



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

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

37 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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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, Hcn.	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

Friday, October 28, 1988.

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines):

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Supplementary Information for the 1988-89 Estimates for the Department of Energy and Mines and the Seniors Directorate.

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): Mr. Speaker,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Department of the Attorney-General, for the fiscal year 1987-88.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Child Abuse Government Response

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the action which the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) took yesterday when he announced that he had contacted the Mayor regarding the insufficient staffing in the City of Winnipeg Child Abuse Unit. I am somewhat surprised, however, that the Premier or the Mayor appeared to have no knowledge of the lack of this service until the arbitration hearings, and that the Reid-Sigurdson Report, which has been within the public domain now for well over a year, did in fact cite difficulties with a lack of sufficient staffing in the City of Winnipeg Police Department Child Abuse Unit.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). On October 14, 1988, the Attorney-General received a letter from Madam Justice Bowman in which she informed him that 62 days had passed between when she first learned of a child abuse incident and when she further learned that that incident had not yet been investigated. Can the Attorney-General tell the House what action he has taken on this letter from Justice Bowman?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): Mr. Speaker, the matter of the Child Abuse Unit of the City of Winnipeg Police Department has been raised by me with Chief Stephen of the Police Department for the City of Winnipeg. I also can confirm with the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) that I have received the letter from Madam Justice Bowman and the matter is being raised with my department and will be raised with the City of Winnipeg Police Department.

Justice References Delay

* (1005)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

With a supplementary question to the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), the Justice references that as a result of this action, two trials instead of one might be necessary, thereby increasing the trauma to the child by 100 percent. Can the Minister tell this House how often two trials have been necessary because of a lack of quick police investigation?

Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General): That matter I will be raising, Mr. Speaker, with the Chief of the City of Winnipeg Police Department.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question to the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), the Justice also points out the difficulty in obtaining evidence when 62 days have passed, as well as the difficulties with two investigations going on at the same time. Will the Attorney-General order his staff to meet with the staff of Community Services, and also to meet with the Winnipeg Police, so that a new protocol in investigation, including the speeding up of the delivery of that investigation, can be developed?

Mr. McCrae: We will take whatever steps are possible and certainly whatever steps are necessary to address the matter raised in Madam Justice Bowman's letter.

Family Life Education Compulsory Curriculum

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

Mr. Speaker, with a new question to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). Physical and sexual abuse of children are terrible crimes and we all agree with that. So too, however, is the crime of not ensuring that our children have a knowledge to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancy, STDs and AIDS. Why will the Minister of Education not make Family Life education in Manitoba compulsory?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, I think Family Life education in this province is an important aspect in our curriculum. However, we live in a province and in a country where parents have to make decisions about some of the things regarding their children. Parents at the local level have to have some input into the kinds of educational programs that are offered in schools.

We understand the problems that are associated with unwanted pregnancies, substance abuse and all of those evils of our society. However, I do believe that it is important that we provide the opportunity for programs such as the Family Life Program that is offered in our schools. However, I think it would be

wrong for me as a Minister to say that every child in our province must enroll—the Family Life Program is in the schools, but I think it will be wrong for anybody to say that you must take that section that refers to the sexual aspects of Family Life.

Program Availability

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): All parents must be given the opportunity to opt their children out of a Family Life Education Program, but programs to protect children must be in place. Why has this Minister been unwilling to take the leadership and ensure that such a program is in place in every school division in the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): This is a Government that is going to consult with parents, with school divisions, school boards across the province with regard to the programs that are implemented. I think there is an education process here which has to be entered into with the parents at the local level.

Certainly, we are discussing and will continue to discuss with parents across Manitoba the importance of the Family Life Education Program. In addition, that is the way that more students in Manitoba will take part in the program. We cannot simply say that we think, as a department, this is the program your child should have and then force it upon students and upon parents in this province. That kind of an approach will not work.

Social Disease Programs

* (1010)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a supplementary question to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), according to a recent study, nearly 50 percent of Canadian children under the age of 16 are sexually active. They must be protected from AIDS, a killer disease that almost 2,000 Canadians have. They can only be protected if they are informed. Will the Minister re-enter negotiations with every school division in the Province of Manitoba to ensure that our children have the protection that comes from information?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, much still needs to be done with regard to the development of programs in the Family Life and the types of programs that relate to the kinds of situations the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) speaks about.

There is no way, and I reiterate this once again, that the department will force every Manitoba student to take a program which may be offensive to some students because of their lifestyle. I think we have to educate our society in terms of the kinds of evils that are out there and the kinds of situations that should be kept away from.

I think the Family Life Program has some excellent areas within it and I think we have to promote that,

but certainly we do not do it by forcing it upon people. We do it through consultation; we do it through informing parents what is in that program; we do it by meetings with parents. We will continue to do that and that way we know that more parents will see the importance of that program and in fact will opt that their children take the program within that particular school that their child attends.

Health Information Availability

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): All Members of the Chamber lauded the Government on the proclamation of The Freedom of Information. Mr. Speaker, we noted that in the Speech from the Throne the statement from the Government was, "My Ministers have advised me of their intentions to introduce policies and procedures to make this Government more open and accountable to the citizens of Manitoba."

My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Why is he directing his staff in the Department of Health to withhold copies from Members of the Opposition of annual reports, briefs, position papers and background statements in dealing with the Department of Health? Why is he trying to gag his department in giving us, not critical information, but information that is necessary to do our jobs as the elected representatives in this province?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I have been open to requests of information from my honourable friends. An annual report is available when tabled in this House and have been made available.

Mr. Speaker, we have had requests which have been made by some Members of the Opposition directly to individuals within the Civil Service. As has been customary and traditional and longstanding, regardless of political stripe, including my previous friends in the NDP, requests for information specifically from ADMS, DMs, directors, were referred to the Minister's office. That longstanding tradition still exists. Information is made available when requested as soon as possible.

Mr. Doer: It has been the practice that confidential material that is going to Cabinet and confidential option material that the Minister is preparing is withheld until the Minister is prepared to outline his/her position to the public. It is not the policy nor has it been the policy for members of a ministry to gag their department on routine information.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is his gag order to his department consistent with the Speech from the Throne as presented by his Government some four months ago?

* (1015)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I regret that on Friday morning we have to get into theatrics of gag orders, etc., etc. There is no gag order in the department. That is an incorrect piece of information. What has been

specifically provided to the department is that if they have requests for information from Members of the Opposition Parties, and indeed that restriction applies to Members directly from my own Government backbenchers and Cabinet Ministers, the information request is to come through the Minister's office, and that is a long-standing request that has been in place for a long period of time. It is nothing unusual because you cannot put your professional apolitical civil servants on the line making decisions that ought to be funnelled through the Minister's office.

My honourable friend, the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer), knows full well that that is the long-standing method of information flow that exists in the department today, as it did over the last number of years.

Freedom of Information Information Policy

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

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), and I will table the memo that does not talk about MLAs. It talks about the Opposition, so the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is not being straight with this House, Mr. Speaker. I can assure you that when Members opposite questioned my department I did not put a gag order in, in terms of the department in terms of basic information.

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

Mr. Doer: My question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is, is this order from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to withhold background information from Opposition Members of this Legislature, is this consistent with his policies and procedures of open Government in this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): We are the Government that proclaimed The Freedom of Information Act in Manitoba. After three-and-a-half years of sitting on The Freedom of Information Act, the NDP were fussing and fuming and trying to find ways to duck out from under that commitment. We proclaimed it because we intend to be an open Government. We intend to be a Government that provides information.

The Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) knows full well that even under Freedom of Information every department has a central coordinating function with one person required to be the person who is the coordinator for responding to Freedom of Information. Even under Freedom of Information, you have a coordinated way of arriving at the information. You do not just go to anybody you want in the Government so that you cannot just ask for anything.

There are rules under Freedom of Information. There are protections that we have under Human Rights and under all sorts of other things to ensure that, for instance, medical records are not released in a form

in which they were not intended to, to ensure that all sorts of information is not released.

So to say that it is wrong for us to have a coordinated manner by which we release information is nonsense. You have to have a coordinated manner by which that information is released out to anybody in the public, be it a Member of the Opposition or be it a member of the public. We want to ensure that that information is released as it should be, in a coordinated fashion.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Doer: When we asked for copies of the guidelines of the Home Care policy so we can follow up on what we are hearing from our constituents, that is a right of the Members of this Legislature to have. Those are clearly public documents available to us.

My question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) is, is this policy in place in all departments of Government or only in the Department of Health with the paranoid behaviour of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)?

Mr. Filmon: If we want to look at paranoia, Mr. Speaker, we can look at the Members of the Opposition who shredded everything that they did not want to have go out publicly. We know about their former member for Gimli. It is surprising—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. The Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), on a point of order.

* (1020)

Mr. Doer: Point of order, there is a procedure in place for all documents to be maintained by the central record holder, and let the First Minister know that every law was followed in terms of documents with the archivists.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, and when, to their horror, things were inadvertently shredded there was a procedure in place whereby they apologized publicly for it, if they were caught.

The fact of the matter is that if the Member opposite has asked for the guidelines and the criteria for the provision of Home Care Services, I am sure that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) will be happy to share that information with the Member opposite, and if he has any difficulty he can raise it again in the House. But enough of this grandstanding, if you want the information ask the Minister and he will provide it for you.

Kopstein Report PUB Public Questioning

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): My question is to the Minister in charge of MPIC (Mr. Cummings). We on this

side of the House would like to congratulate publicly Judge Kopstein for the enormous quantity of work he has done, and high quality of work as well, and I think he has performed a real service to the people of Manitoba.

The letter that was dated to the Minister was September 21, which means that the Minister had well over a month to digest the report. One of the reasons for the delay was apparently a French translation and I wonder if the Minister would table the French copy today so the Francophone Members of the Assembly could see it and be apprised of the judge's wisdom.

We agree with most of the judge's recommendations but not all of them. The Government has accepted one which denies the opportunity of members of the public to appear before the board of MPIC and its senior officials so that at least once a year the people of Manitoba can hold the corporation accountable.

I wonder why it is that the Minister has withdrawn and taken away the right of Manitobans to question the board and senior management of MPIC.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): First of all, I would ask the Member to wait till The Crown Accountability Act has been tabled to indicate the direction that we are going with these Crowns.

The judge has indicated in his report that he felt these sessions were not necessarily productive, but there are several recommendations in the report and other parts of the report where it is indicated that the Crown should communicate and facilitate meetings with parts of the public in order to meet and have exchange of ideas, and certainly the Crown is still at liberty to carry on.

Recommendations Justification

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): An essential feature of the judge's recommendations was that there ought to be an arm's length relationship between the Government of Manitoba and the board of MPIC. Now, the recommendation has been made that the chief executive officer currently appointed by the Cabinet ought to be appointed by the board. Now, among the 27 recommendations accepted by the Government, this is not among them. I wonder if the Minister intends to respond to that recommendation to create a little more distance between the Government and the board of MPIC.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): Mr. Speaker, again, the manner in which we deal with all our Crowns will have a bearing on our response to that recommendation, but I should point out to the Member opposite and to the House that the hiring of the new chief executive officer of the corporation this year was as a result of an extensive executive search that was conducted on behalf of the board. The board made the recommendation to myself, and I would also point out that the Member of our caucus who sits as a member of the board excluded himself from those

interviews in the selection of the chief executive officer. So we have put in practise a process that does do everything within reason to keep Government influence out of the choice of the chief executive officer.

Legislation Schedule

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): I find it interesting that the Minister found it necessary to exclude a member of the board from important conversations. Maybe he will go the full distance and agree with us that there ought not to be MLAs on the boards in the first place. Mr. Speaker, many of Judge Kopstein's recommendations, including some already approved by the Government, necessitate the legislative changes, in particular, to The MPIC Act. I wonder if the Minister could inform the House whether or not it is his intention to introduce those legislative changes in this Session of the Legislature.

* (1025)

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation): First of all, Mr. Speaker, the Member opposite is indicating what he considers appropriate distancing of the Government from the operation of the Crowns and has indicated that not every one of the judge's recommendations have been immediately adopted by ourselves.

At the same time, however, he must have also read in the report, I presume, because I believe it is in the same section, that the Judge has indicated that it is appropriate in his opinion that a Member of the Government caucus be part of the board of the corporation. The practice of appointing the Minister responsible for MPIC as chairman of the board is inappropriate. We have already complied with that. Currently there are insufficient legislative guidelines for the division of responsibility but it is appropriate that the Government be empowered as it presently is to appoint an MLA to the MPIC Board.

Hazardous Waste Management PCB Shipments

* (1030)

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Labour): I have three answers to questions that had been given to me previously. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) was very critical of us not answering questions, but I think it is appropriate that those Members be in the House when we give answers to the questions. So I hope that she would ask one of her Members to read Hansard on Monday morning.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the Honourable Minister that we do not refer to members as being present and/or away.

Mr. Connery: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.- (Interjection)- I see he will not have to read Hansard. The Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) asked about PCBs being flown out of Winnipeg, intimated that it had been secretly

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done. The material was shipped out by the American Air Force on June 14 but it had been discussed on the Peter Warren show in May so there was no secrecy to the material being shipped.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Connery: The material was PCBs out of decommissioned radar sites and the material was shipped to Winnipeg by road in 1986 when the NDP were in power. It was done under absolutely safe conditions, under the Canada Environment conditions, the Manitoba guidelines, and it was appropriately delivered into Winnipeg and appropriately shipped out of Winnipeg back to the States, unlike what the Opposition says that American waste is coming into Canada. They took their waste home. We congratulate them.

An Honourable Member: The boxcar did stay though.

Mr. Connery: I do not know. You will have to ask the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor), he is the boxcar chaser.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: You are pushing your luck today. The Honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery), and I have said this numerous times before, that we refer to all Members as Honourable Members. The Honourable Minister of Labour to withdraw that last comment.

Mr. Connery: Yes, I apologize to the Honourable Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor).

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery).

Affirmative Action Discrimination Procedures

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) asked about a case, and a serious case, about discrimination, and I must apologize to the House. I apologize to the Member and I appreciate the Member for bringing it to my attention because it did take 28 days before a reply went, and this is not appropriate. We have had some discussions within our departments to ensure that these things are followed up and I am sure that every Member of this Legislature is in unison when we say that we are opposed to discrimination.

There are avenues, though, for this individual. It is through his union representation to have some arbitration. There is the Human Rights Commission, which it is before right now, so details of the case cannot be discussed. There also is the Labour Board that any employee in Manitoba can go to for some arbitration, so there are avenues for every person in Manitoba to be properly adjudicated.

