform the House today who are the Members of this network and table in the House a list of their duties and functions of this network?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, no, I can do neither because the members of the Health Advisory Network have not been appointed and have not been established to date. That should possibly come as no surprise to my honourable friends because the establishment of the Health Advisory Network is not deemed to be a quick-fix scenario as possibly the Royal Commission, as promised by the Leader of the Opposition during the election campaign, which was her magic solution to identifying solutions and problems in the health care system.

The Health Advisory Network will commission specifically areas of investigation and recommendation for change. It will do that through extensive community consultation with the individuals not only involved in delivery of health care but, indeed, the affected consumer groups in that health care program.

* (1350)

Thermal Coal Plants Environmental Impact Study

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery). Today, in committee, we learned that one of the alternatives for future hydro

development is indeed contrary to where most countries and provinces are going. It is going to be in the development of thermal coal plants to replace and refurbish the coal plants to replace the—perhaps the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)—I am trying to ask the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery) a question—to indeed somewhat refurbish those plants, expand those plants and have future development on those coal plants.

Given the fact that Hydro, on the one hand, is talking about the negative effects of the greenhouse effect and, on the other hand, they are proceeding with the Government in developing, on the fast track, this alternative, has the Minister of Environment ordered an environmental study of the effects of these coal plants or expansion of these coal plants, and could he table that in this House today?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): Mr. Speaker, the Member knows that any significant operation that goes on in this province has to have an environmental impact study done before it can proceed. That has not changed.

Environmental Impact Study

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

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my second question is to the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery). Given the fact that he has had these documents presented to him in Cabinet, dealing with those alternatives, and he has not instituted an environmental impact study, and we were also told that the alternative of Wuskwatim is now being proposed to replace the development of hydro on the Nelson River system, the replacement of Wuskwatim, which will cause flooding and damage on the Burntwood River to communities and environmental damage, has the Minister, in reviewing that alternative, initiated an environmental impact study and an environmental study that he could table in this House?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, there is no intention to expand the thermal plants at either Selkirk or at Brandon. What we have said is that in undertaking expansion of hydro projects, we must first look at all alternatives for lesser cost generation. One of those alternatives might well be to keep the thermal plants in Selkirk and in Brandon going for the period of time that it is needed, which might be, say, up until 1999. That is all we have said.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Government talked today in terms of an option and an alternative for producing electric power in the future, which indeed was the thermal coal plants. They talked in terms of refurbishing those plants and producing more electricity, which obviously means more days to be used.

My question is to the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery). The Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld) did not answer the question of the Wuskwatim project. Today, in committee, we were told by Hydro officials that they

do not do environmental impact studies. Would the Minister of Environment please tell us whether he has initiated any studies to deal with these alternatives that are before Government, and will he please table those studies in this Chamber, dealing with the environmental impact on the Wuskwatim project and indeed the effect of the greenhouse on the Wuskwatim Dam?

Mr. Neufeld: The Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) again tried to put on the record that we are planning on expanding the thermal plants. That is not the case.

We are looking at the cost of refurbishing the plants as an alternative to a new generation on the Nelson River. As far as Wuskwatim is concerned, it is another alternative that Hydro is looking at. They have not come to a decision and, as such, did not have to go to an environmental impact study until they have come to a decision on which might be the best alternative. Hydro does not at this time know which alternatives they wish to pursue. It could be Wuskwatim, it could be Conawapa, but when the time comes that they have come to a decision on it, they will do the study.

* (1355)

Environmental Impact Study

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): We were informed in committee that Hydro is not doing the environmental impact study or the social impact studies. The Government is now talking about making a decision and having the environmental impact study after that decision.

My question to the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery): would it not make a lot more sense to consider the environmental impacts of Wuskwatim and the coal plant before Hydro and the Government make its final decisions?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): What the Member opposite is suggesting is that Manitoba Hydro, who is the proponent of the project, or would be the proponent, should do its own environmental impact study and own social impact study. That is not the way it works and he should know it from being in Government.

The fact is that you have a separate arm's length relationship in which, if indeed there is an environmental impact study required, that would be done by a separate authority under the authority of the Minister of the Environment. The Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) should know that his Government refused to have an environmental impact study of Limestone—a 1,200 megawatt plant and they refused to have an environmental impact study. Now he is suggesting that Manitoba Hydro should be the proponent and should also conduct its own environmental impact study. He does not understand the process, Mr. Speaker.

High School Review Tabling Request

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): During these past few weeks, I have received many questions regarding the

status of the High School Review. Young people in high school are trying to finalize their course choices for their last one or two years in school in preparation for university, college or the work force. Junior high school students are looking at their decisions with regard to various classes. Teachers and parents are being told to wait, things may change, depending on the recommendation of the High School Review Committee.

Mr. Speaker, these recommendations were anticipated in January of 1988. On August 3, the Honourable Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) stated in the House that he has received a draft copy, and on August 8 he stated that the review would be ready in its final form by the end of September. I ask the Minister of Education: When will the rest of Manitobans receive this long overdue report?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): I guess I should indicate to the House that we on this side, and I, as Minister of Education, am just as anxious to have the report tabled as the Opposition are to receive it. However, the report is in translation and until the translation is complete, we cannot table that report. As soon as I have received a copy of that report in its final form, I will be only too happy to table it.

Funding

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): My supplementary to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). Can I ask the Minister—is this delay for the most part caused by the fact that the review was inadequately funded and therefore has not been able to address some of the concerns sufficiently?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): No, Mr. Speaker. I do not know where the Honourable Member gets her information, but that is certainly inaccurate. The only reason that the report has not been tabled, and I have indicated this before, is because the translation on it is not complete. As soon as that is done, we will be in a position to table the report.

* (1400)

I.B. Program

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): My final supplementary to the same Minister. What assurances can the Minister give the House that many of the concerns that parents, teachers and students have with regard to the I.B. Program will be addressed in the responses of the High School Review?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Again, this is all a matter which will be addressed when the High School Review report is presented in its final form. We, on this side of the House, had a lot of questions when we were in Opposition with regard to the status of the I.B. Program; and once that report is tabled and once we have received it in its final form, then we will be able to address not only that issue but all issues that were addressed in the High School Review.

Open Custody Government Policy

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): My question is for the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). As the Attorney-General well knows, judges often give young offenders open custody sentences in this province which have a very specific mandate. The concept of open custody has been successful in this province and many other jurisdictions in dealing with problematic youth at a very critical stage. I am sure the Attorney-General will agree with me that judges' sentences should be respected as much as is possible at all times. Presently, I regret to inform this House, that they are not, and in particular on this open custody issue.

The Attorney-General, I am sure, knows that three years ago there were 22 homes in this city with over 40 beds for open custody wards; now there are 3 homes with 10 beds, of which only 2 are being used, while approximately 90 young offenders are in Agassiz or the Manitoba Youth Centre in what amounts to, in effect, closed custody. My question is: has the policy of the Government changed or is this Government still committed to real open custody in appropriate cases?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): The Honourable Member raises a matter that has been looked into by me, and I can tell the Honourable Member that there has been no change in policy. The fact is that some youths do not work out very well in an open custody setting and, in fact, we have cases of youthful offenders running away from open custody situations. On the other hand, the open custody situation at the Youth Centre is not strictly closed custody as the Honourable Member's question would seem to suggest. There are many of the day pass provisions that are available to open custody youths in open custody homes.

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

Mr. Edwards: I regret to have to inform the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) that there is a unilateral system by which anyone who has been sentenced to under four months is sent to the Agassiz Youth Centre or the Manitoba Youth Centre. That certainly does not belie any merit that the Attorney-General suggests behind the decision not to put them into real open custody homes, and I hope the Attorney-General is not suggesting that in-house schooling and locked doors in the Agassiz Youth Centre in any way replaces the real integration of open custody homes in real communities. My question is: what is preventing the Attorney-General from respecting the real wishes of judges, and why is this unilateral four-month provision in place, in effect, in the Corrections Branch?

Mr. McCrae: I will certainly check into the Honourable Member's suggestion that there is an automatic closed custody sentence after the imposition of an open custody sentence, which is what he seems to be suggesting.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, every effort is being made by Corrections staff to determine that eligible youth for

the open custody homes with vacancies find themselves in such a setting. A review of assessment and placement practices with short-term sentenced youths is also being undertaken by the department. So the Honourable Member is not quite correct when he says that it is automatic, that you are going to end up in closed custody when you are sentenced to open custody. It is just not true, again.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), with a final supplementary.

Mr. Edwards: I see the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) is reading and that may be what the manual says. What I am telling him is what is really happening.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Edwards: I am sure he will find that out when he checks. We hear continual complaints and I am sure the Attorney-General does.

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

Mr. Edwards: I certainly do. I am wondering if the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon) perhaps has a question. Perhaps he would like to ask it.

Mr. Speaker: Will the Honourable Member kindly put his question now?

Mr. Edwards: My final question. Is this Government committed to open custody in residential communities in this province, as we hear continual complaints about the overcrowding of our institutions? Does he see it as a real alternative and a good alternative, one we are supporting and promoting within the correctional system?

Mr. McCrae: That is why such a disposition is available and is there. The Honourable Member is suggesting that youths sentenced to open custody and are spending their time at the Youth Centre, that that somehow is closed custody. There are separate portions of the facility available for open custody inmates and for closed custody inmates. At the present time, there are 50—this is as of September 26—youths in the open custody program at the Manitoba Youth Centre.

The Honourable Member is off the mark again. He comes forward with information in this House on a continual basis that is always incorrect.

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

Manitoba Hydro Export Sales

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I think Manitobans were saddened to read in the paper that the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld) and the Conservative Government have now blown the negotiations with the Upper

Mississippi Power Group. The Minister would like us to believe, and have Manitobans believe, that these suspended negotiations are as a result of something other than the Minister of Energy and Mines' and the new Chairman of Manitoba Hydro's attitude towards the export of power.

In light of the fact that this particular sale stood to gain Manitoba Hydro some \$4 billion in revenue, can the Minister explain to this House what information was provided to him by his staff, by staff at Manitoba Hydro, that would lead him to change his attitude toward the development of export sales in the United States?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I hesitate to remind the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) about what his Government said on February 14, 1986. At a news conference in Thompson, the former Member for Transcona and the former Premier said at that time that they had already an agreement on \$4.3 billion worth of hydro sales. Here it is: "Pawley announces \$4.3 billion in new Hydro exports." This is Thompson, February 14, 1986. "Premier Howard Pawley and Energy and Mines Minister Wilson Parasiuk, on Friday, announced three new hydro-electric export arrangements and a commitment to establishing a long-term development foundation with Hydro revenue."

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: On February 14, 1986, they announced that they had an arrangement to sell this power. A couple of days later, those utilities said, and here is the headline: "U.S. side issues power mega sale caution." Of course, the caution was that they were just talking. There was no agreement, no arrangement—nothing.

Later, as we asked questions day after day after day, month after month, a year later, we found out that several of the utilities had dropped out. They were not even in the discussions. As time went on, we found that there really were just preliminary discussions and in fact there was no agreement, there was nothing on the table, and there never was the kind of "almost" deal that the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) talks about.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mr. Storie: I think that rather spirited, misdirected energy by the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) indicates how seriously he is wounded by the fact that his Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) has not been able to conclude this deal or, in fact, any others. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have that rhetoric on the record and I will be dealing with that in due course.

* (1410)

Future Developments

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): My second question is to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). Due to the comments made and the attitude expressed by both the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro (Mr. Neufeld) and the chairman of Manitoba Hydro, it became evident to everyone in the committee that in fact the Alumax deal is dead as well.

My question to the Minister of Energy and Mines is given that the committee was told that there would be no incentive rates by Manitoba Hydro, that the Free Trade Agreement prevented that—and that was also part of the president's report to the committee—and in view of the fact that the Minister is concerned about the long-term capital costs of an aluminum project, will the Minister responsible for Energy and Mines now admit to Manitobans that the Alumax deal is dead, the UMPG deal is dead, and in fact he has also bungled the HBM&S modernization program?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, which one of those questions would he like me to deal with first? First of all, the mandate of Manitoba Hydro is to provide power to Manitobans at the least possible cost. If the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) wants us to subsidize the rate paid by Alumax or any other big user of Hydro, let him tell that to the users of Hydro, the everyday domestic consumer. Shall he pay the cost? Somebody must pay the cost. I suppose that the Member for Flin Flon believes that it is fair to charge a homeowner for the cost of electricity that should be borne by the industrial user.

I should say, also, Mr. Speaker, that the deal with Alumax is not dead. The negotiations are ongoing. Again, we cannot negotiate an agreement with Alumax or any other large user in this House. We have to deal with that on a confidential basis. As time goes on and we come to an agreement or do not come to an agreement, we will make the announcement in this House.

Mr. Storie: The Minister indicated quite clearly to committee the reasons why a project like Alumax would not be going forward. He cannot have it both ways. He cannot be concerned about the cost of capital investment for the additional development of electric energy and at the same time say that does not have an impact on Alumax.

Hudson Bay Mining & Smelting Federal Funding

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my final question to the Minister is given that—

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

Mr. Storie: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Would you kindly put your question now?

Mr. Storie: The Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) continues to express concern about the lack

of federal support for the modernization of Flin Flon. Given that 150 people got together to express their - (Interjection)- concern over the environment, will the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Storie: —Minister say whether he has met with Mr. Epp or the Minister responsible for the Western Diversification Initiative or the Minister responsible for the Acid Rain Abatement Program to assure the people of Flin Flon and the community surrounding Flin Flon that this project will receive the go ahead, that it will not continue to be part of the election strategy of Mr. Epp?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): This Government is extremely concerned about the welfare of the people of Flin Flon. We are concerned that the agreement between the federal Government and the company and indeed the provincial Government proceed. Again, we cannot negotiate that agreement within this House. We will continue, as I have said earlier, to monitor the negotiations between the Hudson Bay Company and the federal Government. Yes, we have been in contact with the Minister, Jake Epp. We have been in contact with the Minister in charge of Western Diversification. We will continue to pressure them for an agreement.

MPIC Rate Setting

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): My question is to the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation (Mr. Cummings).

When in Opposition, that Member and his colleagues were very critical of the former Government and the way it handled rate setting at MPIC, levelling charges day after day of political manipulation. Since the MPIC is almost at the end of its fiscal year and rates are now being discussed within the corporation, what steps is the Minister taking to ensure that his Government will not be involved in any kind of political manipulation; and, in particular, will those rates be subject to approval by the Public Utilities Board?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): First of all, the Member is correct. The year-end is rapidly approaching and the corporation is in the middle of setting rates for 1989. Those rates will be taken to the board where they will be discussed and where the board will have an opportunity to make recommendations to this Government.

The legislation still calls for the rate setting in MPIC to be receiving final approval by Cabinet. We are committed to those rates appearing before the Public Utilities Board. There will be ample opportunity for a public review and examination of whether or not those rates have been correctly settled.

Mr. Carr: We are glad to hear that answer from the Minister.

Kopstein Report Release

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): The Public Utilities and Natural Resources Committee of the Legislature will sit next week to review the 1987 Annual Report of MPIC. Since it would be productive to analyze past mistakes, in the light of the Government's plans to make sure those mistakes do not recur, I wonder if the Minister intends to release Judge Kopstein's report well in advance of the committee meetings so Members on this side, and indeed all Manitobans, will have a chance to digest it well in advance of the committee hearings.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): It will not be possible to release it in advance of those committee hearings, but I certainly will be releasing it as soon as it is available.

Mr. Carr: We understand that the Minister has been in possession of this report for some weeks now.

Auto Insurance Competition

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): A final supplementary. When the Minister was in Opposition, he, and indeed his Leader, mused aloud that their Party was in favour of introducing competition in the auto insurance industry in Manitoba. Now that the Minister is in power, does he intend to introduce such competition in the course of his mandate in Government?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): Mr. Speaker, the Member chooses to be a little bit footloose with some of the comments that he is reading from old Hansards, because we are firmly on the record as being in favour of public insurance for the automobile industry in this province. The only thing that he forgets is that there is a certain element of competition in automobile insurance; in particular, the heavy trucking and the SREs. The Bill that was recently introduced regarding ATVs in this province was deliberately left open-ended so that all insurance companies could participate in that liability.

Health Care Emergency Services

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Let me start, Mr. Speaker, by saying that we certainly appreciate the need for a coordinated approach to review the unprecedented problems that resulted in major dislocations and patient inconvenience at the Health Sciences Centre this past weekend, but the problem is more immediate than that. There have been reports of patients having been forced to lie on mattresses on the floor, of patients being turned away. According to the Health Sciences Centre Emergency Department Director, the hospital was lucky indeed that there were not any dire emergencies at that time. But luck is not enough. The emergency rooms are still quite busy.

I would ask the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) what immediate procedures have been put in place to ensure that there will not be a repeat performance of last weekend's problems while that ongoing review and coordination is taking place?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): The circumstance on Friday was not one which any Minister of Health or indeed any administrator of a hospital is satisfied with because there was every potential for unsafe patient care when you are into a circumstance like that at the emergency hospital. I am informed, as of this morning, that the circumstances returned to normal approximately by noon on Saturday, so that other hospitals apparently were able to meet their emergency patient commitment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what has been happening is a growing trend, I guess, in terms of the use of the emergency departments, and particularly in three of the hospitals in Winnipeg, where the number of uses of the emergency department are indeed growing. That is subject to a separate discussion amongst the hospitals. The immediate concern was, first of all, to identify exactly the circumstances which took place leading to Friday's temporary placing of patients at the Health Sciences on mattresses.

I cannot offer any solutions today since the problem has returned to a more normal state. Secondly, we have not determined exactly what the circumstances were which led to Friday's circumstance. Of course, that is the reason for the meeting.

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

* (1420)

Mr. Speaker: I have two rulings for the House.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, may I have leave for a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am coming down with a ruling.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: On October 4, I took under advisement a point of order raised by the Honourable Member for Churchill respecting alleged unparliamentary language used by the Honourable Minister of Health. The words spoken by the Honourable Minister of Health, referring to the Honourable Member for Churchill, were "does not tell the truth . . . that is not true. He knows it is not true."

I have reviewed Hansard with care and have examined relevant precedents and references in the authorities. To allege that a Member has not told the truth or has misled the House is perhaps less than courteous. To allege that a Member has done so deliberately, intentionally or knowingly is unparliamentary.

A 1977 ruling by Deputy Speaker Gerald Laniel of the House of Commons states the point very clearly,

"It is not considered unparliamentary to say that a statement is untrue, but it is unparliamentary to say that it is untrue to the knowledge of the Honourable Member making it."

I must therefore conclude that the words spoken by the Honourable Minister of Health were unparliamentary.

I must therefore call upon the Honourable Minister to withdraw.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I certainly will abide by your ruling, Mr. Speaker, and withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Minister.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: I have one more ruling for the House.

On October 5, I took under advisement a point of order raised by the Honourable Minister of Health alleging that the Honourable Member for Churchill had reflected on the Chair.

I have read the relevant sections of Hansard and have examined appropriate references in the authorities.

Immediately prior to Orders of the Day, the NDP House Leader and the Acting Government House Leader entered into a somewhat lengthy exchange respecting the arrangement of Government business and the attendance of Ministers while their Bills are being debated.

The Chair intervened to conclude the exchange and to thank the Honourable Member for Churchill for his assistance and to move the House along to the business of the day.

The Honourable Member for Churchill, on being recognized to speak on the adjourned second reading debate on Bill No. 6, The Fires Prevention Amendment Act, commenced his remarks by saying, "Continuing on the point which I was making previous to your interruption . . ."

These comments were made despite the fact that the previous exchange had been concluded by the Chair and the House had moved on to other business.

Honourable Members may be aware, as stated in Beauchesne, that reflections upon the character or actions of the Speaker may be punished as breaches of privilege. My actions cannot be criticized incidentally in debate or upon any form of proceeding except by way of a substantive motion.

In my opinion, the remarks of the Honourable Member for Churchill were a reflection upon the actions of the Chair.

Therefore, I must request the Honourable Member apologize to the House.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Certainly my comments were not intended to reflect either on your character or your actions as a Speaker. If you found them

offensive, I would be more than pleased to withdraw and apologize immediately.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Member for Churchill.

Order, please; order.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I rise to move a motion under Rule 27. Whereas the unemployment rate—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have already recognized the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I wonder if I might have leave of the House for a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: By leave? The Honourable Minister of Health, does he have leave? (Agreed)

Mr. Orchard: Thank you, and I thank my honourable friend from Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans).

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Thanksgiving weekend has just passed and, of course, that is a celebration of harvest. I want to recognize a citizen of growing fame in my constituency from the village of Roland. Roland is a community fondly remembered by many of us because it was the home town of the former occupant of your high office, Mr. Speaker.

Over the weekend, as is traditional on Thanksgiving weekend, there is the Annual Pumpkin Weigh-in.

An Honourable Member: Did she win it?

Mr. Orchard: The question was asked, "Did she win it?" That is an unkind reflection on the former Speaker of the House. No.

Mr. Edgar Van Wyck is an 84-year-old gentleman in Roland who has been growing giant pumpkins in Manitoba for years and years and years, and this has taken off into a growing competition over the years. Now we have a world pumpkin growing contest for which the weigh-in was formally over the weekend, the Thanksgiving long weekend.

I am pleased and proud to indicate to all Honourable Members of the House that Mr. Van Wyck placed eighth in the world competition for pumpkin growing. Now that indeed brings honour to Mr. Van Wyck himself, and I know all Honourable Members will want to share in the enthusiasm with which we congratulate him; but indeed it puts Roland firmly on the map not only as the home of 4-H but also of large pumpkins.

MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I rise to move a motion under our Rule No. 27:

WHEREAS the unemployment rate in this province has risen since the Conservative Government took office and continues to rise; and

WHEREAS the policies of the Conservatives are clearly causing an increase in unemployment and a downturn in the provincial economy; and

WHEREAS 7,000 more Manitobans are unemployed today than 12 months ago; and

WHEREAS the Conservative Government is embarking on a return to the acute protracted restraint policies of the Lyon administration; and

WHEREAS this government arbitrarily, without proper consultation, has cut funding to agencies and programs that have assisted the unemployed; and

WHEREAS the cutbacks in funding to the Winnipeg Community Unemployed Help Centre, the Brandon and area Community Unemployed Help Centre, the terminating of the Jobs Fund, the Job Training for Tomorrow Program, and the Workplace Innovation Centre, in particular, will cause further hardship for the unemployed; and

WHEREAS rising unemployment has had a devastating effect on individual Manitobans.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, Mr. Speaker, and I move, seconded by the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill), that under Rule 27, the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss the matter of urgent public importance, namely, that the Legislature urge the Government to undertake direct training and employment programs in cooperation with the private and non-profit sectors to alleviate growing unemployment in the province.

* (1430)

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): As I have repeatedly, during the course of this Session, whenever resolutions have been brought in, in the guise of a motion under Rule 27 of our rules, I have raised an objection either by way of point of order or during my argument.

I believe you have yet to rule on the form taken by the resolutions that are brought forward by Honourable Members both in the Liberal Party and in the New Democratic Party. Mr. Speaker, I suggest the form of the motion again today, just on having heard it, I have not had a chance to review it, but I suggest that the form of the motion today is the form of a resolution which is very much like a resolution you might find in Private Members' Hour. I would raise that matter as a point of order at this point.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Government House Leader. He has a point that I have some grave concerns about, and I will be dealing with it in the very, very near future.

Before determining whether the—

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): Perhaps on that point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Churchill, on the same point of order.

Mr. Cowan: Yes, on that point of order. The fact that the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) has raised that matter on numerous occasions in this House does not give credence to his argument. There is substantive precedent that shows that WHEREASes have been included in many, many emergency debate resolutions in the past. To my knowledge—and I have researched this, Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, back to the early 1900s and will go further if required—there has never been an emergency debate ruled out of order on the matter of it containing WHEREASes. The Government House Leader may have a problem with the format but his concerns are not in any way substantiated by the precedent and the ordinary usage of the emergency debate resolution in this House. So I would suggest that it is entirely in order and should be dealt with accordingly.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank both Honourable Members.

Before determining whether the motion meets the requirements of our Rule 27, the Honourable Member for Brandon East has five minutes to state his case for urgency of debate on this matter.

A spokesperson for each of the other Parties will also have five minutes to address the position of their respective Parties respecting the urgency of this matter.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): In my view, it is urgent that debate take place on this matter now in the House inasmuch as only last Friday morning did we receive the statistics from Statistics Canada indicating a serious deterioration in the unemployment situation in our province. This matter is of significant public importance, Mr. Speaker, to our citizens and to the Members of the Legislature, that all should be given an opportunity to debate the matter and provide solutions to help overcome this problem.

The figures that we received from Stats Canada last Friday indicated our unemployment rate was up on a seasonally adjusted basis to 8.7 percent. Last year, it was 7.4 percent at this time; this year, it is 8.7 percent. In actual terms, it also went up substantially, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the seasonally adjusted rate has worsened now three months in a row. July, Manitoba was 7.9 percent; in August, it went up to 8.0 percent. Incidentally, July was up over June. June was 7.4 percent, July 7.9 percent, August 8.0 percent, and now September 8.7 percent.

I point that out, because this past month the national rate, seasonally adjusted, has gone down. So what we have got in the province is an ominous pattern. Three months in a row of deterioration of unemployment. As a result, from looking at these survey results, we see 7,000 people out of work in September 1988 over the

level of last year. There are 7,000 more people, 7,000 more Manitobans unemployed. On an actual basis, in September, there were a total of 43,000 people not working. We had fewer people working in the province both on a part-time and on a full-time basis. You saw a deterioration in both areas.

We see the youth unemployment is higher than last year. Last year, we were at 12.2 percent in September; this year, we have gone up to 13.3 percent. In fact, our youth unemployment is higher than the Canadian average. We are beyond the Canadian average. As a result of this deterioration, something rather significant has happened. We were always either lowest, second or third lowest, never worse than third lowest. Because of last month's figures, we are seen to have slipped to fourth place out of the ten provinces.

In answer to my questions last Friday morning, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has rejected our suggestion of a reinstatement of the Job Training For Tomorrow Program, a direct job training and employment program. We know we have no Jobs Fund. There does not seem to be any indication of employment policies in place, and indeed, Mr. Speaker, in addition, we have the banks and other agencies forecasting a lower rate of economic growth. The Toronto Dominion Bank has indicated that it will drop to one-half of 1 percent next year which will translate into fewer job opportunities.

The second requirement for an emergency debate is that the matter be of such urgency that it should be dealt with immediately. Mr. Speaker, there is no reasonable opportunity to allow for debate in a timely fashion. The debate on the Department of Employment Services and Economic Security Estimates will not come forward for many weeks. We may never get to them because of the slowness of the review of the Estimates. We do not have any motion before the House on which we can debate this. We do not have Finance Estimates in front of us and therefore this is the only option we have for debate. So I trust that you will rule that this is in order and that the House will agree that we set aside the ordinary business of the House to address this important urgent issue.

* (1440)

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, unemployment is always a concern to any Government in power or any Party out of power. The Honourable Member, it is his and his Party's credibility when he comes forward today, five months after leaving office, and suggests that the present Government of Manitoba is responsible for unemployment that happens to exist in our province after seven years of NDP business bashing.

I am surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Member would come along now and whine and complain about unemployment. It is obviously a matter that has to preoccupy all Honourable Members and all elected representatives in our province and I believe always does. You do not have to be a Member of the Honourable Member's Party, I suggest. Also, I understand the information that he is relying on in raising the issue today was available to him on Friday, if I am not mistaken. So on that point he has missed

his deadline in terms of bringing the matter forward today; the matter of timeliness is very important.

The other matter that really has to be looked at carefully, in terms of the urgency of the debate and the urgency that the Honourable Member seems to be wanting to put forward, is if it is so urgent to the Honourable Member, why then did he not seek the floor during Question Period today? Why then did no Member in his Party seek the floor in Question Period today to ask questions about unemployment in Manitoba?

The Honourable Member displays and betrays a shallowness here, Mr. Speaker, that is disturbing to me and should be disturbing to all Honourable Members and all Manitobans. Not one question today in Question Period. Not one question by the Honourable Member, who supported the Government that imposed the payroll tax on employers across this province, robbing employers and employees of job opportunities right across this province. He raises this issue to castigate the Government which in its very first Budget did what it could to reduce the burden on employers and employees in this province out of the payroll tax.

After spending seven years in office, scaring businesses away from Manitoba and discouraging employment in our province, the Honourable Member has the unmitigated gall to raise this matter in a motion which could have been raised in any Private Members' Hour, Mr. Speaker.

The Honourable Member forgets also, when he raises the issue, that in mining and in other primary industries, employment in Manitoba is up. In manufacturing, employment is up. In transportation, communication and utilities, employment is up. In the community business and personal services, employment is up. The figures reveal the fluctuations in the labour market that might be expected but which do cause concern nonetheless to any Government in office. The Honourable Member raises something that as long as there is any unemployment in our province it is going to be chronic problem. Nobody is going to deny that and we are always going to have our eye on policies and programs that can help alleviate that problem.

Indeed, our Government did move quickly in its first Budget by removing the payroll tax, something that employers across the province have been complaining about for a good number of years. Indeed, it was employers and employees in this province who put the Honourable Member's Government out of office on April 26 and that was for a very good reason. That was because they were tired of the bungling, the deficit financing, the waste that has caused taxpayers' dollars to go to programs other than programs aimed at assisting employers and employees, to put people to work and to develop our communities and to enrich our lives in this province.

The Honourable Member's motion today, Mr. Speaker, will do nothing in the sense of bringing about solutions to problems that give rise to unemployment, but the Honourable Member does betray in himself and his Party a hypocrisy, I suggest, which comes from being out of office. The Honourable Member opposite should know better, I suggest, to bring in a resolution couched

in the terms this one is, calling for certain specific action under the guise of a motion under Rule 27 in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I will argue loudly and for a long period of time, if I had the chance, on the inadequacy of this type of motion and the inadmissibility in terms of debate in this House. The Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) says that he can give us certain isolated precedents for exceptions to that rule but exceptions do not make the rule. The rules of our place are something that evolve over many years of customs and usage and practice in this place. I think the largest body of practice is that this type of resolution is out of order.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mr. Reg. Alcock (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a serious matter. It is a matter that we have been speaking on on every occasion we have had an opportunity to over the last couple of months. We asked questions on it on Friday. I spoke to it as early as my response to the Budget. My Leader has been calling for a mini-budget to address this very serious issue.

At the same time, in discussions with yourself, we have agreed not to use the format that this motion is put in. On every occasion in the past when there has been a motion of this sort, we have consulted with the Opposition Party and informed them in advance so there could be some consultation on the form and content. That consultation was not undertaken in this case and we await your ruling, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is a very serious matter. Order, please.

* (1450)

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed carefully the motion proposed by the Honourable Member for Brandon East and have listened attentively to the remarks of the Honourable Members respecting the necessity of debating this matter today.

I did receive prior notice of this motion required by our rules. In order for me to rule in favour of such a matter, I must be satisfied that the urgency of debate is so pressing that the public interest will suffer if it is not taken into immediate consideration by setting aside the regularly scheduled business of the House. There must be no other reasonable opportunities for debate. I do not believe these conditions have been met. There are other opportunities for debate, in my opinion, when the Estimates of Employment Services and Economic Security are being examined and during the second and third reading debates on the Main Supply Bill.

With respect, therefore, in accordance with our Rules and Practices, I must rule the Honourable Member's motion out of order as a matter of urgent public

importance. This does not prevent the Honourable Member from rising this matter as a grievance at the next opportunity, if he so wishes. While I have the opportunity, I would like to point out, as Honourable Members have to the House, my continuing concern about the format in which this motion was presented, because I believe it contravenes our rules, despite the fact that there are a few precedences to support this approach.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Regrettably, Mr. Speaker, I must challenge your ruling.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The ruling of the Chair has been challenged. Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained? All those in favour, please say Yea. All those opposed, please say Nay. In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Yeas and nays, Mr. Speaker.