Environmental Safety Matters Resolved

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment, Workplace Safety and Health): The other question was to do with Gravure Graphics that the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) brought up. The material at that Gravure Graphics was of course accumulated over many years, during their time where they were unable to deal with it. I would like to say today that, finally, and we discussed this many, many times and I have correspondence going back into July with Gravure Graphics as to how we would accommodate it, we did have a process of disposing of this material, environmentally safe and at almost no cost to the Gravure Graphics company, but because of the goofy antics of Members opposite that avenue was closed to us. Today a clean-up order has been issued to Gravure Graphics, with their cooperation, as to how we can secure this material safely and eventually dispose of it environmentally safe.

Mr. Speaker, these three things have been done. Thank you.

Lynn Lake Hospital Maternity Ward Closures

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): My question is for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). The Lynn Lake Hospital is without primary obstetrical services and forcing pregnant patients to be sent to Winnipeg and Thompson for deliveries, and these patients are being exposed to unnecessary and unwanted risks. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister of Health explain the reasons why communities like Lynn Lake are without obstetrical services?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the situation in Lynn Lake hopefully will be resolved next month. My understanding of the situation in Lynn Lake is that the present medical staff there, in cooperation and consultation with the administration of Lynn Lake Hospital, have determined that it would not be appropriate and safe until further measures are in place for them to allow obstetrics in the Lynn Lake Hospital, and that situation has existed for approximately three months. It is my further understanding that upgrading, retraining, is nearing completion, so that obstetrics can hopefully be offered from the Lynn Lake Hospital as early as next month, November.

Corrective Measures

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): This problem has existed for the last six months. Can the Minister tell us what steps he has taken to correct the situation and restore the confidence of Lynn Lake residents in the health care system?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): My answer to the first question should not be anticipating the second question which was drawn up an hour ago. I answered that question in that the physicians are going

through training process which, in the estimation of them and the administration of Lynn Lake Hospital, will allow them to resume obstetrics next month. That is what I indicated to my honourable friend in my previous answer.

Provincial Hospitals Services Lack

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Could the Minister tell us how many other communities in Manitoba are without such services?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): No, I cannot give my honourable friend an exact number, but I will tell my honourable friend that in many hospitals in Manitoba, rural and northern Manitoba hospitals that are smaller hospitals, the College of Physicians and Surgeons will not permit obstetrical deliveries because of volume and because of safety to the patient aspects.

I am not in a position as Minister of Health to overrule the professional judgment of the College of Physicians and Surgeons and I would hope my honourable friend is not asking me to do that.

Provincial Hospitals Bed Closures Report

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and I hope that the Minister does not feel restrained from answering by his own gag order, but I can assure him that this is information which is important to the work of this House.

On several occasions during the past few months, both the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) have promised a comprehensive review of hospital bed closures and the impact on those closures on the health of Manitobans. I ask the Minister now if that review has been completed and, if so, can he please table it? If the review has not been completed, can he please indicate when it is he believes that it will be completed and can he commit today to tabling it when it is done?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): The review of Assessment of Need, as put forward to Government and to the Manitoba Health Service Commission in terms of the specific bed needs within the Manitoba system, but particularly the Winnipeg system has been subject of discussions within the department and the Manitoba Health Services Commission in conjunction with the Winnipeg urban hospitals in particular.

Mr. Speaker, that process of consultation, discussion and investigation was completed in terms of the announcement I made yesterday in which, because of program need and changing delivery of medicine in terms of provision of respiratory bed service, where physical beds are no longer needed because more of the services are done on an outpatient basis—not for admission to the hospitals—that a review of the system and a discussion with the management of the Winnipeg hospitals led us to the conclusion to the satisfaction

of the commission and myself, that those beds could be closed at the Health Sciences Centre.

That is because, in part, 19 oncology beds were opened and in service this week providing service to Manitobans with lung cancer who formerly used respiratory beds to some degree. The new beds renovated and state-of-the-art in oncology that are in service this week at the Health Sciences Centre provide a higher degree of patient quality care and that is the objective of this Government.

Mr. Cowan: Now I know why, when I was driving in this morning and yesterday morning, the slipping and sliding on Pembina Highway reminded me of the Question Period and the answers from the Minister of Health. In fact, there are no new beds being opened at the Health Sciences Centre. Those are beds that were previously opened and newly renovated. The fact is that yesterday the Minister of Health finally confessed that they had broken the promise that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) made and he had made with respect to closing of hospital beds.

Winnipeg City Hospitals Bed Numbers Total

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): My question to the Minister, so that the record be straight, can he now confirm that today there are over 20 less beds at the Health Sciences Centre than there were before his Government decided to close the respiratory beds and to replace those beds with office space?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): The slipping and sliding that the Member referred to obviously is his driving habits which are also his legislative habits. Today at the Health Sciences Centre there are more beds open for patients service than there were a month ago.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

* (1040)

Mr. Orchard: Those beds which are in greater supply are there to provide higher quality patient care, something that the administration of the Health Sciences Centre has indicated would be required to meet the changing pattern of medical service delivery within their institution and within the hospital institutions in this province.

Certainly my honourable friend is half correct. The 19 oncology beds were closed to be renovated. That is how you bring them up to state of the art service delivery, to provide better service for lung cancer patients, as an example, than was available in the old respiratory wing. Today there are more beds at Health Sciences Centre serving the health care needs in a higher quality fashion than there were last month.

Surgical Beds Available

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, so that the Minister in spite of all his long ramblings can be able to give complete information, I will ask him directly. Can he confirm that the 19 oncology beds that are being reopened were previously closed for renovations and were in the system previously? Can he confirm that the five surgery beds that he talked about yesterday were beds that were in the system previously? Can he confirm that there is one other surgery bed that he talked about yesterday, which brings the total to six, was a unit under renovation? Can he confirm that because of the closure of the respiratory unit, the 21 beds there, there are fewer beds in the system today than there were when his Government took office a few months ago, and that they have broken that very key and important election promise to the people of Manitoba?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, no, I cannot confirm any of my honourable friend's ill-founded allegations, nor would I wish to. My honourable friend is absolutely correct in his dissertation on five surgical beds because, due to the ill-founded approach of the previous administration, they mandated the closure I believe of 24—well, I will tell you what. If you will bear with me just for a moment, I will get the exact number.

An Honourable Member: Now they do not want the information.

Mr. Orchard: Now they do not want the information. Mr. Speaker, the previous administration mandated, ordered and dictated to the Health Sciences Centre that they close 24 surgical beds. The Health Sciences Centre administration at the time told them from a program standpoint they may not be able to comply with that. The best they could do and maintain a semblance of quality patient care in surgery was to close only 19 of those beds. They never did close the five beds as ordered by the previous administration.

What I did this week was in the balanced overview which we have done, as committed in the election, is given the Health Sciences Centre permission to retain the use and funding of those five surgical beds which the previous Government wanted closed to deny services to Manitoba.

Northern Education Bachelor Nursing Program

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): Mr. Speaker, I have a short question for the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). The Swampy Cree Tribal Council has been waiting for an answer from this Minister regarding the Government's intention with respect to their proposal for the northern Bachelor of Nursing Program. The Minister promised to give them this answer before the end of October. That is fast approaching. Is he prepared to give his answer today?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, my department and myself have met with the

Swampy Cree Tribal Council with respect to their request for a Bachelor of Nursing program. In addition, we have also met with the staff and the administration of Keewatin Community College with regard to programs that are being delivered in northern Manitoba. I indicated at the time that certainly we would consider the request of the Swampy Cree Tribal Council, and that we would also be entering into further discussions with them about the program and how we could better serve the northern residents in terms of providing programming for northern Manitobans.