* (1500)

Mr. Speaker: Call in the Members.

The question before the House is, "Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?" All those in favour of the motion will please rise.

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

YEAS

Burrell, Connery, Cummings, Derkach, Downey, Driedger (Emerson), Ducharme, Enns, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Manness, McCrae, Mitchelson, Neufeld, Oleson, Orchard, Pankratz, Penner, Praznik, Alcock, Angus, Carr, Carstairs, Charles, Cheema, Driedger (Niakwa), Evans (Fort Garry), Gaudry, Gray, Lamoureux, Mandraké, Patterson, Roch, Yeo.

NAYS

Cowan, Doer, Evans (Brandon East), Harapiak, Harper, Hemphill, Maloway, Plohman, Storie, Uruski, Wasylycia-Leis.

Mr. Clerk, William Remnant: Yeas 36; Nays 11.

Mr. Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been sustained.

* (1510)

ADDRESS FOR PAPERS

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I would move, seconded by the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill),

THAT an Address for Papers do issue, praying for:

- (a) copies of all correspondence between the Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security and the Manitoba

Association of Urban Municipalities and the Union of Manitoba Municipalities respecting implementation of the one-tier system of social assistance; and

- (b) copies of all correspondence between the Minister and anti-poverty organizations and church groups respecting the implementation of a one-tier system of social assistance; and
- (c) the current welfare rate structure for each municipality of Manitoba.

MOTION presented.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): This motion for Address for Papers is acceptable to the Government.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented.

* (1520)

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Prior to going into the debate on the Supply Motion, I would like to exercise my right to engage in a grievance before this House.

I rise on a matter of great concern to myself and to my colleagues in the New Democratic Party, namely, the lack of concern by this Government for the working people of Manitoba, particularly those who are unemployed, particularly the young, untrained, and particularly the disadvantaged. Mr. Speaker, this Government seems to lack direction in its employment policy. I wonder if it has any employment policy whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, you referred, and others referred, to the possible opportunity to debate this in the Department of Employment Services, the matters that we have concerning unemployment, concerning lack of concern for working people but, regrettably, I do not think we are going to be able to get to that department because of the procedures in the House, because of the length of time it is taking to go through some of the other departments. I suspect we are going to be running out of time in the Estimates debate before we get to the Department of Employment Services. Unless the Government wants to rearrange the order, we will not have an opportunity, regrettably, to bring up our concerns.

Mr. Speaker, the actions of this Government have indicated an anti-labour bias on the part of certain

Ministers. I refer in particular to the decision to cut back on funding for the Labour Education Centre; I refer to cutbacks regarding the Workplace Innovation Centre; and certainly with regard to the elimination of funding of the Unemployed Help Centres both in Winnipeg and Brandon. We are concerned with unemployment. We think that we need every vehicle possible, every agency available, to help us and help Manitobans overcome problems of unemployment. Certainly, the unemployed help centres did an excellent job in this respect.

(The Acting Speaker, Mr. Neil Gaudry, in the Chair.)

The Community Unemployed Help Centre wrote to the Minister of Employment Services (Mrs. Oleson) back in June of this year, indicating that they would like to meet her. They congratulated her on her appointment and indicated some of the activities that they engaged in. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read that letter for Members of the House, which gives you a clear idea of what that agency does, what it contributes to the fight against unemployment, what it does to help those who regrettably have to seek unemployment insurance. This is a letter dated June 17, addressed to the Minister and copies were sent to various people in the Legislature:

"On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Community Unemployed Help Centre, I am writing this brief letter of introduction to the centre and its services. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your recent appointment as Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security. As our organization is funded in part by your department, I am also requesting the opportunity to meet with you at your convenience.

"The Community Unemployed Help Centre was incorporated in June, 1979 as a non-profit organization. The centre began operating in 1980 and has been in continuous operation since that time. The centre provides a range of services to unemployed Manitobans with a particular emphasis on information and advocacy services in respect of unemployment insurance.

"This service was developed to assist unemployment insurance claimants who were having difficulty obtaining unemployment insurance information and benefits, some as a result of the imposition of disqualifications or disentitlements by the Unemployment Insurance Commission. In 1987, the centre recovered in excess of \$281,960 in lost U.I. benefits for its clients for that period -(Interjection)- That is true, it is advocacy services—an amount far in excess of its \$135,960 budgeted for the same period; that is better than 2-1."

I go on in the letter: "The centre has maintained a consistent 80 percent to 90 percent success rate through its appeals to the Board of Referees and Umpire. This success rate is inversely proportionate to the success rate of unassisted claimant appeals.

"In addition to unemployment insurance information and advocacy services, the centre assists unemployed Manitobans by referring clients to other agencies who may assist them with problems exacerbated by

unemployment. The centre and its staff further assist individuals in search of employment through referrals to various employment and training programs, and through the exploration of employment alternatives. Many of the centre's clients tend to be employment disadvantaged, often due to a lack of skills, education and work experience. They tend to remain in the cycle of short-term low paying jobs.

"The Community Unemployed Help Centre also engages in some public education activities with respect to unemployment insurance and unemployment related issues. The centre provides in the order of 20 to 25 workshops on related topics in any given year for a variety of groups and organizations. Among these include the United Way of Winnipeg, for its referral agent and union councillors programs; the Winnipeg Association of Non-Teaching Employees; National Defence employees for their pre-retirement seminar; various unions; employee associations; youth groups; immigrant and women's organizations, and other social service agencies.

"The centre employs five full-time staff and is funded primarily by the United Way of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba. Demand for the centre's services has increased appreciably in each of the last three years, while the number of staff has remained constant. The centre assisted 4,351 individuals in 1987, up from 2,970 in 1985. The centre has enjoyed an excellent relationship with a variety of agencies and organizations throughout Manitoba. It is, in part, as a result of these successful relationships that the Community Unemployed Help Centre has continued to thrive.

"I trust that this information will be of some benefit to you as you familiarize yourself further with agencies and programs funded by your department. I look forward to your reply in regard to our request for a meeting. Sincerely, Neil P. Cohen, Executive Director."

This letter points out quite well what a terrific service this agency has been to Winnipeg and indeed to the people in the Province of Manitoba. They have recaptured in unemployment insurance benefits monies far in excess of grants paid by this Government, by the Province of Manitoba to the agencies. We are in effect earning dollars, if you will, for the Province of Manitoba. For the life of me, I do not know why we would want to stop something as positive as this.

I might add that the success of the Unemployed Help Centre of Winnipeg was observed by a former Chairman of the Unemployment Insurance Commission's Board of Referees. In the Winnipeg Sun of Wednesday, September 28, this person, a gentleman by the name of Cam Mager, who sat on the three-member panel that judges UIC appeals, in so many words, he is saying, "Low income and immigrant Manitobans will be hardest hit by cutting of funds to the Community Unemployed Help Centre." This person, as I said, Mr. Cam Mager, is the former Chairman of the Unemployment Insurance Commission's Board of Referees. He said, "I think the cutbacks will mean that the underdog will suffer."

* (1530)

He goes on to say, "Teachers get help from the Teachers' Association, Canada Packers workers get

help from their union, but waitresses and such have no one to turn to." It is the poor and a lot of women, a lot of single parents, a lot of women who are trying to struggle and make ends meet, or people among those who do not have anywhere to turn by way of having someone assist them in going back to U.I. to appeal the decision made by that organization."

Mr. Mager goes on to say, "The U.I.C. Act is a little on the complicated side and that is how the Community Unemployed Help Centre helps out. They are pretty knowledgeable about the laws." The fact is that this agency is providing a positive benefit to the province and particularly to those people.

Regrettably, later the Government advised the centre that it was cutting its funding. They received a letter from the Minister indicating that she and her department were no longer going to fund this organization.

I will just quote from a letter dated September 28, from Mr. Cohen again, addressed to the Leader of our Party and, I guess, sent to some other people in the province.

He says, "The Government has indicated that funding to the Community Unemployed Help Centre does not fit in with the Government's priorities. These priorities have not been communicated to us and we have not been advised by the Minister as to why funding to our agency does not fit in with the present Government's priorities. As you are aware, the Community Unemployed Help Centre continues to provide a much needed service to this community. We are gravely concerned about the future of our agency and our ability to continue to provide service to those in need. We are in the process of attempting to hold the Government accountable to us for their decision."

This is an excerpt from a letter by Mr. Neil Cohen, Executive Director of the Community Unemployed Help Centre of Winnipeg to Mr. Gary Doer, dated September 28. The fact is that here we have a very useful organization that was doing a good job, that is doing a good job, whose funding was cut off without any prior notice. They had asked for a meeting to explain to the Minister what they were doing. She did not meet with them but instead they got a letter saying, sorry, no more money. Thank you very much for your services.

An Honourable Member: They got six months' notice. That is what it is.

Mr. Leonard Evans: They got six months' notice, yes; the funding will no longer be approved, effective April 1, 1989. The fact is they got a letter, no previous notice, and so on. They got a letter saying the funding is cut off.

If the Minister is getting a little exercised about this matter and wants to debate, I welcome her contribution in the debate after I have concluded. The fact is, this is it. If the Minister is telling us now that she is prepared to reconsider, that this is just some kind of notice and if they want to come back to her and make the case, maybe she will reconsider, that is fine, but this is not what I gather. From the position that the Government has taken, this is not what I gather from what the

Minister has said and from what I have read in the media.

But the interesting point, as I have said, is that the Unemployment Insurance Board of Referees person, a former chairman himself, has said that they have done an excellent job, that they have an excellent success ratio. Eighty to 90 percent, I believe, of those that they deal with have had their cases reversed, the decision reversed. I think that is very important, and I say this kind of service is going to become even more important as we have more people unemployed in Manitoba, more people going on to unemployment insurance and possibly more people having difficulty getting assistance for whatever reason.

I note the Brandon Centre obtained, since its inception—it has not been going as long as the Winnipeg centre—but the Brandon Centre, since its inception has obtained about nearly \$300,000 of benefits for its clients. The grant it gets, incidentally, is roughly about \$47,800 a year at the present time, so the grant monies have far been superseded by the benefits.

The unemployment insurance monies that the Brandon Centre has achieved for the people of Brandon and Westman, indeed maybe some of these people even live in the Minister's own riding of Gladstone, who have been helped. That would be an interesting thing to find out. How many people from the riding of Gladstone have been assisted by the Brandon and area Unemployed Help Centre, because I believe about 40 percent of their clientele are from the Westman area outside of the City of Brandon. They have served 1,717 people since inception and, as I said, they have an excellent record of getting monies for these people, getting unemployment insurance benefits to which they are entitled.

Of course, the point is that if these people do not get U.I., often they have to resort to welfare. Nobody likes to do that, nobody wants to do that, but this is the other recourse. You have run out of U.I., and if you have family responsibilities, there are no job opportunities, the job opportunities are becoming less in Manitoba, then what do you do? You go on to welfare, so that we end up paying out more money for welfare.

The Government of Manitoba of course shares in this, and shares in it, I might add, in the City of Winnipeg and the City of Brandon where a lot of unemployment is concentrated, where a lot of welfare is concentrated. The Government of Manitoba picks up 85 percent of the payment made by the City of Winnipeg and the City of Brandon, so a large share is picked up by the province. However, I would observe that in turn the province does cost-share with the federal Government. But nevertheless, a significant portion of the payments of welfare are picked up by the provincial Government.

I would say, therefore, that the elimination of this service—I am not sure what will happen to the Winnipeg one. The United Way has seen fit to support it; other organizations have seen fit to support it, so perhaps it will carry on. I am not so optimistic about the Brandon Centre. It is in a smaller city. It has not been established as long and it does not seem to have as much other

sources of revenue to call upon, although I believe they are working on that.

It is interesting that the City of Winnipeg's United Way has seen fit to continue to support this organization because they think that it is providing a service that is needed.

Just as an aside, Mr. Speaker, I recall that the Winnipeg Community Unemployed Help Centre did an excellent job in taking on the Mulroney Government with regard to the Forget Commission because the federal Government was going to charge the cost of the Forget Royal Commission looking into major changes of the unemployment insurance fund, of the unemployment insurance system in Canada, they were going to charge this back to the unemployment insurance fund. The unemployment insurance funds are funds that are contributed there by people who participate in U.I., by workers who pay U.I., by the working people and by the businesses. They have put the money into this fund and it is just not fair that a Government should come along and say we are going to charge these people, who happen to be paying into U.I. for the cost of this Forget Commission. They did not ask for it, the workers did not ask for the Forget Commission, but the Government in its wisdom decided to set it up and they were going to charge the U.I. fund, but because of the legal challenge offered by the Winnipeg Community Unemployed Help Centre, the Government decided to back off. I think that move alone, that legal challenge alone that the Winnipeg Centre was prepared to undertake was a great service for working people right across Canada who pay into unemployment insurance.

As I said earlier on in reading the letter from Mr. Cohen, the Community Help Centre does a great deal of other work in the community in advising people who have problems with unemployment, in assisting other organizations, and so on. An excellent organization, very well run and it is a tragedy that the Government in its wisdom has seen fit to give them notice that, as of April 1 of next year, there will be no more funding.

* (1540)

It is interesting that the Winnipeg Sun has made an observation about this and said that we should not be complaining. In its editorial of Tuesday, October 4—I will just read a bit of this because it is very interesting. It is entitled "Tories will be Tories."

"There's been a lot of huffing and puffing in the last few weeks by outraged labor types and other left-leaners over the fact that our five-month-old Tory Government is acting just like a Tory Government.

"After promising up and down that they would balance the budget, the Tories moved in and started slashing, cutting everything from the Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse to the Labor Education Centre and other NDP brainstorms that few people knew existed.

"Following the social philosophy . . . "Well, the Minister of Highways says "hogwash" but I say I am reading an article. It is not my word, it is an editorial

from the Winnipeg Sun that I am reading. So I will carry on—this is the editorial of Tuesday, October 4.

"Following the social philosophy they outline time and time again, they began trimming the Community Services budget and making changes, such as deciding to subsidize private day care—a move considered outrageous and heretical in NDP circles.

"This Labor Day, there was no party at the Legislature—no celebration or concert or even modest little information booths. The Government felt no obligation to celebrate labor.

"It even chopped free parking for civil servants.

"For some, though, the last straw came last week, when the cuts hit the unemployed, as the Government pulled the financial plug on the Community Unemployed Help Centre.

"Surprise, surprise, surprise.

"Tories will be Tories. They are, after all, only following the agenda that the minority of Manitobans who elected them expected them to follow."

That is part of an editorial in the Winnipeg Sun.

I am also concerned, not only because of these cuts—and there are others—we did not go in any detail, the Labour Education Centre, and so on. I am very concerned, as are my colleagues in my caucus, regarding the situation of unemployment in the province. The unemployment rate is up, the actual rate is up to 7.9 percent. It is 1.3 percentage points higher than a year ago. Last year 6.6 percent, this year 7.9 percent.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) should note this. Even the seasonally-adjusted rate is up because with the seasonal adjustment you usually have a correction for the cooler months, the winter months, when unemployment tends to be high for seasonal reasons. But the seasonal figure went up again to 8.7. I might refer you to last year around this time, last September, it was 7.4 percent.

I appreciate you do not compare year over year with seasonally adjusted. That is really meant to compare one month after month. You have got rid of the seasonal factors through a statistical calculation, so you should really compare one month on another. If you take this and you look at Manitoba's seasonally adjusted labour unemployment rate, in June of this year it was 7.4 percent, July it went up to 7.9 percent, in August it went up to 8.0 percent and now in September it has gone up to 8.7 percent. So you have had three months in a row; it is an ominous pattern when you get that.

In times past, you have seen the figures go up, but then they will usually correct and they may improve the following month and you get sort of a zigzag pattern, if you have plotted in on a chart. I am suggesting that here you have a clear indication of a deterioration.

I know if you compare that with the Canadian situation, this last month we are going against the national trend. Canada did worsen in July and it did worsen in August, but the Canadian figures improved. I guess this is good news for Mr. Mulroney. The fact

is the Canadian figures improved. The Canadian seasonal adjustment went from 8.0 percent down to 7.8 percent. Manitoba, I am going to repeat for those who are listening and do not have these figures, went from 8.0 percent up to 8.7 percent.

We are well above the Canadian average and this is just incredible. Historically, we have tended to be below the Canadian average. Historically, we have tended to be either lowest, second lowest or third lowest in Canada. Today, because these figures have gone up, we are now to fourth place out of ten, so relatively we are slipping in terms of our unemployment situation. No longer can we brag that we are among the lowest levels of unemployment in Canada, because we are not.

The fact is that you have a figure here, Manitoba 8.7 percent compared to Canada 7.8 percent. It is just an incredibly wide spread. It is just for those people who study these figures who can tell you that is a significant spread. It is significant because, as I said, it has worsened for three months in a row.

You can look at figures in years gone by, and we have had business cycles. I am not suggesting we are not subject to business cycles in this province. There are all kinds of factors that affect the economy, that affect the rate of unemployment. I am not suggesting that for one moment. I have been in this House for about 19 years and I have never said that there is only one reason why unemployment gets worse or better.

We are part of a national economy. We are part of an international economy, but when I see the rate of unemployment worsening, going against the national trend, then I think we have to, all of us in this Legislature, sit up and take notice.

I have looked at these figures over several years and you can see patterns. If you leave the seasonally adjusted alone and just look at the actual figures, you will always get higher rates in the colder months, January; February, even March is high. Sometimes April is quite high, but usually by May it improved. It did improve this May, in actual terms, and June—May and June.- (Interjection)-

I do not buy the argument that it is the drought. If you look at Alberta, while the drought is hurting, there is no question the drought is—

An Honourable Member: Alberta does not have a drought.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Listen, tell that to some people in Alberta. It is not just that we -(Interjection)- At any rate, the fact is I am not suggesting for a minute that the drought is not playing a role. It does play a role; of course it does. It plays a role but it is not that significant in terms of these figures if you take an analysis of the figures and take a closer look at them. Putting the rates aside, I do not care which way you slice the cake, the bottom line is that there are 43,000 Manitoba people, men and women, old and young and middle age, who were out of work in September. That are 7,000 more people than a year ago. It is rather interesting.

Last night, the television stations had a bit of a show on the people going for a free meal on Thanksgiving. I think it was CKY-TV showed the Salvation Army, which does an excellent job in helping people who have for whatever reason nowhere to go and are not being fed for whatever reason. They interviewed, I believe he was a major, I do not know what his title was, but they interviewed a person there with the Salvation Army and he was shaking his head. He said I do not understand where all of these young people are coming from; they are here for dinner. We have just got an incredible increase of people. I would invite you to go and have a look at that TV clip. I am sure you can get it from someone who may have taped that.- (Interjection)- He did not say they were farmers, he did not say who they were. He said that there were young people. He could not understand why there were so many people out for a free dinner. They were not sure whether they were going to have enough food to provide a turkey dinner for these people.

I say, Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to have been there to tell the major and say what you are telling us is what Statistics Canada is telling us, what the Labour Force survey—which we just got and incidentally we got it just prior to the beginning of the Session on Friday. We did not have a chance to give the Speaker the one hour notice because we did not have the data to analyze. This was a first occasion. I might mention that we could come up with a motion that we did, asking for emergency debate.

* (1550)

Nevertheless, we did ask questions. We did not get very good answers. The answer we got from the Premier was that he did not care for direct training programs, for direct training and employment programs as we had. Indeed, it has been announced in this House that as of June 30, the Job Training for Tomorrow Program, which is an excellent program providing jobs for people of all ages including disadvantaged people, is terminated as of June 30. They are not accepting any more applications. The Premier said this Government did not want to get engaged in make-work projects. The Minister or the Premier did not know that particular program, Training for Tomorrow, worked with the private sector. The jobs were in the private sector not in the Government.- (Interjection)- While the Minister indicated, from her seat, it still is. She told us in this House in an answer to a question I put in Supply—I believe we were discussing Capital Supply—that you were not accepting applications as of June 30.

An Honourable Member: There are people still in the program.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, yes, there are people still in the program because it takes several months to go through the program. As of June 30, this Government is not accepting any new applications. The point is, regardless of whether there is one or ten or a hundred or whatever there is in the program, the program is not accepting any more applications. Therefore it is being wound down.- (Interjection)- The Minister says she may be introducing a new program.

When I asked the Premier questions last Friday, he was very critical of these kinds of programs. He said we do not believe in these "make-work programs." When I asked him directly whether they would reintroduce or whether they would establish a job creation program with the private sector, with the non-profit sector, he gave a negative answer. The impression we got is that they would not be going in that way. That is what the Premier (Mr. Filmon) said. I invite you to look at the Hansard for that day, for last Friday.

I say this is one program that has proven very effective, and is only one. I am not saying that you have only one way to fight unemployment, but that is one excellent way, and it helps the small businessman as well. It helps the small business sector. It helps a lot of non-profit agencies and it has been very, very successful, so I think it is a tragedy. My suggestion was and that was included in my question the other day, that the Minister and the Government get on with their senior staff and look at ways and means of bringing in other programs. If you do not like Training for Tomorrow, look at other programs that you could introduce.

The Minister says from her seat they are but that is contrary to what the Premier of this province said on Friday. He gave us the impression that contradicted that particular statement. He contradicted. He said that people had enough of this. Our Government was defeated, we had those kinds of programs and therefore they were not going to proceed with these kinds of programs. That is what the Premier (Mr. Filmon) said. I wish he had said something else, but he and what the Minister are saying are two different things. The Minister and the Premier should get together on what they want to do about this.

So not only do we have more people out of work, but we have a lower level of people employed. Usually month-after-month or year-over-year comparisons we have more people working in Manitoba. Now, under this Government, we have fewer people working. Last year in September, we had 504,000 Manitobans working in full-time and part-time jobs. This year we only have 500,000 people working in full-time and part-time jobs. In other words, the actual number of people at work has declined by 4,000. As I said, there are fewer working both on a part-time basis as well as a full-time basis.

If you look at the youth unemployment, you will find that is higher than last year as well. As I have it here, it is 13.3 percent for this year compared to 12.2 percent last year. We have the table here if I can refer to it. Mr. Speaker, this is entirely based on facts. All these numbers that I use are from the official sources of Stats Canada. I invite the Members here to look it up themselves if they wish. The unemployed youth as of September this year was 13.3. Last year it was only 12.2. I do not have the year before with me. If you look at Canada, the Canadian rate is only 11.5 compared to our 13.3, so the Canadian rate is much lower than Manitoba's. Also, if you look at last year, their rate was 12 percent, so they have gone down. They have improved, whereas our situation has deteriorated. As I said earlier, we have just slipped to fourth place.

So we do not know where this Government is going. They have eliminated the Jobs Fund. I can take these

different programs and put them in different departments as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has said. You can do that if you want, but we do not see the evidence of any direct action in terms of job creation. As I said, the major employment program has ceased to receive applications as of June 30. So, in effect, there is no major employment program now operating where a small businessperson can go and say, hey, I would like to create one or two jobs, is there any assistance for me? Before you could say yes.- (Interjection)- The fact is that many of these jobs, as I said, were in the private sector and they were very interesting jobs. They were in every kind of occupation you could imagine. At any rate, we will see as time goes on.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Mr. Speaker, I see my light is on. I wonder how much time I have. Four minutes? Okay.

I was saying that not only are the figures bad now, but I want to conclude by referring to the fact that the Toronto Dominion Bank, which engages in forecasting like a lot of other organizations, has come out with a forecast that is substantially below that offered by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) during his Budget Address. The Toronto Dominion Bank says for Manitoba it will be only one-half of 1 percent next year. That means a lower economic rate of growth translates itself into a lower level of job creation.

So I say when you look at these figures, when you look at the forecast, all in all, this Government in my judgment, should be getting busy. They should be bringing its research people together and looking at ways and means to do something to offset the situation.

The difficulty we have in Manitoba is that our economy, which has been relatively stable and proceeds at a relatively slow pace, is small and sometimes it is not strong enough. We need every lever that we can possibly use in this province to help the private sector and the non-profit sector to create jobs.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Lever borrowing is gone.

Mr. Leonard Evans: The Minister of Finance says lever borrowing is gone. But I would like to remind him he gave up money with CPR, he gave up money with International Nickel, and I say you are not getting - (Interjection)- You could have had the same tax structure as the Province of Saskatchewan did with diesel fuel. You gave that up, you could have used that money alone to help the small private sector.

At any rate, what we are going to see regrettably is a worsening situation this winter. We are going to have fewer people working, we are going to have more people out of work and it is partly because of the policies of this Government. I am particularly concerned—to use one specific example that I might refer to before I sit down—of what is happening in Flin Flon because here, specifically, there are a large number of jobs at stake. There are over 2,000 Manitobans directly working and another 1,500 Manitobans in indirect jobs because of Hudson Bay Mining. They are still not given any answer

by the federal and provincial Governments together as to what is going to happen with regard to the funding of the \$130 million that is required for pollution control equipment. I trust they are not being used as political pawns in the federal election. I think that not only the company but the entire workforce, the entire town, demands an answer and demands an answer soon.

So I would take this opportunity to urge the Government, to urge that Minister to get on with it, to get a hold of Mr. Epp, or whoever he has to get hold of in the federal Government, to get an early decision on this matter. I would urge this Government to indicate to the company that it is prepared to be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

Mr. Speaker, while there may be some who may not think that this is a serious matter, I suggest to you—and I am going on record now—for us to all be alerted as to what is going to happen in the months ahead, and particularly this winter. You may have the odd reversal, the odd month, but we have seen a pattern that is ominous, that does not spell well for the future of our people.

I appreciate the opportunity of exercising my right to speak on this grievance. It is a very important matter and I trust that I have gotten through to some of the Ministers who may wish to rethink their position in this matter. Thank you.

* (1600)

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, with the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) in the Chair for the Department of Community Services; and the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz) in the Chair for the Department of Agriculture.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—COMMUNITY SERVICES

* (1620)

The Acting Chairman, Mr. Darren Praznik: The committee will come to order. My apologies, I did not realize that I was beginning the Session. I thought I was replacing the Chairman. The committee is now in order.

I believe we are on line 4.(b)(3) Maintenance of Children.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): I have some material to table at the request of the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock). He requested it when last we met. No. 1 was the Service and Administration deficit surplus as reported in the financial statements of each of the eight Child and Family Service agencies for the years '85, '86, '87. No. 2, the same information for Child Maintenance budgets, and the same for Prevention Grants. No. 4, the numbers of children in Pay Care, total numbers for '84, '85, '86, '87. No. 5, child abuse cases '84, '85, '86, '87; that is child

abuse cases—sexual abuse and physical abuse. No. 6, number of locked beds in Manitoba by location and current occupancy. No. 7, longest stay in a locked facility in Manitoba, number of similar locked child welfare beds in Saskatchewan, I believe the Member was asking for. Also, No. 8, the distribution of Family Support Service Grants.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik): Shall this line pass?

Ms. Avis Gray (Elice): A few questions in this area, could the Minister tell us, the parent child centres, are they funded in this line or do individual child and family service agencies provide funding to these centres?

Mrs. Oleson: Some of the agencies provide funding through their grants.

Ms. Gray: Has the Minister been approached at all by the parent child centres in regard to their concern about instability in funding, that sometimes they are funded on any given year by a child and family services agency, but they have difficulties with this method of funding and would like to be part of funding on a yearly basis, a commitment from the Department of Community Services? Is the Minister aware of this or has she had any meetings with the board of the parent child centres?

Mrs. Oleson: They were originally funded by Education, I am told, and I have had letters expressing concern. I have a meeting set up for later this month to meet with them on the subject.

Ms. Gray: Another project which has come to my attention, and I am sure to the Minister's as well, is Project Opikihewin where we have a group that has been initiated by parents who provide support services for the parents for the Native children who are placed in non-Native homes. This particular group has been funded primarily through the United Church of Canada but they have asked for some funding from the Department of Community Services. Could the Minister, first of all, tell us what she feels the role of the Community Services Department is in supporting families where Native children have been adopted into non-Native families a number of years ago, before the policy change, and could the Minister explain what her department's position is on providing ongoing support in regard to these cross-cultural adoptions?

Mrs. Oleson: I met with that particular group within the last few weeks. I cannot indicate right now just exactly when it was but I met with them. It was very interesting to hear what they had to say about the objectives and the role that their organization is playing in helping people, particularly within the City of Winnipeg, but in some other areas as well with the problems faced by parents and children who have adopted Native children. And as the Member indicated, they were funded and assisted by the United Church of Canada who is really wanting to get out of that because they feel they can no longer afford it and they want to, I guess, do other things with their funds. The membership, the board indicated to me their desire to

continue their programs of course. I have undertaken and my department has undertaken to review this. It is under active consideration of whether or not to fund them. I do believe they do play a very important role in the lives of the Native children who have been adopted by non-Native parents.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, does she feel—she has mentioned the important role this group would play—that there is a role in fact for the Department of Community Services to see that some dollars would go to an organization such as this so that their programs and the objectives of the board could be met and their work could be continued?

Mrs. Oleson: As I indicated to the Member in the previous answer, we are actively considering whether or not we could help them. By that, I am not saying that they are not doing an important job. The department has not funded them before so we have to, of course, look at where we would get the dollars to fund them. That will have to be taken into consideration when we are looking at funding them. There probably is a role for Community Services in that. Just to what extent and how much in the line of resources we can dedicate to that, I am not quite certain at this time because it is still under consideration.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, has this project, the board Members of this project, given the Minister an indication as to what type of dollars they would be asking for from the Government?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, they have.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us what the approximate amount of dollars is that this group has requested?

Mrs. Oleson: The minimum that they feel they could manage is almost \$66,000 and the maximum is approximately \$150,000.00. Those are sort of the figures they have indicated. As I had said before, we still are considering that.

Ms. Gray: Another community group which has had some ties with the child welfare system and I understand has written to the Minister and perhaps even met with the Minister is the care centre for Native youth. Could the Minister tell us if this project has ever been funded by her Department of Community Services?

Mrs. Oleson: No, it has not.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate, has the Care Centre asked for funding from the Department of Community Services and is this department in any type of negotiations with this service?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, the staff have been meeting with the people from that particular agency on several occasions and identifying their needs. I have not met with them personally but I see no reason why I will not when I get time. What the staff are waiting for, for the consideration of funding, is that the staff

need a financial audit and there also needs to be a board of directors put in place. Presently that is lacking and is one of the reasons there is a hold up. They will be considered if they provide that information. I understand there was a meeting cancelled last week that was to be held with Ms. Lafreniere who is the head of that organization, and I do not know whether that is going to be rescheduled or not. The department is working with them to identify their needs but has to have, of course, the proper information in place before they the request can be considered. I should add to the Member that there is extra funding being given this year for youth for emergency services to Ma Mawi Centre so that will help that situation somewhat.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the extra dollars given to Ma Mawi, just to clarify, those dollars though certainly would not be available to the children in which the Care Centre are providing service for. Correct?

Mrs. Oleson: Some of it could be available to that group.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us how those funds would be available to the Care Centre and are they aware of this?

Mrs. Oleson: I meant that they could be available to the children, not to the particular centre per se, but they could be available to the clients of that centre.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, when the Minister says that they have asked for a financial audit, would she explain what exactly she has asked for from the Care Centre?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, before the department can enter into funding for any group we need to know their financial standing. We need to know if there is a deficit, how they have spent their funds. The problem with this group is there is no board so there needs to be some method of accountability that needs to be put in place. Before the Government can authorize funds to be given to any particular group, you have to some mechanism in place for accountability.

Ms. Gray: Again to clarify from the Minister, first of all, is the Minister aware that in order to obtain some of their funding the Care Centre had used sponsorship from the Children's Home of Winnipeg, I understand, to receive some of their dollars from other sources because they were a new formed organization. So I ask, for some of those dollars under the auspices or the sponsorship of the Children's Home of Winnipeg, I am wondering if the Minister would consider that in giving funding. Again to clarify, what I am asking in regard to financial audit, has the Minister's department asked for an audited statement of the finances of the agency?