However, I have to tell the House that there was never an indication given to the Swampy Cree Tribal Council that, in fact, we would be approving that program by the end of October.

Program Funding

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): I suppose a dispute over the facts is not a point of order, but according to the letter that was sent to the Minister, the indication is clearly that he had indicated that the answer would be by the end of October. Even so, there is still a lack of making a decision in this instance, and this group is close to losing its funding already committed by the federal Government. So when will he actually take action and make a decision so this group knows where they stand?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, the letter that the Member refers to is a letter that was sent from the Swampy Cree Tribal Council to me as Minister. It certainly was not a letter from my department or from myself with regard to any commitments that had been made, because there were no commitments made.

In fact, those discussions and those considerations are ongoing and when we are in a position to give the Swampy Cree Tribal Council a definitive answer, we will do that.

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

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, if I may have permission of the House for a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable First Minister have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, this morning, a number of my colleagues and I joined with many Members opposite in attending the Annual Crime Prevention Breakfast. I believe that all of us would want to join together in saying thank you to all of those involved in Manitoba's society in the field of crime prevention.

Organizations, such as Block Parents, such as Neighbourhood Watch, Crime Stoppers are doing a tremendous service to the people of Manitoba. Thousands of people are involved in putting thousands and thousands of hours of volunteer service to ensure

that our communities can remain safe. They involve, of course, social agencies as well, community-based social agencies that are out there working with people to ensure that our elderly and our young people can feel safe in their neighbourhoods once again, that they can go out from their homes, walk in their neighbourhoods, play in the local parks and recreation facilities without feeling anxious about the potential ill effects of crime.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that all of us here in this Legislature will agree with all of those people who are volunteering their services in the area of crime prevention that a crime prevented is far more valuable to us in society than all of the efforts and all of the resources that we put to dealing with the consequences of a crime that has already been committed.

This morning, I was very pleased to extend a proclamation to make it be known on behalf of the Assembly that November is Crime Prevention Month in Manitoba and that all of us support the activities of community-based social agencies and, indeed, all of the community-based agencies that are involved in crime prevention in Manitoba.

Thank you very much.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to recognizing the the Honourable Member for St. James, I would like to draw all of the Members' attention to the gallery where we have from the Teulon Collegiate, forty Grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Al Reinsch. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer). On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this morning.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I seek leave to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for St. James have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Edwards: I simply rise to join with the Premier in making mention of the kick-off day, being today, of Crime Prevention Month in this province. As the Premier has mentioned, Members from all Parties were present this morning at the kick-off breakfast, an extremely enlightening event, and an extremely important event, and an extremely important month for this province in terms of crime prevention.

* (1050)

We were treated to a lovely breakfast and also a very interesting speech by Professor Waller, a renowned expert in the area. We were also, I might add, given various pieces of information by the Manitoba Society of Criminology, talking about their programs they are doing and bringing again to our attention the good work that they do. I simply want to assure this House

of our support for this very important month and thank the Manitoba Society of Criminology for their leadership in this area and thank the many hundreds of volunteers in this province who work for crime prevention. It is important and indeed a developing area in the criminal justice area. Thank you.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): May I have leave of the House to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Concordia have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Doer: The Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) perhaps knows what this non-political statement is all about, because I threatened him yesterday with a non-political statement indeed on the October 29 anniversary. But seriously, Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with all Members of this House in applauding the volunteers who work throughout this province and the kick-off breakfast this morning dealing with Crime Prevention Month in Manitoba.

Manitoba has had, through the activity of volunteers, a leading role to play in terms of community activity and crime prevention, a leading role of getting business, workers, social agencies, church agencies, volunteers from the corrections professions, working together with the judiciary and the police in an unprecedented way. Indeed, this has been used as a model all across Canada and even in some states in the United States.

I also learned today that the Victims Assistance Plan in the Province of Manitoba is now being modelled in terms of New Zealand as legislation for the whole country of New Zealand just passed this year as again a model. I think all of us as MLAs from whatever political stripe can be very proud of it.

I have worked as a volunteer for years in the crime prevention area and, whether it is continuing on in a different role now which is usually being in a dunk tank to raise money, Mr. Speaker, everybody loves to dunk their local MLA. I can assure you, it is a good way to raise money.- (Interjection)- That is right. I am sure that we all work with our own community groups.

Crime prevention is the key. We can never hire enough police officers. We can never have enough judges. We can never have enough Crown attorneys to deal with the formal parts of the legal system. We have to do it in the communities, really the old-fashioned way, and I applaud the efforts of the volunteers today. Thank you.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): I wonder if I might have leave to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Minister have leave? (Agreed)

Mr. Ernst: October is Export Trade Month in this country and has been celebrated in Manitoba. We all know, with the exception of the Member for St. Norbert

(Mr. Angus), that exports are of prime importance to industry in this province. About 35 percent or 40 percent of the production of this province is exported for profit. In order to recognize large exporters, people who make a significant contribution to exports in this province, the province recognizes annually four companies for their expertise for the year previous.

Yesterday, I had the honour of honouring four specific companies who have contributed greatly to Manitoba's exports and a significant contribution to our economy. Those four companies were: Selkirk Wood Industries, Wilson Auto Electric, Federal Pioneer Electric and Boeing of Canada. I am sure all Members of the House will wish to join me and the rest of my colleagues on this side of the House in congratulating these four companies for the great contribution they have made to the economy of Manitoba.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): May I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Ellice have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Ms. Gray: I rise in the House today to pay tribute and I trust that all Members of this Legislature will join with me in recognizing National Occupational Week, which is being held this week in Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, the theme of the National Occupational Week has been, "When Daily Living Becomes a Challenge." I think if we stop and think about that phrase, "When Daily Living Becomes a Challenge," we oftentimes—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, on a point of order.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): I am having difficulty hearing the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray)—

Mr. Speaker: That is right.

Mr. Ernst: —on what is an important to the House, and I wish you would draw Members' attention to the fact that we should have quiet.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Minister and I would hope that all Honourable Members would listen to the statement being made by the Honourable Member for Ellice.

Ms. Gray: The theme of the National Occupational Week, "When Daily Living Becomes a Challenge," I think is a very thought-provoking one. Certainly, in the last day and today, as all of us have to rush through the snow and move about, I think sometimes we forget how lucky that a lot of us are that we have the use of all our limbs and that we are able to move quickly. Sometimes we do not realize how lucky we are until again we have to move through the snow and we know there is treacherous ice.

When you think about individuals who may have had a stroke or you think about young children who do not

have the movement of their arms, or you think about individuals who have severe arthritis and it is not easy for them to move about, I think that is when we stop and think "When Daily Living Becomes a Challenge."

That is when we can recognize the great work of our occupational therapists throughout Manitoba. They are small in number, Mr. Speaker, 220 across the province, only some 4,000 nationally; but certainly the work that they do in the community, in the educational system, in private practice, through the Home Care Program, is very, very valuable to all citizens of Manitoba.

I did have the pleasure of attending a reception last evening where the Manitoba Society of Occupational Therapists honoured for the first time two individuals from Manitoba. They received a first Annual Citation Award. These individuals were Betty Havens who has been our first provincial gerontologist and certainly is well-renowned in this province and across North America and the world in her work that she has done in the area of gerontology and particularly rehabilitation. The other individual who was honoured last evening was Arthur Quanbury who is an electrical engineer and again has worked very closely in the occupational therapy field. Both individuals were certainly well-deserving of the award.