Mrs. Oleson: I understand what the Member is referring to with the money through the Children's Home. The Core Area Initiative funds flowed through the Children's Home of Winnipeg and there are a number of issues that need to be clarified from that particular group.

What we want is a statement of what funding they received and how they have spent it and then we could consider whether or not we will be able to fund them.

* (1630)

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us has this agency or group, the care centre, have they said that they are able to provide an audited financial statement for the department?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, I understand they are able to. They are working on it and they will be able to provide it later.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, with groups such as this—and the one thing about the care centre is that particular group happens to provide a very specific type of service to a very specific clientele in a particular part of Winnipeg and they have been rather unique in terms of providing bail supervision to young Native youth and also providing recreational and educational opportunities to youth.

This centre, as well, has been able to have some successes partly because of the fact that they utilize Native counsellors so that the children or youth of the area seem to readily congregate, shall I say, at this centre and see it as a haven sometimes. In fact, Child and Family Services staff in the central area have certainly said that this project is one of a kind and does provide a very specific need.

I am wondering if the Minister sees, as part of her department's role, through the Directorate or through other parts of her department, rather than just to say to this agency, you need a board of directors, to actually work with the care centre and actually assist them in how to go about setting up a board and really helping them out as far as what is required.

Mrs. Oleson: Staff are actively working with the group, as I indicated before, and have met with them several times and are assisting them, or attempting to assist them, with the very thing that the Member is saying, setting up a board of directors and so forth. They work primarily with young offenders, so this has some implication perhaps for the Attorney-General's (Mr. McCrae) department also, so that is one thing that we were really looking at as well.

I am certainly not disputing that they help people. It is just that in the process of decision-making with regard to funding we have to take certain things under consideration to make sure that they are a bona fide group. As I said, the staff is working with them, attempting to help them set up their board of directors and identify what their funding needs are.

Ms. Gray: The Minister mentioned the Attorney-General's department and certainly over the past couple of years there seemed to be some confusion or joint jurisdiction as to where this particular centre should be seeking funding. The Corrections area or the Attorney-General, as it now is housed with, or the Community Services, could the Minister indicate if at

least, in terms of seeking funding from a department, has it been decided that Community Services is the department the agencies should be working with and not the Attorney-General's department?

Mrs. Oleson: It may, after we finish talking to them and negotiating with them, turn out that both departments may fund them. It has to be coordinated. Of course, before, when Community Services held the Corrections department as well, it was all working with the same department. But, no, we want to have a coordinated approach. No matter who funds them, we still need this information. We still need a statement from them and they still need the board of directors.

Ms. Gray: Certainly I do not have a problem with the notion that there needs to be accountability and a board of directors. My concern is that we hope that the department is being proactive in assisting the group such as this to actually actively look at how to establish and set up a board.

Just one further question on this particular centre, is the Attorney-General's department also involved in negotiations with Community Services staff with this agency, or is Community Services taking the lead role at this moment?

Mrs. Oleson: The two departments are working together on it. There is input from the Attorney-General's department.

Ms. Gray: A question in relation to child welfare and children, immensely handicapped children. I understand that in southwestern Manitoba or the Brandon area that there was a move by ACL of Winnipeg and they had entered into some negotiations with Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba in regard to setting up a community residence for children under 18, for young children who have mental handicaps. I believe some of those children are in St. Amant. The Minister, is she aware of this project and does she have any update information as to the status of this community residence?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, there are discussions going on, so it is under consideration. It is in respect to three children from St. Amant.

Ms. Gray: Who would they make the decision as to whether this community residence would be a go? Whose budget would the dollars come out of?

Mrs. Oleson: Western Manitoba Child and Family Services.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us, has Child and Family Services requested those types of dollars? Is it in their specific budget for this year?

Mrs. Oleson: It is within the special rates budget of the agency and they would have to make the decision of whether or not they could fit it into their budget, but it is part of the ongoing work of the agency.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, has she had any communications from Child and Family Services of

Western Manitoba as to whether they are going to go ahead with this project this fiscal year?

Mrs. Oleson: They are still in discussion with ACL, so I have not had an indication for sure whether they are going to go ahead with it.

Ms. Gray: Is Children Special Services involved with these negotiations at all?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, they are.

* (1640)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik): Shall the line pass?

Ms. Gray: I may have some further questions on that under Children's Special Services.

Just going back again to the care centre. This audited statement, does the Minister know, has the care centre mentioned as to what the cost would be of getting an audited financial statement?

Mrs. Oleson: No, they have not indicated what the cost would be and have not communicated whether or not that would be a problem as I understand.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Just a follow-up question on both of those external agencies. Could the Minister indicate or give us an approximate time frame when she expects to make a decision with respect to funding for Project Opikihawin and the care centre for Native youth?

Mrs. Oleson: Project Opikihawin, probably a decision will be made fairly soon on that one. The care centre may take a little longer because of the information that we need and negotiations are still going on. So I really could not give the Member a definite time frame.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik): Shall the line pass?

We are now on line 4.(b)(4) External Agencies, \$25,368,100—pass.

We are now on line 4.(c)(1) Seven Oaks Youth Centre, Salaries. Shall the line pass?

Ms. Gray: I apologize if I am repetitive to the questions the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) asked the other day. Could the Minister indicate exactly how many spaces or beds are at the Seven Oaks Centre and what the occupancy rate is?

Mrs. Oleson: It is licensed for 50. The occupancy on Friday was 42.

Ms. Gray: There has been, over the last few years, concern expressed about overcrowding at the Seven Oaks Centre. Could the Minister indicate if that is still a perennial problem and, if so, what steps have been taken to rectify that?

Mrs. Oleson: We were attempting to downsize it to 32. It is licensed for 60—66, sorry—according to the

fire regulations. As I indicated presently, we are trying to downsize it and it should be at 32 within the next while.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister have information as to what is the average length of stay at the Seven Oaks Centre?

Mrs. Oleson: We could get that information for the Member.

I might remind the Member that we did go into a fairly lengthy discussion of this with the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock).

Ms. Gray: I thank the Minister. I did read the Hansard the other day so I was aware of the discussions.

The Minister has indicated that she will get us the information on the average length of stay. In regard to staff, who provide services at the Seven Oaks Centre, what is the professional background or what type of academic qualifications or training is required for the professional background or what type of academic qualifications or training is required for the professional staff who work there?

Mrs. Oleson: There is a range of experience, as I understand, of staff there. There are some who have Grade 12 and related experience, some are in the process of studying to receive upgrading in related field. So most have a fair amount of related experience. There is, as I indicated, a variety of experience amongst the staff at that centre.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, do we hire social workers at this centre who provide counselling for these youths? Do we hire psychologists who work with the youths?

Mrs. Oleson: We have people who are classed as juvenile counsellors. As I understand also, though, that the children that are there have caseworkers from the agencies. So they will have those people to counsel them as well.

Ms. Gray: With the recent need for education at, shall we say, small institutions in regard to health in general and, in particular, the need for education in the area of AIDS and other STD, could the Minister indicate if any of that teaching or any procedures have been put in place at the Seven Oaks Centre in regard to sexually transmitted disease or/and AIDS.

Mrs. Oleson: There is a nurse on staff and then there is a requirement to training of staff on those subjects and there is a manual procedure in place to answer those questions.

Ms. Gray: Who provides the training for the staff?

Mrs. Oleson: If it is medical, it is the nursing staff.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us how many nurses are in staff and are these nurses RNs or PNs or RPNs?

Mrs. Oleson: There is one nurse who is both an RN and an RPN, and then there is a sessional physician who visits five days a week.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us where in the system would the nursing staff receive their training or support in regard to these health issues?

Mrs. Oleson: From Manitoba Health.

Ms. Gray: Manitoba Health is a big department. Could she be more specific?

Mrs. Oleson: The medical officer for health for that area with that training.

Ms. Gray: The Minister is indicating that the medical officer for health in Winnipeg North region who would provide that training and would work closely with the Seven Oaks Centre?

Mrs. Oleson: There is a close association with a doctor in Corrections and also the health officer as I indicated from that region assists. Also Dr. Fast, as the Member knows, is the communicable diseases expert in the province, works with him as well.

* (1650)

Ms. Gray: Would it be the Department of Health, then, that would initiate the establishment of various procedures and policies in regard to STD and AIDS?

Mrs. Oleson: They might initiate it, but it also could be initiated at our request, at this department's request.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik): Shall the line pass? Pass.

4.(c)(2) Other Expenditures \$290,100—pass.

We now move on to line 4.(d)(1) Child Day Care: Salaries \$1,341,100.00. Shall the line pass? Does the Member wish to speak to it?

Ms. Gray: I am wondering if the Minister could begin by telling us, in regard to the new directions that her Government is taking in regard to child day care and in regard to the task force, some specific questions on the task force. Has the task force met yet and is there a time frame with which they have been asked to complete their work?

Mrs. Oleson: They have, I believe, met individually and my staff have certainly met with the chairperson. I am meeting with them tomorrow, and the time frame for the completion of their work is 100 days. Hopefully we can meet that.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): I note that staff years for administrative support have not increased from 19.26, and yet we see an approximately 30 percent increase in salaries for that portion of this line, from \$377,100 to \$511,600.00. It is difficult for me to comprehend that particular increase, given no increase

in staff years, and I would like it explained in full if possible.

Mrs. Oleson: This reflects a full year cost. This budget was prepared after the year end when we could get a better picture of what had actually been spent last year, and it also reflects full year costs, which sometimes cannot be done. It would not have been done in the last year's budget because some expenses would come on stream in the middle of the year. This represents full year costs.

Mr. Kozak: I note that that has not affected other portions of this line, managerial salaries, professional and technical salaries. Is that correct?

Mrs. Oleson: There were no increases in staff, so it would still reflect the full year. There were no increases in staff, so that last year's would probably reflect full year also.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has indicated that the task force will have 100 days approximately. Is that 100 days and 100 nights, or just 100 days? With the task force and what they have been asked to do, could the Minister explain what exactly the role of the advisory groups will be in relation to the task force?

Mrs. Oleson: Exactly that, to advise the task force. There is a parent advisory group, for instance, who will advise them from a parent's point of view on matters pertaining to child care. The other group involves the people who work in the field, who will also advise the task force on things related to their perspective of child care.

Ms. Gray: I am wondering if the Minister could elaborate for us the process that will be set up. Will these advisory groups be told to take a look at the terms of reference, as established for the task force and be asked to collect their own information and present briefs to the task force? Will the task force be directing the advisory groups to look at specific areas under study, or how will they be soliciting information from the advisory groups?

Mrs. Oleson: The advisory groups are tied to the task force. The task force will decide how they want to proceed. They could assign them some specific item to study. They could assign them some subject matter that has come, for instance, to the Minister. I have had some letters and some information given to me, and I will be passing it on to the task force. They may, in turn, assign it to the advisory group to study it and give them the feedback, but it will be the task force that will set up how they will operate.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister tell us, will it be part of the mandate of the task force to establish the specific role and function of the advisory groups? Who actually will be making that determination or has it already been made by the Minister's department or the Minister?

Mrs. Oleson: As I indicated, the task force will. The committee will outline the role of the advisory group.

As I indicated before, they may assign them subjects. They may give them a specific job to report on.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, to clarify then. The Minister, in giving some suggestion as to what the relationship was between advisory and task force, is she now saying then that it will be up to the task force, the group of seven to decide on the mandate or the functions and the relationship of the advisory groups to the task force, that it will be up to them and that information will be one of the first matters, I would assume, that the task force will deal with?

Mrs. Oleson: The advisory groups were put in place to assist the task force in its work and give them a wider perspective of the whole thing. We could not appoint a task force of that many people. It is hard to get every subject to cover the field with that many people. Actually on a task force, it is hard to cover every field of endeavour, so we appointed an advisory committee to assist the task force in their work and to advise them on specific subject matter or assist them in any way they could, to bring in an effective report on how day care is functioning in the Province of Manitoba at this time.

Ms. Gray: I am wondering if the Minister could answer my question which was is it up to the task force to establish the specific scope and purpose of the advisory boards or has that already been determined and is in writing somewhere?

Mrs. Oleson: It is mainly up to the task force to establish that.

Ms. Gray: Could we assume that will be one of the first jobs or responsibilities given to the task force when they meet is to develop the terms of reference and/or scope and purpose of the advisory groups, and then to establish some understanding of the process and how these advisory groups will relate to the main task force?

Mrs. Oleson: As I indicated before, I will be meeting with the task force tomorrow. But that will be one of the first tasks of the task force, would be to outline just how they would proceed and what role the advisory committee will have.

* (1700)

Ms. Gray: Will the advisory groups have participation and involvement in determining what their own scope and purpose will be on their own and in relation to the main task force?

Mrs. Oleson: The terms of reference are set out, but how they will do it will be determined by the task force committee.

Ms. Gray: These advisory groups that have been established, could the Minister indicate to us—let us say not wanting to perceive problems, but should a direction be sought by the task force which, let us say, one of the advisory groups does not agree with or they

have concerns about, what type of process or appeal mechanism would the advisory groups have in relation to the main task force?

Mrs. Oleson: There is always the possibility that if they do not agree with the direction, they could produce a minority report or go to the Minister with their specific subject that they may differ on, if they could not come to an agreement with the task force committee.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Praznik): The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Hour. This committee now rises.

SUPPLY—AGRICULTURE

The Acting Chairman, Mr. Helmut Pankratz: This section of the Committee of Supply has been considering the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture.

We are on item 3 on page 12, the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation. Mr. Minister, are you ready for questions?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Acting Chairman, a couple of questions that were asked the last day I just got the answer for. There was a question on the number of guaranteed operating loans that were declined last year. We had said about 450 approved; there were seven loans that were declined—seven applications declined out of the 450.

The other question had to do with the MACC clients that are before the Federal Debt Review Board or the Manitoba Mediation Board. The total number of MACC clients who have applied to the Federal Debt Review Board is 275; total MACC clients who have applied to the Manitoba Mediation Board, 81. Of that 81, 26 have applied also to the Federal Debt Review Board.

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): I was just looking over my notes. I had to leave the building for a minute.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I do not believe that there is very much more in the MACC area in terms of interest rates. I would like to, in terms of their portfolio, ask the Minister whether in his recent meetings with his federal and provincial counterparts, whether the question of interest rates and rising interest rates has been one under discussion, and whether there has been any move made interprovincially to basically attempt to deal with the question of farmers who are in financial difficulty on a global basis, rather than as we are continuing to do, limp through the financial crisis that in MACC's case is 200-and-some that are before the Mediation Board now. I am sure hundreds of others that are probably not far behind, whether there has been any follow-up to the suggestion made by the Premier of Saskatchewan last spring about bringing in all the lenders and sitting down to see whether there is a way of dealing with this financial problem in a more rational and humane way?

Mr. Findlay: I would have to assume that the Member is thinking of special interest rates for farmers or

something in that context or a special treatment for farmers in delaying debt, maybe, through this period of time.

I would have to say basically the answer is nothing has materialized at this time in terms of programs or policies that anybody in any jurisdiction is going to follow. There has been lots of talk about the impact of the present drought on financial affairs of producers that were in a tight circumstance prior to this drought because of previous events of high interest rates and low commodity prices, but at this point in time, no, there has been no special meeting on that, although there is one coming up in Vancouver in November, an ag lenders credit conference, to which our chairman here is going.

No, there have been lots of ideas tossed around in discussion, but there is nothing that has come forward in the way of a formal proposal to give special consideration to producers during this period of time, other than the mediation process which has the opportunity to negotiate some degree of set aside or write down or special circumstance for the producer who is in that position at that time.

Mr. Uruski: Can the Minister indicate the regional breakdown of the farmers who are in financial difficulty in terms of MACC's account, whether that breakdown of difficulties has shifted at all from previously, especially in terms of the drought, or whether it is as has been generally the case in previous years, it is pretty well spread throughout the province, but whether there has been any change in that pattern?

Mr. Findlay: No, as mentioned last time, MACC accounts are not due and payable till November 1, so we really will not know the impact of '87, but with the information that is available to date it would still indicate that the greatest problem area is still in the southwest part of the province. Given that they had a major part of the drought down there, we would not expect them to be much improved this year.