I hope that all Members of this House will take the opportunity in joining with me to congratulate these two individuals and to recognize the important contributions of occupational therapists and to say to the occupational therapists and to other Manitobans, yes, we believe in the skills that you offer in the community, we recognize National Occupational Week and we hope that services will continue and the Society of Occupational Therapists will continue to grow as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY HOUSE BUSINESS

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce that the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation will be before the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources on Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. in Room 255 and, if necessary, on Thursday morning.

Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to call the Bills today? First, Bill No. 28, second, Bill No. 29, and then the Bills in the order listed on the Order Paper, Sir, with the exception of Bill No. 21.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): I wonder if the Attorney-General, or the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae), on a matter of House business, could indicate how many more Bills he believes will be brought forward in this Session.

Mr. McCrae: The Bills will be introduced in the House at the appropriate time and after all the Bills have been introduced, the Honourable Member will know how many there will have been.

* (1100)

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, on the same matter. It has been customary for all House Leaders who take their job seriously to try to cooperate with the Opposition and to indicate at this point in time in the Session—we are at day No. 67 in the Session—as to how much legislation they feel will be brought forward during the rest of the Session as to how much legislation they feel will be brought forward during the rest of the Session. That question has been asked by Opposition House Leaders time and time again in this House, and this is the first time that I remember an answer not having been given in such a snide and cynical response which does no good in making this House function any better, being presented by the Government House Leader.

I would ask him point blank: can he indicate how much more legislation, not the exact numbers but generally, how much more legislation he anticipates bringing forward? If he can indicate that, can he indicate why it is that he cannot provide that reasonable information to us at this point in time, day 67 of the Session?

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Government House Leader, on House Business.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, certainly in the wake of recent events, I am not about to take very many lessons from the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) about cooperation among House Leaders. Indeed, now I hear the Honourable Member for Churchill chirping about some apology being required for something that I have said out in the hall. The Honourable Member might search his own soul and review his own behaviour since the beginning of the Session, and I think that is probably about enough said about that.

I believe that this House will operate well only as long as there is cooperation and that cooperation has to go in all directions. We have three Parties - (Interjection)- we have a three-Party system in this province. We have a minority House, and no one recognizes more than I do the necessity of cooperation under those circumstances. The leather on my shoes is wearing thin for the times I have tried to find the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) to consult him on matters. Indeed I attempted this morning to consult him on a matter which is in the Government's purview of the calling of a standing committee, and I have not received any response yes or no or whether that is satisfactory to the Honourable Member.

I do not need any lectures about cooperation from the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan). When the Bills have been tabled in the House, the Honourable Member will know. This is the first time the Honourable Member has raised the issue with me. The Honourable Member knows very well that discussions between House Leaders are done on a private basis, and I am open at any time and have been since the beginning of this Session, open to the Honourable Member for Churchill, open to the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) and, for the most part, we have had a good working relationship. I do not quite understand what prompts the Honourable Member for Churchill today, except that he might be

feeling a little sensitive for the little trick he played in this House earlier this week.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. That will be enough.

Mr. Cowan: There were certain things that were put on the record that cannot be let go without being challenged, and I would respect, Mr. Speaker, your advice in this regard.

I would ask the question basically, given that it is a common practice

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is the Honourable Member up on a point of order?

Mr. Cowan: Yes, on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Cowan: Given that it is a common practice for House Leaders to at least know how much legislation they are going to bring forward and to provide that sort of advice to the Opposition House Leaders and in fact all members of the Opposition around this juncture in the Session, we can only assume from the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) that he does not know.

The point I want to make, Mr. Speaker, at this point in time is referencing the comment that the Government House Leader said about sending a note over—and I think this is important because it does reflect upon the proceedings of the House—asking if it was okay for certain committee hearings to be held next week. That note came over in the middle of Question Period.

In the past, when we have indicated to the Government House Leader that we did not want certain committees to be called, he called them anyway. We put on the record our objection to the way in which he has arbitrarily chosen which committees should be called. Even though he talks about consultation, he does not in fact live up to that consultation.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, in the past, and I provide this on a point of order by way of lesson to the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae), who obviously has a great deal to learn not only about keeping his own members in the House at all times, but a great deal to learn about how this House operates. In the past

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

Mr. Cowan: Well, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) talks about smacking in the face from his seat, Mr. Speaker. If he has courage he can put those words on the record by standing in his place. But I do not believe he has the courage to do so, so I will do so for him.

But not to be distracted from my point of order, Mr. Speaker, the point of order is that normally, if the Government House Leader cannot get his act together enough to be able to consult personally, rather than

by way of written notes with respect to committees, he then takes an opportunity after the Question Period to call House Leaders aside, which I did, which Government House Leaders from the Conservative Governments have done in the past, to decide if possible on what committees should be called.

The Government House Leader knows he has until adjournment time today to stand up at any time, which has been done in the past, and say that certain committees will be called. So in fact he does not lose any opportunity to get on the record today which committees would be called at which time. That has been the standard practice. It is the standard practice because it is courteous and cooperative and that is something that this Government House Leader just does not know anything about and one would expect no less than what happened today from him.

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

An Honourable Member: The Member dragged his Members out of the House.

Mr. Cowan: You guys drag your Members out all the time.

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

Mr. McCrae: The Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has characterized this matter as a point of order and I must respond to the point of order. The Honourable Member speaks of consultation and courtesy. It is my understanding that the calling of committees is within the purview of the Government House Leader and the purpose every step of the way of my consulting with Honourable Members has been so that this House can work. I cannot help it if the Honourable Member refuses to respond to my attempts to consult with him, which is done in a spirit of courtesy. Let us remember the Honourable Member is the House Leader for the third Party in this House, Mr. Speaker, and he needs to be reminded of that.

Mr. Cowan: Idiot.

An Honourable Member: He just called him an idiot.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, I hear the Honourable Member for Churchill telling me today that I am an idiot and I take an offence to that comment as well. I know very well the Honourable Member for Churchill is smarting. He is very embarrassed by his own behaviour earlier this week with regard to a quorum call in this House and he must wriggle and he must squirm and he resorts to language like "idiot" when he gets his back to a wall. The fact is I have had enough of the Honourable Member's tactics. I have consulted, I have made every effort to be courteous to that Honourable Member, especially that Honourable Member, and I will be not be subjected—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. These types of political negotiations that do take place between the

Government House Leader and the Opposition House Leaders, that has nothing to do with the rules and procedures of this House. This kind of exchange does little to assist the House in getting on with the business before it. Therefore I do not believe that I have to rule on any point of order here. I believe we will get on with the business of the House, and I will be calling second readings.

Order, please. On a new point of order?

Mr. McCrae: From his seat the Honourable Member referred to me and used the expression "idiot." Mr. Speaker, since 1958 it has been ruled unparliamentary to use that expression and I would ask that the Honourable Member be asked to withdraw that comment and to apologize for it.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, in my frustration with the incompetence of this Minister I used the word "idiot" from my seat. I apologize and withdraw the word. I do, however, believe, Mr. Speaker, that he has a great deal to learn in the area of running the House effectively.

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

Order, please; order, please.

SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 28—THE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS' ORGANIZATION FUNDING ACT

Mr. Speaker: We are going to get along with the procedures of this House. Second readings, Bill No. 28, The Agricultural Producers' Organization Funding Act.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture) presented Bill No. 28, The Agricultural Producers' Organization Funding Act for second reading.

* (1110)

MOTION presented.

Mr. Findlay: I am pleased at this time to rise and introduce Bill No. 28, The Agricultural Producers' Organization Funding Act. The Bill fulfills a commitment made during the election campaign to provide an efficient means of funding a general policy organization for farmers in the Province of Manitoba. With passage of this Bill—Mr. Speaker? Could I have attention in the House, please?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I believe it is the Honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), not the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), who has the floor at this time. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): On a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Honourable Member for the Pas (Mr. Harapiak).

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Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Speaker, I was being attentive and listening to it. I was not being destructive of what was going on in the House, so I do not think my name should be going on the record as not being attentive.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I was distinctively looking at the Honourable Member when he was making his comments. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Speaker, with passage of this Bill, farm leaders will be able to devote more time to representing the interests of Manitoba farmers as less time will be required to maintain the funding base for their organization. Furthermore, adequate funding will ensure that the general farm policy organization will have the resources to research adequately farm policy issues and to provide strong representation for farmers on those issues.

The importance of a strong farm policy organization was never greater than it is today. The farm population comprises some 8 percent of the total population of Manitoba and we can include the basic producers, their wives and their family members. With the declining population, the farm population needs a very strong, effective leadership voice. Issues are more complex in today's modern economy, requiring more resources to develop policy positions on the many issues that face the farm community.

I would like to spend a little time giving the House a little background on the farm policy organizations that have been placed in this province over the many years of agricultural history. We have a long history prior to the present organizations that are here with regard to the representation that farmers have had in this province. Keystone Agricultural Producers can be traced back to the establishment in 1939 of the Manitoba Federation of Agriculture as a direct membership organization.

The Manitoba Federation of Agriculture was succeeded in 1945 by the Manitoba Federation of Agricultural Cooperation. At this time, direct membership was dropped as the MFAC assumed a role in farm policy and is the Manitoba section of the Cooperative Union of Canada. Farmer representation in the MFAC was through their farm cooperatives.

In 1957, the Manitoba Federation of Agriculture re-emerged as a direct membership organization with membership of farm cooperatives in addition. The Manitoba section of Cooperative Union of Canada became an independent organization.

The MFA was replaced in 1965 by the Manitoba Farm Bureau. The bureau was a federation of farm cooperatives, other rural organizations and producer marketing boards as they were organized and applied for membership in the 1970s. There was no provision for direct membership by farmers in the bureau.

In 1984, the Keystone Agricultural Producers was formed and the Manitoba Farm Bureau was disbanded. Once again, emphasis was placed on direct membership with affiliation open to rural groups such as cooperatives, marketing boards, farm business associations, etc.

At present, the general farm organization in the Province of Manitoba has some direct membership of 5,100 producers and 15 groups.

Another general policy organization, the Manitoba Farmers' Union, was organized on a direct membership basis in the 1950s.

In 1969, the structure was modified so farmers held direct membership in the National Farmers' Union with a Manitoba region to represent the Manitoba membership.

One lesson is clear from this brief review of the history of general farm organizations. Manitoba farmers will determine the form and the type of organization they believe best represents them. When changes are necessary in the organizations, farmers will determine what changes are required and they will make them.

General principles of Bill No. 28, one of the weaknesses of the general farm organizations has been the maintenance of adequate funding revenue. This week this has required the farm leaders to spend large amounts of their volunteered time on membership recruitment and renewals. This time has been supplied on a volunteer basis and has been a significant, sometimes unappreciated, burden. It has also limited the amount of time farm leaders have available to develop the policies and represent their memberships on the many significant issues that are in front of them.

(The Acting Speaker, Mr. William Chornopyski, in the Chair.)

The main purpose of Bill No. 28 is to provide the funding mechanism for a General Farm Policy Organization in the Province of Manitoba. Under the Act, purchasers of agricultural products will be required to deduct membership fees from money payable to farmers. To make this provision available, several important procedures are set out in the Act. The Act establishes the Agricultural Producers' Organization Certification Agency, and the certification agency will follow it, a two-stage procedure in approving the use of funding mechanism by General Farm Policy Organization.

1) The agency will determine which of the farm organizations meet the qualifications set out in the Act for general farm policy organizations.

2) If more than one farm organization is qualified, the agency will then determine which organization represents the largest number of farmers in Manitoba. The agency will then certify that organization as a certified organization in the province, and this certification will remain in place for a two-year period.

These two determinations must be made on a fair and non-partisan basis if farmers are to accept the decisions of the certification agency. Accordingly the Government decided to specify in the Act the majority of membership on this agency, four of the five members will be holding respective positions related to the farm community. These positions are: No. 1, the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Manitoba; secondly, the Director of School of Agriculture at the University of Manitoba; thirdly, the President of the

Manitoba Institute of Agrologists; and fourthly, the President of the Manitoba Union of Manitoba Municipalities.

People are appointed or elected to these positions totally independent from partisan politics or involvement in farm organizations. Thus their determinations will be seen as being fair and unbiased. The qualifications for a farm organization to be certified under the Act are very straightforward.

One, an organization must be incorporated under a Corporation's Act without share capital; secondly, an organization's objectives must be the development and promotion of a unified policy voice for Manitoba farmers; thirdly, an organization must have an open membership policy—open membership to all producers in the Province of Manitoba; fourthly, the organization cannot be a purchaser of agricultural commodities from farmers. When a qualified organization is certified as the farm organization entitled to use the funding mechanism, it shall maintain the status for two years. After two years, its certification may be renewed or if another qualified organization has a larger membership at that time, that other organization may be certified by the certifying agency. A farmer rate may request exemption from paying the membership fees and this exemption is also valid for a two-year period.

These two provisions ensure that a certification organization must maintain the support of farmers or it will lose its certification. In effect the exemption provision represents an ongoing referendum of the support farmers have for the organization. We have in this province many good farm leaders and I think it is time that we congratulated the many leaders of the past and by this Act we are giving the farm organization leaders of the present and future an opportunity to do their job representing the farm community.

The Act provides for a maximum membership fee of \$75 per year; however, if inflation should make this amount obsolete, it will not be necessary to amend the Act as provision is made for higher fees if approved by the certification agency. For the development of this legislation, the Government also considered the funding needs of other commodity organizations. Producers of specific commodities under marketing boards already have a well-funded organization to represent their commodities specific interests. The benefits of being a well-funded commodity group have been demonstrated to farmers over the years. I will just mention a few examples of some very good commodity organizations that are under the marketing boards that are representing their commodities very effectively: milk, hogs, eggs, broilers and turkeys. They have done a very effective job of representing the interests of their commodity on a provincial level, a federal level and an international level.

I believe that all farmers have the right to present their issues at those levels through effective representation and the funding of those organizations is very critical to making that representation.

* (1120)

Consequently, the Government decided to include a provision in Bill 28 to provide funding for designated

commodity groups. A commodity group can petition the certification agency for check-off powers. The certification agency can hold a referendum on the proposal, and a vote of 60 percent of eligible producers of that commodity, and the certification agency can then recommend to the Minister that funding legislation be brought into being.

This part of the Act also contains a provision for a producer to obtain an authorization number for exemption from paying the check-off to the designated commodity organization. Again, this is an ongoing referendum that ensures a designated organization maintains the support of the producers it represents.

I would like to clearly restate that if a commodity group is already adequately funded under a marketing board, this provision will not be available to it.