Mr. Uruski: Is the corporation doing any advance work in terms of the farmers in the southwestern area, or are there initial contacts being made, or what is the follow-up in those cases, or is there any at the present time, in terms of those who they perceive will be—who have been in difficulty in the past generally and knowing the crop conditions in the region, what procedures is the corporation using at the present time?

* (1620)

Mr. Findlay: The corporation has met with field staff and reviewed the problem accounts that they have to date, and really are not in the position to identify new problem accounts, as I said earlier, until at least a month or two down the road to see if they fall into arrears. But there has been field staff discussion on the ongoing problem accounts that the corporation has had for at least a year or more.

Mr. Uruski: Does the Minister or the corporation have any projections given the present circumstances as to

either the number or global amount of money that may be, in fact, for loans that may be in arrears, say, six months from now, when they come due? Are the provisions that they have made, and the estimate that they have made in the Estimates, will these be adequate or do they foresee any further moves that may have to be taken in this area?

Mr. Findlay: No, the corporation believes that the allowance that they put in for doubtful accounts of approximately \$5 million related to the drought is to the best of their ability to guesstimate at this time and be reasonably accurate. They do not know of any reason to say at this point that it is not sufficient.

Mr. Uruski: The Minister did earlier provide us, and I did not have my notes in terms of the special farm assistance of \$3.5 million, how many are actually on the program now? How many are receiving and have received financial assistance as a result of the counselling? Will farmers who are in fact involved through the federal mediation board, would they be eligible for assistance even if they are not MACC clients?

Mr. Findlay: As I mentioned the other day, so far MACC has a fade-out assistance to 25 clients totalling \$250,000.00. That has been processed by them but they do not know how many other clients are in the process of being recommended by the Mediation Board and we will find that out when the Mediation Board is here.

The method of utilizing that assistance is not restricted to MACC clients. It is any client who comes before the Manitoba Mediation Board that falls into the guidelines that are set up with regard to recommending that they be considered for some degree of financial assistance under the five-year program that we mentioned the last day. So you do not have to be an MACC client to qualify. All you have to do is go before the Manitoba Mediation Board and meet the criteria and the guidelines laid down by them.

Mr. Uruski: I know there was a significant amount of debate on this question in turnover. Who makes the final approval on the payment of the actual funds, who actually approves the payment? Is it the Mediation Board or is it MACC? Because I know that there was a lot of debate on this very question, so I am wondering whether that question has been resolved.

Mr. Findlay: The Mediation Board makes a decision through a resolution, then it comes to MACC who signs the voucher for the payment of funds. So the real answer to your question is the Mediation Board makes a decision through a resolution that a certain individual receive a certain degree of financial assistance.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Pankratz): The Minister of Finance.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Acting Chairman, thank you very much for recognizing me. I feel compelled to respond to some charges that were levelled at the Government, potentially the ministry

of Finance, with respect to some of the accounting that has gone before us, focused of course mainly within the area of the Department of Agriculture.

I am not at all amused by the fact that the former Minister, at one time of Agriculture, chose to make this such an issue only because I directed him to that comment within the Budget Address that indicated how it was that we would be comparing year over year. I agree with him and I agree with the Liberal Finance critic that consistency in comparison is a desired goal and objective as between series of financial statistics.

But, Mr. Acting Chairman, I will say this for the record that myself, as the Minister of Finance, made the decision to compare forecasted Budget '88-89 figures with preliminary actuals for '87-88, and I would do it again under the set of circumstances we found ourselves. This is an open Government; this provides the latest information that is available. Indeed, if we find ourselves in a position where we are developing a Budget again part way into the year, and if we have before us numbers that can be disclosed to the public of Manitoba, which in effect are preliminary actuals for the year previous, we will present them. We will respond to any criticism that may come.

The Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski) likes to paint the scenario that we were able to, because of that comparison, show that increases in expenditures within the Department of Agriculture were greater than otherwise might be the case. There is an offset to that, Mr. Acting Chairman. I can list other departments of Government where exactly the opposite were the case. The Department of Community Services which had a final expenditure figure far beyond that budgeted in 1987-88 and came in with an actual that surpassed by far the Budget forecasted for 1987-88. That became the base for comparison. This works both ways and I just find it incredible that the Member for the Interlake (Mr. Uruski) would see fit to try and make a political point on this. We did not. We did it purely. If we had followed the old budgetary system, in my view we could have shown agriculture spending even up greater than it was. We chose not to do that.

* (1630)

I do not know specifically then what it is that the Member brings into question. He brings into question the new approach, the one that is based on openness, the one that is based on the latest, presenting to the people of Manitoba the latest numbers that are available. I make no apology for doing so. If he is saying that we had a political agenda, that we are trying to build up the agricultural numbers, nothing is further from the truth because, myself, I could have written in a 57 percent or 58 percent increase. I choose not to in the Budget. I said 50 percent, because again that reflected more accurately than numbers as between years. I take it, in a sense, as a personal attack from the Member for the Interlake (Mr. Uruski) and I felt it was important that I put these comments on the record.

Mr. Uruski: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am very pleased that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) now has admitted that he knowingly made the kind of

comparison that he did. In fact he has now admitted that they did have, and he denies it in terms of the Budget, because what difference in terms of the presentation of the Budget, whether it is 50 percent or 58 percent. The whole notion of saying that your expenditures have increased by 50 percent is really what you want to get across. If you had in fact left the print over print and made the actual comparison and put in the numbers that even your colleague, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) said and admitted in this House that he did not like that comparison, that he had nothing to do with it, that had you made the comparison of what is the allowance for doubtful accounts and added another \$8 million into the left side of the column, you would have been not at a 50 percent increase over actual expended over print, but you would have had an increase in terms of expenditures in the 20 percent to 30 percent range.

Mr. Acting Chairman, that was the political agenda that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) here—because his colleague had to 'fess up because he could not explain the numbers, because it was a new way of setting down the allowances and change. If the change was okay on the new year to make a fair comparison, it would have been just as well to be put in on the left-hand side of the column. This Minister of Finance went even further. He did not even make the comparison of print over print. He said, let us make sure that farmers know that we have increased the budget because it is a political agenda. There is no doubt about it, he is a politician. To have an increase in expenditures during a severe drought year of the magnitude of say 25 percent is not such a great increase. But if you can put on the record that somehow this year during a severe crisis we have increased agricultural spending by 50 percent, then you have something to crow about. So let the Minister of Finance (Manness), because his colleague admitted the other day that that comparison was unfair and not right—it is untrue, the comparison in terms of making an accurate comparison of what expenditures were there.

I am pleased that the Minister of Finance came here today and is touchy on this very issue because he knows darn well that if it was his accounting firms, those that he has hired to do the assessments of Government accounting, took his analysis and his comparisons which he stated flatly in the budget, a 50-percent increase, they would criticize him immensely. They would say this is not accurate accounting. This is what you call cooking the books. This is truly comparing apples and oranges. That is what this Minister of Finance did. At least the Minister of Agriculture had the integrity to come in the House and say we had nothing to do with this. This was done by Finance. So my charge the other day sticks, and I am sure the Minister of Finance now realizes it sticks, because that 50 percent figure is a hoax. It is not true. It is not factual. Even giving the actual expended overprint, if you do not spend that money, it will not be true. The fact of the matter is, when you make those kinds of comparisons, they are not true because they are not reflective of good accounting practices. You would accuse anyone of cooking the books.

So the Minister of Finance knows that in fact the figure is far less in actual fact than is the case that he

stated in his budget. He knows that. Now he is trying to wiggle his way out of it.

Mr. Manness: We are on item 3. Mr. Acting Chairman, let me say in respect to item 3 and with respect to the way MACC figures reflected in the budget, what can be more honest and more open knowingly when the Government before you spent \$70 million within an area to indicate to the public of Manitoba that you have intentions to spend \$115 million, intentions at that time, and I dare say at this point, most likely very close to that figure? What could be further or closer to the truth? Well, further away from myth, closer to the truth than to say you are increasing the expenditure by 50 percent? I do not care what calculator you have.

Another reason for the accounting policy was that whereas the former Government would take this year's loss experiences and reflect it in the next year's budget, this Government in a move in openness said no, we are going to do it a different way. When we anticipate the losses in any entity of Government, we are going to budget for it this year. We are not going to pass it on to the next year. We are going to reflect it this year. That was done. That is sound open accounting policy. I will lay it before any accountant within the Province of Manitoba or in Canada. It is the way Government should reflect their business. If one of the entities under them, MACC in this case, see whether there is going to be a loss in this year, reflect it in the budget this year, not in the next year as was becoming the policy of the former administration. So, if the Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski) asks, that most certainly is true. The MACC numbers that were in the defeated Budget were to reflect the losses from the year before.

Mr. Uruski: No, I have Mr. Kostyra's Budget right before me—11.6 million.

* (1640)

Mr. Manness: That is right, Mr. Acting Chairman. We reflect it and we are bringing forward the losses within the year. That was a difficult thing. We know. We challenged MACC at the last moment to tell us what they thought their losses were going to be in this fiscal year. That was a difficult task—go forward a year to do that and we reflected it, because that is the open and honest way to reflect numbers. It is not creative accounting. It is not cooking the books. It is the way things should be done. Indeed, if we had not done it in Education and followed the former Government's approach, we could have shown a 4.5 percent, 5 percent increase in Education. We chose not to. We showed a 3.3 because we were going to be consistent.

What the Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski) is trying to say is that we gave the highest priority to Agriculture in his view, in the political charge of trying to convince people we were doing something we were not. - (Interjection)- He says "damn right" from his seat, and that is not true, Mr. Acting Chairman. I just want to say that for the record. All we have done is try to reflect to the people of Manitoba the state of finances as they exist as of August 8, nothing more, and nothing less.

Mr. Uruski: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), and I hope that he will listen, his own colleague already

in this House has contradicted what he is saying. He brought in a document which he gave us. The Minister of Finance just a few minutes ago said that had the previous administration accounted in the way that we have accounted, there would have been a lot more openness. In the defeated Budget, that was the Minister of Finance under Eugene Kostyra, for this fiscal year, showed an amount of \$11.6 million which is the same as the comparable figure of what is in this Budget. So those numbers are in this Budget and they were in the previous Budget in terms of MACC Estimates.

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) brought in a document indicating the Department of Finance has adopted the recommendations of consultants which was to provide the provincial records for MACC's allowance for Doubtful Accounts.- (Interjection)- That was not done by your Government, it was done by our Government. The fact of the matter is, and I will show him that in fact the increase in agriculture is not 50 percent, it is more like 20 percent. I will show him how. If one made a comparison of the actual printed Estimates, which were \$86 million and included the \$8 million which is short on the left-hand column for that same doubtful account, one would show a difference, a basically \$20-million-dollar difference between print over print. Twenty million dollars, from \$94 to \$114, is a 21 percent increase, not a 50 percent increase.

Let the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) not say there is no political agenda because in actual fact there is no more money going to farmers. The fact of the matter is it is an accounting provision and the Minister of Finance on behalf of this Government does have a political agenda because there is not one penny more going to Manitoba farmers. It is all a bookkeeping account in terms of the actual expenditures and the Minister of Finance is the only one that can say look, we are really not giving farmers a heck of a lot more.

Mr. Findlay: I think the Member for Interlake is losing sight of the fact of what is happening in this Budget when he says farmers are not getting one penny more. We just passed line 12 the other day which is \$18.3 million of additional money to the farmers of Manitoba. I think he has to take the credit for the fact that in the past two budgets, \$6.5 million were allocated Special Farm Assistance and only some \$14,000 out of \$13 million was paid out. He has got to take the blame for that in terms of not getting the money out into the farm community.

Last year the education tax of Special School Assistance Tax Rebate Program was for \$12 million. We talked about that back and forth and back and forth because he put in guidelines that we told him would not allow the whole \$12 million to be paid out. Sure enough, only \$9 million were paid out. There is another \$3 million that did not go into the farm community for reasons that he knows about. We debated them for a long time. For him to stand up and say not one extra penny has gone to the farm community. I challenge him in those three areas—\$18.3 million in the drought assistance. There will be at least \$3.5 million paid out this year in the Special Farm Assistance, and the whole \$12 million, very, very close of the whole \$12 million will be paid out in the education

tax program. So those are some major improvements of getting money into the farm community, major improvements.

Mr. Uruski: When the Minister tries to work his way around the difficulty that his colleague has gotten him into, the fact of the matter is and the Special Farm Assistance Program, he has indicated to us that the guidelines remain the same. There is no change in the guidelines. The fact of the matter is he is now saying yes, the program took longer to get off the ground and it is now working. If he wants to take credit for that it is his. I will be very pleased to give him that credit. The fact of the matter is the guidelines are there and the program is working.

The Farm School Taxes Assistance Program, we will have a lot to say on that issue when that matter comes up on that question. I will be raising those points there. The fact of the matter is there is no 50 percent increase in agricultural spending in this province. That is what irks the Tories. When you look at the numbers, the best that you can put on the budget is between 20 and 25 percent. But if you account the way the Conservative Government accounts, you can now make out of 20 percent, 21 percent, you can make it 50 percent. That is the point I want to leave with my colleague because that is the actual fact of the matter, and the Minister knows it. The political agenda, whether it was in the Minister's comments, whether it was 50 percent or 58 percent, does not wash. The fact of the matter is they wanted to make that point very clear to farmers. I believe that they have succeeded. I want to say that I think that farmers believe that it was 50 percent. The only problem is they will have a hard time finding it and that is where the proof of the pudding will be, is in the eating. There will not be a 50 percent increase for farmers, in effect, to eat.

Mr. Acting Chairman (Mr. Pankratz): Is it the will then to pass No. 3?

Resolution No. 9: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not to exceed \$21,885,200 for Agriculture for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989.

4. Agricultural Development and Marketing Division,
4.(a) Administration: Salaries.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Before we get into this particular item, I would ask the Minister if he would check Schedule 5 on page 12 of the Supplementary Estimates. From my calculation, there is a mistake in the total staff years. If you look on page 13, the total comes to 708.35. You see the figure I am getting at there? On total, for Department of Agriculture for year ending March 31, 1989, the total staff years 708.35.

If my calculations are correct, there has been a mistake somewhere here because the total under Agricultural Development and Marketing, which is identified as 210.2, totals up to 209.24, and just below it the Farm and Rural Development total staff years, which is identified as 268.21, my calculation is that it is 266.77, so you end up with a total number of staff years of 705.95 as opposed to 708.35. I am just

wondering, what is the actual correct staff years. Is it 708 or is it 705? There is also the chance that my mathematics is off here.

Mr. Findlay: We will just take that as notice and do some checking on the arithmetic to see where the mistakes might be.

There are a few minutes here. I would not mind just making some opening comments on this section before we get into any questions on item 4., Agricultural Development and Marketing Division. We have with us Assistant Deputy Minister, Tom Pringle, for today, and we will have additional staff here Thursday. Yes, Tom has been around a long time. How long, Tom?

The Agricultural Development and Marketing Division, a major program development and support division of the department, is responsive to the needs of farmers and rural people. Over the past seven years the combined effect of drought, high interest rates and production costs, together with decreasing commodity prices, have had a devastating impact on the financial stability of farmers.

Presently, 80 percent to 85 percent of a farmer's gross income is required to pay for operating and depreciation charges. Farmers are less able to carry debt, are vulnerable to unexpected situations such as drought, flooding and adverse events in the international marketplace.

The division has developed programs designed to complement the Farm and Rural Development Division by providing provincial planning and coordination of resources and service activities which are available at the farm and community level. Program activities include support and communication of agricultural research, industry liaison, development of education resource material and productivity support services to the family in farm business.

These divisional program activities are administered and carried out through the Animal Industry Branch, the Veterinary Services Branch, Technical Services and Training Branch, Soils and Crops Branch, and the Marketing Branch. The Department has recently developed specific strategies to more adequately target farmers and farm families in technical and financial management assistance. These strategies are human and resource management which includes farm management, home economists and 4-H, beef, swine, crops, forage, soil conservation and water management.