In conclusion, Mr. Acting Speaker, Manitoba farmers have recognized the need for a long time that an adequately funded general farm organization is needed in the Province of Manitoba. History proves that if an organization no longer meets the needs of the farmers, the farmers will take steps necessary to correct the situation. The Agricultural Producers Organization Funding Act has the support of many Manitoba farmers.

I urge all Members of this Legislature to give the Bill its support so that Manitoba farmers will have the strong, effective general farm organization required in today's increasingly complex world. The passing of this Act will put Manitoba as a province in a position of leadership in recognizing the role of farmers and farm leaders to represent themselves on very important issues on a provincial, a federal and an international level. At those levels, we will find that our farm leaders, as in the past, will continue to represent our farm community very well. Thank you.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Acting Speaker, I welcome the introduction of this Bill and would move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), that it be adjourned.

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): Mr. Acting Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would permit a question for clarification.

Can the Minister indicate whether the question of criteria in terms of determining the agency determining numbers, is there a criteria that will be developed that the agency will use to determine who has the greatest number of members, and on what basis will that criteria be developed?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Speaker, we will ask the certifying agency to develop the criteria that they will use in assessing the applications that come before it for certification.

Mr. Uruski: Is the Minister prepared to consider putting this question to a plebiscite vote of all producers in the Province of Manitoba?

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Mr. Findlay: No, it has been our determination that this decision was made on the basis that we have

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developed in the Act, that the certifying agency receiving applications and making the assessment, they may decide to use whatever criteria they believe is necessary to make the appropriate certification.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) that the debate be adjourned, agreed? (Agreed)

BILL NO. 29—THE CATTLE PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture) presented, by leave, Bill No. 29, The Cattle Producers Association Amendment Act, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able today to introduce Bill No. 29, The Cattle Producers Association Amendment Act.

Bill 29 is a fulfillment of a commitment we made during the 1986 election and the 1988 election. The passage of Bill 29, The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association will again operate on a sound financial basis. The MCPA was established in 1978 when The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association Act was by the present Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) and who was at that time the Minister of Agriculture.

For five years the association was a strong and effective voice for cattle producers in the Province of Manitoba. The association was able to provide services such as marketing information for cattle producers, market development and promotion programs were carried out also; and thirdly, a home economist to provide nutrition information and other services for consumers was employed. Fourthly, the Beef Information Centre promoted the consumption of beef in Manitoba.

The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association was able to represent cattle producers very effectively at both provincial and national levels on policy issues of concern to the Manitoba cattle industry. This all changed when the check-off provisions were removed from the Act in 1983 by the NDP administration. The Manitoba cattle producers, to their credit, remained as an organization throughout the intervening time, another five-year period, by operating on voluntary funding. With passage of Bill 29, the important programs that they had in place prior to the removal of the check-off provision will be revived and they will be a much more viable organization in terms of representing the cattle industry.

The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association will be able to raise the funds required to do their job for cattle producers. Just like I mentioned in the previous Bill, we have under The Natural Products Marketing Act a number of marketing boards which effectively can do this through the fees they collect on their check-off. The hog producers, the milk producers, the broiler producers have done a very effective job in lobbying for their commodity and we believe the cattle producers in this province need that opportunity to remain

competitive with those other forms of meat that are offered to the consumer.

It is recognized that not all cattle producers wish to support the MCPA. Therefore, we have offered in the Bill an opt-out mechanism and this will allow producers who do not wish to be checked off to register their name and receive a certification number. The opt-out mechanism has been greatly simplified in these proposed amendments. When the producer gets the authorization number and he goes to market his animals, he will present this authorization number and not be checked off.

The authorization number will be effective until it is cancelled by the producer at his request. This simple, up-front, opt-out provision makes it easy for producers to not support the MCPA if that is their desire. It also means that the MCPA is subject to an ongoing referendum by cattle producers. Therefore, the MCPA will have to be responsive to cattle producers' concerns if it is going to continue to maintain its revenue base.

Manitoba cattle producers have asked for these check-off powers because they believe that they can be an effective lobby voice in the province. They can assist in development of policies for the good of the cattle industry. They believe they can be an effective policy voice at the federal level and at the international level. And as we all know, the cattle industry like all other commodities is faced with a number of ongoing challenges and issues that must be addressed. Without the funding ability they cannot effectively represent their industry in this province or beyond.

* (1130)

Our Government is responding to this need to strengthen the cattle industry in this province and I would urge all Members of this Legislature to support Bill 29 so that the cattle producers of this province can be effectively represented so that they can promote and improve the industry for the good of the economy of the Province of Manitoba. Thank you.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): I would move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Vital, that debate on this Bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

DEBATE ON THIRD READING AMENDED BILL

BILL NO.—10 THE COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH ACT

Mr. Speaker: Bill No. 10, The Court of Queen's Bench Act; Loi sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper). (Stand)

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DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

**BILL NO. 8—THE COURT OF
QUEEN'S BENCH SMALL CLAIMS
PRACTICES
AMENDMENT ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 8, The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le recouvrement des petites créances à la Cour du Banc de la Reine, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor). (Stand)

**BILL NO. 9—STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT
(RE-ENACTED STATUTES) ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 9, Statute Law Amendment (Re-enacted Statutes) Act; Loi modifiant diverses dispositions législatives (Lois réadoptées), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak). (Stand)

**BILL NO. 11—THE CHILD CUSTODY
ENFORCEMENT AMENDMENT ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 11, The Child Custody Enforcement Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'exécution des ordonnances de garde, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) who has 39 minutes remaining.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Speaker

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Just a minute please, the Honourable Member for Churchill, on a point of order.

Mr. Cowan: I understand that they are going to get the Minister responsible for this Bill to come into the House so we would prefer to wait until he is here to speak.

An Honourable Member: It has to be, by leave, though.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to revert back to Bill No. 11?

Hon. James Downey (Acting Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, if the Member wishes to stand the Bill, have the Bill stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. The Honourable Member for The Pas, on a point of order.

Mr. Harapiak: I intend to speak on the Bill but I believe, because of what happened the other day, that the Attorney-General should be in the House to listen to his comments on the Bill.

Mr. Speaker: Stand.

**BILL NO. 15—THE COOPERATIVE
PROMOTION TRUST ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General, Bill No. 15, The Cooperative Promotion Trust Act; Loi sur le fonds en fiducie de promotion de la coopération, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Interlake who has 35 minutes remaining.

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, I wish this matter to stand because of the Minister not being in this House. I had intended to speak.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. We do not make reference to . . . Order please. The Honourable Acting Government House Leader.

Hon. James Downey (Acting Government House Leader): A point of order, Mr. Speaker, the long-standing tradition of this Assembly is not to make reference to whether or not a Member is or is not in this Chamber, and I would expect the Member for Interlake, who has been here probably as long as anyone, to apologize to the House and to the Member for that—I would call it rude, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. I have already ruled on that and I have already told the Honourable Member for the Interlake.

Is it standing? Did it stand? (Stand)

**BILL NO. 23—THE REGULATIONS
VALIDATION STATUTES AMENDMENT ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General, Bill No. 23, The Regulations Validation Statutes Amendment Act; Loi modifiant diverses dispositions législatives afin de valider certains règlements, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. James.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I want to make some brief comments on this Bill. It is the Bill, the purpose of which is to introduce, hopefully, some logic into the legislative scheme pertaining to regulations, and to lessen the costs of the translation of Government legislation, statutes and regulations resulting from the Supreme Court decision which we all know so well requiring such translations.