The division acts on behalf of the Department in the promotion and coordination of many export sales of Manitoba products. For example, in 1987-88 the Marketing Branch assisted Manitoba hog producers to export \$385,000 worth of purebred breeding stock. Advice and assistance was provided to beef breed association members in selling \$250,000 worth of bulls and heifers to Mexico and Denmark. Local agri businesses were assisted in selling \$250,000 worth of animal feed in the United States. Japan purchased \$1.3 million worth of pork in 1987-88, much of which was new business.

* (1650)

The Marketing Branch has coordinated a number of incoming and outgoing trade missions. These include Japan, Hong Kong, China and Mexico, particularly Japan. These trade missions are extremely important to the long-term market development of Manitoba products. During the mission to Japan, Hong Kong and China on October 13 and November 2 by the two Ministers before me in this Department, certainly did quite a bit to promote the purchase by Japan of some \$750,000 worth of pork, \$190,000 worth of turkey, \$20,000 worth of Chinese sausage, \$63,000 worth of beef, and \$25,000 worth of honey.

Farm employment standards are becoming increasingly important to farmers, particularly in labour relations and knowing how The Workers Compensation Act applies to them. Technical Services Branch has prepared and distributed brochures and guidelines for farm employment standards. The department recognizes the importance of incorporating the farm, the family and family goals in business of farming. Again, I stress that the Agricultural Production and Marketing Division has many diverse activities which are being directed to supporting the farm financial and family well-being.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I appreciate the Minister's comments on this. One issue though that is prevalent right through the Estimates and that is in many cases the salary component has gone up, which is understandable in terms of the Government agreement and so on. I do not argue with that but in many cases the other expenditures have remained virtually static. My concern is I do not think that can go on forever where the salary component becomes a bigger percentage of the overall budget.

Looking at the administration here, it was \$7,900 out of a \$92,000 budget. Now it is still \$7,900 out of essentially a \$100,000 budget. If this goes on for a few more years, you end up with the situation where the percentage that is available for other operating becomes less and less. Surely there has to be a time when the admission is made that by doing that, the ability of the personnel to carry forward the policy must suffer because all of these items, transportation, communication, etc., have a built-in inflation factor. Would the Minister not agree that eventually there will be a necessity of at least bringing these up on the basis of the inflation on an annual basis? If it is not done fairly soon, you will run into a situation that you have to try and reflect what has happened over a longer period of years, which makes it even more difficult.

Mr. Findlay: Certainly what the Member addresses or points out is undoubtedly going to occur somewhere in the future in that you will expect or want to see an increase in that figure.

In terms of the salary side, where there is not much we can do to control expenditures there, that is done by agreement, MGEA, and those are costs that we would just have to pay. In terms of the transportation, communication and supplies, we have some ability to control that. It is our information, to this point, that control on those spending categories does not interfere negatively in terms of the ability of staff, in this particular

case, the Assistant Deputy Minister, to perform his duties. Naturally, there are some costs, and transportation is a bit more here and there, communication charges are a bit more here and there, so it means that we have to curtail some of the activities but it has not negatively impacted on his ability to do his job, nor is that a problem in any other area that we, as administration, are aware of that it has curtailed the ability of staff to perform their duties.

Mr. Laurie Evans: I would just like to pursue that a little further even though it is moving out of that specific area; that is, when you start to look at the regions, every region has exactly the same figure this year as it had for last year in terms of operating. I would think that under those circumstances it would be far more critical than it is at the administration level within the agricultural development and marketing that we are looking at. So it is a philosophical sort of thing and we can get into that a little further when we are talking about those, but I thought it was a little bit unusual to look at the individual regions—the central, the eastern, and all the rest of them—and although the intermediate figures have varied a little bit, the sum is the same every time for total Other Expenditures. I could only infer from that there must have been some direction given that the Other Expenditures for the regions was not to change at all from year over year and that the minor modifications are within the same total.

Mr. Findlay: No question that the job of administering Government has got to have some degree of toe-the-line responsibility to do the most you can at the least possible cost. Unless there is a real identified need in a particular category, there is no reason to just automatically increase it.

The general direction was out there to hold the line and prioritize within the category—if you are looking on page 38, \$7,900—prioritize your expenditures under the four categories, totalling \$7,900.00. That was done and it has been done in other areas. As I said earlier, there is no indication that is negatively impacting on the ability of staff to do their job. If a particular department or division or region comes forward and says a particular area, we just have to have more; that will be addressed at that time but those requests have not come forward.

* (1700)

Mr. Laurie Evans: We are getting close to the time limit here, so I will just pursue this a little bit further with the Minister, if he will, and that is to look at pages of the Supplementary Estimates.

Admittedly we are jumping ahead, but I think it is on the same issue, those are pages 56, 57, 58 and 59, which relate to the Southwest Region, the Central, Eastern and Interlake Region. On page 56, where we look at Other Expenditures, what I was getting at, and I think the Minister identified it, is Total Other Expenditures in the Southwest Region is \$332,500 last year and the same this year. Any changing has just been within the categories within that. Likewise with the Central Region, the Eastern Region and the Interlake Region, the total amount in each case is identical. There

has been some minor shuffling around of the items within. Maybe I am just cynical but it does not lead me to be very—it lacks credibility in a sense that you would end up with exactly the same total right down to the last dollar and there is minor shuffling within. I guess I would have been less suspicious if there had been no changes within the intermediate categories there.

Mr. Findlay: The changes that the Member notes in terms of whatever particular page he is looking on, under Other Expenditures, under whatever categories are there, four or five categories, strictly reflects the prioritization that staff have put on, and where they want to spend the particular money that is there as a cap. The Other Expenditures has been capped at that level and they chose to do some adjustments because they see a higher priority. Particularly, you have page 56, you see a higher priority in '89 under Supplies & Services as opposed to Communication, which is down a couple of thousand.

It is their prioritization within the cap that is being reflected here. It demonstrates maybe a little sharper pencil in where the actual expenditures are projected in the total category of Other Expenditures for this fiscal year. There will be prioritization again for the coming fiscal year, as changing needs and direction that staff see.

Mr. Laurie Evans: I appreciate what the Minister is saying, Mr. Acting Chairperson, but what concerns me is that in all cases the capital expenditure for this year has been reduced in order to maintain the cap. Therefore, obviously the infrastructure is either going to deteriorate or there is not going to be an opportunity to maintain the so-called state of the art, if the capital expenditure is the one that is suffering in order to maintain the cap on each of those. If you will check, you will see that the capital has dropped in all cases.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Pankratz): The hour being five o'clock, it is time for Private Members' Hour. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Helmut Pankratz (Acting Chairman of the Committee of Supply): The Committee of Supply has considered certain resolutions, directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS PUBLIC BILLS BILL NO. 2—THE BUSINESS NAMES REGISTRATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill

No. 2, The Business Names Registration Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'enregistrement des noms commerciaux, standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). (Stand)

BILL NO. 3—THE CORPORATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 3, The Corporations Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les corporations, standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). (Stand)

Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson): I would like to say a few words about this Bill No. 3.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Would it be agreeable, therefore, to leave it standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae)? (Agreed)

Mr. Patterson: As I said, I would like to address Bill No. 3 for a few minutes. First of all, I might go back to Bill No. 2 because Bills 2 and 3 are really more or less of a piece or directed at the same perceived problem or alleged problem, that of the Brick's Fine Furniture and The Brick Warehouse.

If I may reiterate or repeat some of my comments that I made on Bill No. 2, I frankly wonder just how much of a problem there is. I should point out again that Brick's Fine Furniture is in the fine furniture business. As such, I would suggest that Mr. Brick is in competition with other fine furniture merchants in the city such as Wilson's Furniture, Steek's Furniture, Eaton's and The Bay's furniture departments and so on. The Brick Warehouse or "The Brick" as its federal trade name states is in the—I do not know their merchandise exactly, I have not seen it but it is in a lower line of goods than what we normally think of as being fine furniture. It is a mass merchandiser of more or less standard goods.

How this could really cut into the Brick's Fine Furniture business is a mystery to me. I would like to ask the question: has Brick's Fine Furniture—has its sales decreased in the past year over whatever period that the Brick Warehouse has been in Winnipeg? Secondly, even if, let us say, Brick's Fine Furniture sales have decreased, is it due to the alleged competition from the Brick Warehouse or is it a general decrease in fine furniture generally in this particular market? Have the other similar competitors also had sales decreases?

So I fail to see just what the real problem is with Brick's Fine Furniture. Again as I mentioned in addressing Bill 2, if Mr. Brick had been in the car business and had Brick's Cadillac or Lincoln or Mercedes dealership, he could scarcely say that his business is being cut into if another Mr. Brick had set up, say, a Volkswagon or a Chevy or a Lada dealership. Maybe the same name, but two different market niches that these similarly named car dealerships would be

located in. Having said that, the intent of these two Bills, and I will speak here specifically now on Bill No. 3 ostensibly to help Brick's Fine Furniture or other similar cases that might arise in the future. You might well ask the question: is this proposed help really needed? Businesses in the retail trade such as furniture, other types of commodities, are in a competitive market. When entrepreneurs go into a business they go into it with the expectation of taking a risk, of making a profit, but they do this also at the risk of having losses from time to time, or maybe continually and going out of business.

* (1710)

This is merely a fact of what I would call our not a completely free enterprise society but a mixed enterprise society where we have a definite need and room for the state in certain areas, such as, for example, utilities that you might say are best provided by a Crown corporation or by the state. In these other areas which provide differing products and services in a competitive market, businesses rise and fall. That is a mere fact of life.

I fail to see where we need to, so to speak, use a sledgehammer to crack a nut and be continually passing legislation or mending legislation to take care of every little glitch or ill that might arise in a competitive free market. At any rate, the intent of this is to alleviate an alleged problem. Frankly, this particular Bill is not needed for this particular type of protection because the protection is already provided.

To take the first part of the Bill, Section 191 is amended by adding a subsection 191, 1.1, to define the carrying on of a business and undertaking under a name includes advertising, otherwise promoting the business or undertaking under the name.

Mr. Speaker, this is already covered in the Act under Section 187, subsection 2.(c) which states, "Its name or any other name under which it carries on business together with an address for the body corporate in Manitoba is included in any advertisement advertising the business or any product of the body corporate." So advertising already is covered by the legislation and there really is no need to state it further in another particular section.

Similarly, the second amendment proposed to amend Section 244, that to strike out some words and substitute, cease and desist from carrying on the business or undertaking to which the offence relates.

Again, as with the first amendment to Section 191, this also is entirely redundant. Section 240 in the Act allows the court to grant a restraining order. Also, if I may quote, make any further order that it sees fit. How then, Mr. Speaker, when the legislation as it exists fully covers the type of problem that this Bill No. 3 purports to address. It is really hard to find any particular need or use for it. Really, it just does not add anything, and in fact we might criticize the Member or chastise him gently for what might be called some shoddy research. I am wondering if the objective of the Bill is to get headlines and attention rather than specifically to help Brick's Fine Furniture.

At any rate, Mr. Speaker, whatever the problem might be, it will be resolved by the courts, this whole matter of "The Brick" controversy, but personally I fail to see where any particular long-term harm or even short-term, it has not been shown yet that Brick's Fine Furniture has been directly hurt by the Brick Warehouse or the trade name "The Brick," and the courts will make the decision on the use of these various names. I think we can say that this Bill is really not necessary; any protection that is needed is already there. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: By leave, Bill No. 3 will stand in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

BILL NO. 16—THE REAL PROPERTY AMENDMENT ACT;

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 16, The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik). (Stand)

BILL NO. 13—THE MANITOBA HYDRO AMENDMENT ACT;

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), Bill No. 13, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Hydro-Manitoba, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), the Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I have already spoken to this Bill. However, I am becoming concerned that the Members on the Government side in particular have not been forthcoming with their views on the need for this amendment. In light of the pronouncements by the Chief Executive Officer and President of Manitoba Hydro this morning in committee with respect to the impact of free trade on Manitoba Hydro, I would expect some level of support from Members opposite on this particular Bill.

Mr. Speaker: I was wondering if the Honourable Member was closing debate. It will stand in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

BILL NO. 20—THE WATER RIGHTS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), Bill No. 20, The Water Rights Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les droits d'utilisation de l'eau, standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). (Stand)

**BILL NO. 22—THE LIQUOR
CONTROL AMENDMENT ACT**

* (1720)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), Bill No. 22, the Liquor Control Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réglementation des alcools, standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), the Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Mr. Speaker, I would be quite prepared to have it stand in the name of the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), but I would like to make a few comments on it.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreeable? (Agreed) It will stand and continue to stand in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

Mr. Laurie Evans: On the surface, this looks like a very minor Bill and of course the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), when he introduced the Bill, admitted that it was a Bill that was not going to solve all of our problems as far as the crime situation in the province is concerned. But we do have somewhat of an anomaly in that people in this province are permitted to carry knives. Apparently there is no restriction on the ability for an individual to carry these knives, as long as they are in view, into the premises, drinking premises.

It would seem quite obvious to me that when you are carrying a knife, you must have some purpose in mind, whether it is a hunting knife that you use when you are hunting or whether it is a knife that you just use when you are whittling, to sit down and shave a few strokes off of a stick or something, but I think to have the opportunity to carry these knives into drinking premises is obviously asking for trouble. Now, I do have some philosophical problems with a Bill of this nature, Mr. Speaker, and it is not the pros and cons of carrying knives. It is the fact of just how far does one go in restricting what you might call personal liberties. While I certainly do not like the aspect of legislating what people can or cannot do, I think there is also the element of responsibility that has to be brought into play here.

So I have absolutely no difficulty in supporting this motion, but I have some concerns, and I would hope that we could hear from the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) in due course on this one as to whether or not there is a genuine feeling that this type of legislation will in fact do very much good. Because I guess my view would be that if a person is carrying a knife, I would prefer to see it out in the open. I am sure that there are probably far more knives carried into drinking premises that are not out where you can see them than there are those that are in view.

I think what we are looking at is the necessity of having changes in the Criminal Code, which would be more effective than bringing in legislation which we have the authority to do here in Manitoba. But lacking the legislation that is necessary to change the Criminal

Code, I see no choice but to support this type of legislation provided, of course, that there is some indication that those who are in authority and are responsible for the maintenance of law and order are prepared to indicate that they do feel that this has some advantage.

I would think that advantage would be negligible, but if the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) and the police forces who apparently, according to the comments from the Mover of the motion, are satisfied that it has some merit, then I suppose, bluntly, it can do no harm. Therefore, we might as well go ahead with it, admitting as well though that it is in my view a very minor piece of legislation and one that certainly does not deserve extensive debate in the House.

I think it is something that should move forward very rapidly and I would be quite happy to see it move on to committee without further delay, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: By agreement, Bill No. 22 will stand in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I would like to speak on this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

Mr. Maloway: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to rise to support this Bill and would also encourage speedy passage. I do not know that I can be as brief as the previous Member though, because I think there are some aspects of the Bill that have to be dealt with.

The previous Member spoke about personal liberties and I certainly did want to deal with that as well. This particular Bill amends The Liquor Control Act to prohibit the carrying of knives in liquor establishments in this province. We do admit that this problem could be solved through a federal criminal code change. So far no resolution in that arena has been possible and so we are faced with dealing with this particular problem of trying to solve it partially through the provincial Legislature. This was something that the previous Government had been planning to deal with in the previous Session.

I believe that when you bring knives, when you bring guns, when you bring these objects into an atmosphere where there are drugs, where there is liquor, then you are contributing to a mix that should be discouraged. If you have two people who are involved in a bar and they are involved in a fight, if it is just a matter of using their fists then perhaps all you will have is a few black eyes. But when you start introducing things like knives, things like guns into this mix, then the fights can easily escalate into the point where somebody gets seriously hurt or in fact someone gets killed. We hear of examples of this almost every day. In Winnipeg we all know the murder rate in this city is among the highest, if not the highest, year over year in the entire country.

So the fact that we cannot get action from the federal Government—and that would be a preferable route of course and we admit that—leads us to believe that we

can partially try to solve the problem here in the Manitoba Legislature by passing this amendment to The Liquor Control Act.

I have always been concerned about breeding and promoting a society of "Rambos." I think that you can develop a climate of fear and a psychology of terror if you allow people to carry guns at will, if you allow people to carry knives at will and we do not have to look far. There are many countries in the world—in fact I just came from one a couple of days ago where it is common practice to see military machinery driving around in the streets. After 15 years in Chile, the people are used to seeing that and it does not phase them when they walk down the streets and they see an armoured personnel carrier, that is just part of the every day scenery. Canadians, other Members in this House would be appalled if we were to walk down Broadway and see troop carriers because we are not used to that. I do not believe that we want to bring up our children in a society where people are used to seeing this kind of an environment. The more movement we make to getting rid of arms, getting rid of any show of military strength or police strength, the better it will be for society as a whole. When you escalate the psychology of fear, you have people buying guns to protect themselves against who?—someone else with guns. So I am not in favour of this philosophy.

* (1730)

The Member from the Liberal Party spoke, while he was supporting the Bill, just mentioned in passing that he was concerned about the personal liberties question. I do not share his view in this particular question because I do not know that it is a personal liberty to be able to carry a hunting knife into the Westminster Hotel, for example. I do not know that I would view that as something that I would fight for as a right. Because where do you stop? Maybe I should be able to carry a gun in there. Maybe I should have a machine gun. Maybe I should be able to drive in an armoured personnel carrier. I mean at what point, and it is a matter of degree here. I think we should try to roll this psychology back as far as possible. This amendment to restrict the availability of knives and restrict the people from having knives in bars I think takes another step towards that downgrading of that "Rambo" ideology.

Mr. Speaker, I was a liquor inspector a number of years ago, back in 1976, probably the best job I ever had. I wonder sometimes why I left it. As liquor inspectors, we had to travel together in three's at night. We went out into bars. We could never wear ties, so we were never the best dressed people on the strip, by any means. There was always a concern that if we went into a bar and we ran into someone who became violent that we could be strangled by our ties. Believe me, that was a concern of ours. We were also concerned whenever we saw people with knives. There were people, bike gangs and so on that we had run into occasionally in the bars. They would have knives and so on. I do not know of any liquor inspectors including myself whoever attempted to discuss anything with anyone in the bar who had knives. So I think that the Liquor Commission would be very supportive of this.

I would think that the liquor inspectors would be very, very supportive and very thankful if you would pass this legislation. I am sure it would make their life a little bit easier.

My Leader, when he introduced the amendment, suggested that this in fact was not a partisan issue. I agree with that sentiment. I think that we can all agree here that we want to do whatever we can to discourage violence in our society. While this in itself will not prevent or will not stop violent crime, no one can argue that it is not a step in the right direction. I think that there is a time, and the time is now, for us to pass this legislation and to support the Liquor Control Commission in their efforts, and the police in their efforts, to reduce the crime level in our society. Thank you very much.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Before we proceed, I would like to draw Honourable Members' attention to the loge on my right where we have with us today, Sam Uskiw, the former Member for Lac du Bonnet.

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

BILL NO. 22—THE LIQUOR CONTROL AMENDMENT ACT (Cont'd)

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak in support of the amendment for The Liquor Control Amendment Act and to talk about it and relate the problems that have caused an amendment like this to be brought forward as it relates to my constituency and I think communities that I am very familiar with, the people and what the communities are doing in terms of struggling with trying to stabilize their lives, stabilize the inner city, stabilize the businesses in the business areas. This is one of the things that is going to help them.

It is certainly not a total solution to crime in the streets. It is certainly not a total solution to violent crime, but it is something that has been identified by police departments, not just in Manitoba, but throughout our country. It is a recommendation that is coming from the police departments, one that they have identified they believe will cut down very significantly on violent crimes in our city. This has been brought to the attention I think of the federal Government by all the Attorney-Generals in all of the provinces.

Police departments and police chiefs for a number of years have identified a deficiency in the Criminal Code that allows knives to be worn by individuals if they are not hidden. To suggest that because they are not hidden they are okay, and that if they are hidden they are not okay I think shows a serious flaw and weakness. They have been requesting this change from the federal Government in terms of licensed premises. The federal Minister has not opened up the Criminal Code and provided the kind of change that is going to be necessary. I think this is something that we can do in our province that will have an effect while we

wait for the federal Government and the Attorney-General to take the action that should be taken related to the Criminal Code.

What the amendment says is that no person shall in any licensed premises be in possession of a knife other than a knife provided by the licensee as part of the food service, or a weapon. The definition of weapon is the same definition as it has under the Criminal Code of Canada.

So we are not just talking about knives, but we are talking largely about knives and other weapons. The experience of the police has demonstrated that the weapon that is most frequently used is a knife. They have gone to City Council in our city and asked for support. They have gone to Ottawa and they are coming to us to ask for support for them to carry out their job in a way that will I think help protect citizens and help protect the police that are out there for the purpose of protecting the lives and safety of citizens. We have to be concerned about both our citizens and our police.

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health): I called them and they would not come.

Ms. Hemphill: You called them and they would not come. You will have to learn how to give the proper message to them, the proper information, so they know what the problem is. We will ask for lessons for you.

I think one of the things that we are all recognizing is that the problems are getting so great, the terms of the social problems and the problems of increasing incidents of crimes in all neighbourhoods, in all communities. It is not just related, as people used to think it was, to the inner city where there are serious and violent crimes, but it is really in all our communities and all of our neighbourhoods. It is becoming such a problem that we know that the police cannot solve this problem themselves and that more and more we are turning towards what is seen to be a cooperative approach between communities and between the police.

You see that in terms of the Neighbourhood Watch programs that have been developed, that are so successful, that are combining people in neighbourhoods watching and knowing what is going on in their neighbourhoods, being trained and educated by the police on what to do to protect themselves, and then giving information to the police when there is anything strange going on in their community—a really good cooperative relationship that has reduced crime considerably.

The new pilot project that is under way right now, we are very hopeful is going to do the same thing, and that is the community-based policing pilot project that is taking place in the inner city where there are police on the streets. They know the neighbourhoods, they know the community, they know when people are there that are strangers when they should not be there, and they work in very close liaison and communication with the people in the neighbourhood.

Here I think we have a third example of support and help to the police by the community by saying that we

want to support their recommendation that people should not be able to go into licensed premises with weapons. The premises that they are going into, they are going into for the purpose of drinking, so that they are undertaking a habit or an activity that in itself means that they could lose their inhibitions, they could easily get into a fight, they could become aggressive in a way that they were not before they entered the licensed premises. To think that they can have weapons on hand, easily accessible, that will allow them to threaten and endanger the lives and safety of other members of the public or the community who are also in that licensed premise, or the police who come to deal with the incident, I think is an unnecessary threat that we can eliminate.

We know that the incidence of drugs and alcohol is tremendously increased. We know that the incidence of abuse of all kinds is on the increase. It does not matter whether it is wife abuse or child abuse or sexual abuse. We know that the incidence of crime is up in all neighbourhoods and the incidence of violent crime is up. We know that the incidence of vandalism is up and the damage done to houses, to institutions and facilities is up considerably. So we are living in a society at a time when there is a great deal of violence, and knowing that there are steps that we can take that will reduce the effect of some of that violence, because a person swinging a fist is not nearly as deadly as a person swinging a knife, then I think we should take those steps.

A lot of the causes, of course, have to be dealt with, too. I do not think we can just say crime is up, abuse is up, violence is up, and the solution to it is to take away knives, to take away weapons and throw people in jail that have any predisposition or any history of violence and not deal with the underlying causes of this violence, much of which is related to our social structure and social problems that we are facing in today's society.

* (1740)

It is things like unemployment that have an effect on crime and violence. Poverty has an effect. Inadequate housing or no housing at all; people who are homeless, who are out on the street; people who are unemployed, who are depressed and have a feeling of hopelessness because they cannot support their family and they cannot be independent; people, many of whom are working very hard but who still are living below the poverty line and having a very difficult time putting food and bread and milk on the table for their children and putting a roof over their heads; I think all adds to this feeling of hopelessness and despair that causes them to turn to drugs that turn to alcohol. So we cannot talk about violence and we cannot talk about crime without looking at the social issues that are causing them and recognize that this move may deal with the consequences but the real reasons we also have to deal with.

I want to talk a little bit about some of the licensed premises and some of the hotels. It is recognized that the number of violent cases that we have in Winnipeg are generally in a fairly prescribed geographical area.

Although there is an incidence all over the city, there are areas that have been identified. These areas will be Main Street, Main Street hotels, there are some problem on Selkirk, and other licensed premises in the inner city.

The incidence of violent crimes has been fairly stable, somewhere between 400 and 500 crimes with weapons per year. That clearly is a number that we have to cut down on. If we can cut down by saying you cannot have a knife when you go in there, you cannot have a weapon on your body when you go in there, as the hotels themselves did at one point when they used to put signs up in the window saying, "Please check your knife at the door." It was so serious and it was such a bad problem that they put up a sign saying please check your knives, hang up your guns, put your knives on the front desk before you go in. They knew there was a serious problem and they knew what one of the solutions was, and that was to make them drop their weapons and drop their knives before they went into the hotel or the licensed premise to drink.

I think we have to put a bit of teeth in those signs that they were putting up themselves and that we have to pass this legislation that will put the force of the law behind it that will say you cannot go into a licensed premise with a knife on your person, or with another dangerous weapon. Then when incidents arrive and people are drinking, they are drunk, they get into a fight, there are gang fights where people who have nothing to do with it may be caught in the middle of gang warfare that is going on, where they are just innocent bystanders or just happen to be in the same licensed premise and can get caught and can get hurt by being caught in the middle of some vengeful acts that are going on between other people.

I think one of the things we have to talk about and look at is the question of selling more liquor than they are supposed to—and I am just looking for the phrase. The Liquor Commission says that they are not overselling liquor on Main Street, in one of the areas that is causing the most problems. Well, a fair amount of Main Street is in my constituency. I am close to the constituency; I live close to it. I frequent a lot of the businesses and services that are provided by very credible business people who are serving the north end. In fact, people from all over the city come to many of the establishments.

When you are close to them, when you see them all the time you have a very visible evidence that there is overselling of liquor through those licensed premises. We have to say that and I think we have to ask the Liquor Commission why they are saying that there is not, why they are not dealing with the problem when they have the authority and the legal ability to deal with it by not continuing to allow the continued abuse, major abuse, which is the continued overselling of liquor. I think that is one of the questions that we have to raise with them.

My colleague from Elmwood was suggesting that one of the points that will be raised is the question of the right, are we infringing on the rights of people? Do they have the right to carry a gun? Do they have the right to carry a knife? I would just say that I think we

have to balance rights in a case like this. Whose right is going to be more paramount, the right of somebody to go into a licensed premises for the purpose of drinking perhaps for the whole evening, well into the evening, to have a weapon on their person, or the rights of the citizens, the rights of the members of the community of the neighbourhood, and the rights of the police even, to know that they will not be unnecessarily put in a risky situation because people have weapons on their person that they should not have?

I would lean towards the rights of the people to protection and safety. That is, the rights of the police and the other citizens who are law abiding, who are not carrying weapons and who have no need to carry weapons because they do not have any intention of using a knife on somebody.

We have to ask the question of why do they have the knife? They might say that it is for protection, but in a lot of cases they have the knife because they intend to use it on some occasion, and we should take away that opportunity. So I would lean towards the rights of the public, the people and the police for safety, and I would urge that we all support this amendment.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I will make my comments on this Bill brief. However, I did want to speak to it.

An Honourable Member: Let us hear it.

Mr. Edwards: Not that brief. This is a very short piece of legislation as has been pointed out previously, not that that lessens its importance. However, I think that the area of liquor control and the way it is done in this province, and the things that can be added to it certainly go far beyond the extent of this particular Bill. I look forward to other pieces of legislation which no doubt this House will emanate in the future as this appears to be an area which is in great need of some revision, some amendment.

This, in that it forbids anyone entering any licensed premises to be in the possession of a knife, other than a knife provided by the licensee as part of the food service or a weapon, it has been pointed out by the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) it is not just about knives. It is about weapons. Perhaps a trivial point, perhaps too legalistic, but I guess I wonder, and I am not suggesting that this will be abused in this way, but does a knife include a penknife? Does it include a jackknife? These are questions that I would think the committee stage should perhaps consider. It is fairly common practice amongst males to carry penknives. I do so myself and I think that there may be a problem with this. However, that does not take away from the intent of this Act which is obviously at the behest of the police forces and city councillors and many in the crime prevention field who know that weapons and drinking establishments simply do not mix. I certainly support the thrust of this Act.

* (1750)

The crime rate in this province, as I have pointed out with vehemence, has gone, in my view, way beyond

what should be acceptable or tolerable to the people of Manitoba. We are leading this country in violent offences per capita. We are leading this country in the growth of violent offences. We are also leading this country in criminal code offences. Again, we are way ahead of the national average, indeed way ahead of the next province back from us which is Saskatchewan in violent offences. This province has serious problems with criminal activity and I would suggest crime stoppage and the enforcement of our laws.

It is something that I have called upon the Attorney-General as the Chief Law Enforcement Officer, a title which he has taken upon himself in this House and which I certainly agree with to show some leadership in this area and to do something about it. I note that the Attorney-General has suggested in his prior remarks in question period last week that the Liberals did not bring this up. I would remind the Attorney-General I brought it up many times in the course of my particular campaign. It was a major concern in my constituency.

My constituency, the east side of it is being on the east side of Polo Park, is increasingly feeling nervous about being part of downtown Winnipeg, and for a good reason. They know that they are in danger of being mugged when they go out their door, of having their houses broken into and a large portion of that community is made up of seniors, who, as I have stated, are particularly worried, vulnerable, with good reason. Obviously, we want them to be able to stay in their own homes; they want to stay in their own homes. But for the enjoyment of their own homes they need to be able to go outside. They need to be able to feel safe or they will not stay in their own homes. That is the concern that has been expressed to myself and many others I am sure with respect to crime in the city and, indeed, in the province. In the city it is particularly bad.

This Act, to the extent that it chips away at one small aspect of what causes violent crime, that is the weapons and knives in drinking establishments does make a start on that but I reiterate that it is really a very minor piece of legislation in the scheme of things. We have serious, serious problems with criminal activity in this province and I think with our inability to apprehend those at the first instance and, secondly, to get rid of an excessively high recidivism rate in our correctional system. We have consistently failed as a society to deal with that and, in this, I am not just pointing the finger at Manitoba. We as a country and, indeed, it is chronic in the Western World, have not been able to come up with correctional systems that do really any rehabilitation. It has always been my contention that we need to put far more effort and far more of our resources into the rehabilitation aspect of the correctional system, because who wins if we do not? We know that when we have a youth—and I spoke of youth offenders today—who starts along the path of deviance, of offensive conduct to society, breaking the law, we know that chances are, once inside the correctional system, that person will be back.

The Canadian Sentencing Commission has told us that the single most important factor in ending a life

of crime is age. It is a pathetic statistic when people turn 40, they stop committing crimes. That is the most important factor. Nothing we do has any greater bearing than that on ending a life of crime. I therefore think and I think anybody can state if they would take the time perhaps to read the Canadian Sentencing Commission's report, it is a very, very good piece of work and a lot of research into it.

I think it will be well worth of the Minister of Labour and Environment's (Mr. Connery) reading. There is a fairly significant correctional institution in his particular constituency and I know he will be concerned enough perhaps to pick up that report, take a gander at it. In any event, I am pleased to support the thrust of this particular piece of legislation but I simply reiterate that I have some concerns with the ambiguity of the word "knife." It does not include penknives, it does not include those. That may be a problem and I suggest that can certainly be discussed at the committee stage.

Secondly, I have some concern with the entire area of liquor control and the relationship between liquor and violence, and the relationship between liquor and our motor vehicle accident rate, and our fatality rate on our highways, and the youth alcoholism rate, and this Act is certainly deficient to deal with all of those, but it does start us in giving us a platform to discuss these things. I am happy for that and I look forward to discussing it further at the committee stage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: As per previous understanding, Bill No. 22 will stand in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

BILL NO. 25—THE UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 25, The Unfair Business Practices Act; Loi sur les pratiques commerciales déloyales, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). (Stand)

BILL NO. 26—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 26, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). (Stand)

Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? (Agreed)

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).