Let me preface my comments on this particular Bill by referring back to my comments on the other statute re-enactment Bills which dealt with the same Supreme Court decision. I made comments in those Bills about the importance of the French language in Manitoba and to Manitobans, the importance of the decision of the Supreme Court, and I congratulated the many participants, and in particular the Societe franco-manitobaine for their long and arduous journey to the Supreme Court decision which ultimately recognized their rights in Manitoba. These comments, I think, are relevant to this Bill in that my concern about this Bill is that it does not in any way give short shrift. Mr.

Speaker, I wonder if I might have the attention of Honourable Members.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I believe if Honourable Members would like to carry on with their private discussions that we have ample room out in the hallways. I believe we would like to hear the remarks being made by the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

Mr. Edwards: As I was saying, the comments I made on the Statute Re-enactment Bills with respect to the importance of the Supreme Court decision and the French language in Manitoba and the rights which were gained in that Supreme Court decision, or I should say regained, rerecognized, are germane to this particular Bill in that it is my concern that this Bill does, in no way, give short shrift to the rights gained by the Franco Manitobans. I have some concern that any trend towards not translating regulations which are a very, very important body of the laws, important as the statutes, may be seen as giving short shrift to the decision.

This I anticipate being able to discuss more fully at the committee stage, because the particular repercussions of this Bill are not extremely clear, and I think it deserves further exploring. It also deserves further exploring as to what further regulations will not be translated into French. The Act does validate regulations made by lower levels, and to that extent is simply a necessary part of the regulation process. It recognizes the lower levels' ability to create regulations and pass by-laws themselves. It is through that means, it is through the shifting of the power to make by-laws that there is no requirement for the translation because it is not seen to be within the scope of that decision.

Specifically in this Bill there are five statutes that are dealt with, The Northern Affairs Act, The Health Services Act, The Public Schools Act and The Municipal Act. With respect to The Northern Affairs Act it is stated in this Bill that the Minister can make regulations delegating authority to pass by-laws which regulate a community's behaviour to community councils and small northern communities. The Minister, however, retains the right to disallow these by-laws. But since the by-laws are no longer coming from the Minister, they are not subject to the translation requirement. To that extent, it takes the status of these by-laws for local government districts instead of regulations.

* (1140)

They also, I might add, as well as not being needed to be translated, do not need to be published in the Manitoba Gazette and that causes some concern as well with respect to the continuation of this practice. We certainly do not want to sanction, as legislators, anything which takes public notice away from the regulations which are, as I have referenced in earlier comments, the most important part of the law as far as I am concerned, in that regulations are generally the body of law that affects everybody's everyday life.

The Health Services Act, as well, is referenced in this Act and in that regard the Minister can continue the current health district boundaries which have been previously amended by the local Boards of Reference even though these powers of amendment lay only with the Minister. This, again, official transfer to the local boards eliminates the need for translation of the regulations.

The Public Schools Act, very briefly, the reference to that Act in this Bill gives the Board of Reference rather than the Minister or Cabinet the ability to validate the division of public school boundaries. This is a recognition and continuation of the boundaries established by the local Board of Reference. Since this authority now lies with the local board, there is no need to translate the past boundary changes and local regulations.

The Local Government Districts Act makes The Municipal Act apply to the local government districts except for stated exceptions. It continues the existing boundaries and, by recognizing the authority of the local councils, again removes the necessity for translation of local regulations and by-laws.

Finally, The Municipal Act is referenced and this appears to be a slightly different case than the previous four in that French translation is not a factor.

Under this Bill, there is a limitation placed on the ability to construct local access roads onto provincial highways and this hopefully will increase highway safety. As well, this Bill expands the control zone around provincial roads from 125 feet to 250 feet on either side of the road's edge. This allows hopefully for better road expansion. The current lines according to many authorities are quite a mess. So this provision hopefully allows the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to make a one-time declaration of 250 feet to clarify the situation.

As I say, translation is not a factor. This Act is in French and English and all the regulations will be as well.

With respect to the expansion of these roads, I recognize that there are some concerns which have been brought forward by various interest groups and indeed constituents of mine with respect to the expansion of this zone around the highways. I am convinced that this expansion of the roadway area is in fact a good thing and, in particular, to the extent that it normalizes the practice across the province. I realize, however, that there are some adverse implications and I look forward to discussing those at the committee stage.

The implications overall of this Act with respect to the saving of money, approximately \$98,000, is hopefully going to be saved on the costs of translation and printing in the Manitoba Gazette. That is a small sum when compared to the value of publication in the Manitoba Gazette and indeed translation. For my part, I recognize that probably not everything that happens to be published by the Government or happens to have any relationship to the Government has to be translated and I recognize the extremely high costs.

I look forward to exploring the full implications of these regulations on Manitobans, and in particular

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French-speaking Manitobans, because obviously the translation that will not be done will be of particular interest to them. I look forward to hearing and being assured that this is not in any way cutting back on the commitment which is mandated by the Supreme Court for this Government and this province to French translation of all our laws and the French language in our court system.

There is a possibility under the Northern Affairs amendments that some small pockets of Francophones and, in particular, Metis in the North may not be able to receive regulations in French. This I bring to the Attorney-General's (Mr. McCrae) attention as possibly something that his department has not considered. The protection of any French-speaking people's right, in Manitoba, to be able to read their laws in French and indeed go to court in French has to be a top priority.

It can be argued that these amendments are a decentralizing force as they give more power to boards and councils in the various regions. The decentralization of power, as I have referenced in a previous Act which is before this House, The Regulations Act, has become a necessary part of Government life in the modern world. It is simply impossible in the sophisticated society in which we live to have every piece of rule or regulation with the force of law come before the House and be dealt with by the House.

However, strict restraints always have to be put on regulation making and the Minister is ultimately responsible for any regulations made in that area. The decentralization, I simply caution, must always be seen in that light, that ultimately accountability is political and comes to the House and the people have a right to expect that accountability. The regulations in this respect, I am not casting any aspersions on the local boards who get the regulation-making power; no doubt they do a good job. The only caution is that ultimately the Minister who is responsible for these various Acts must take the responsibility for the regulation-making ability which they delegate.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, we accept the changes to The Highway Traffic Act, in particular, as they have no language implications. We want assurances from the Government that no French-speaking people in Manitoba will be in any way prejudiced by the lack of translation of these regulations and we look forward to those assurances from the Government, which were not completely and in a detailed fashion set forth by the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) and have not as yet been set forward. We look forward to those assurances.

Overall, given that assurance, if it is forthcoming, we are pleased to support this Bill in that it formalizes the regulations procedure and recognizes the decentralization that has occurred. We are hoping, and again I go back to the assurances we are looking for, that this is not any kind of attempt to get out of the translation process and harm Franco-Manitobans, and in that, we look for assurances that the regulations that are not being translated are either obsolete or have been taken over by another jurisdiction. With that, Mr. Speaker, I end my comments. Thank you.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

BILL NO. 27—THE PRIVATE ACTS REPEAL ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 27, The Private Acts Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant certaines lois d'intérêt privé, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). (Stand)

BILL NO. 30—THE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT (TAXATION) ACT, 1988

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill No. 30, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1988; Loi de 1988 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Transcona.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): I would like to address certain issues related to Bill No. 30, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1988. As Finance critic for the Liberal Opposition, I have reviewed this Bill carefully to ascertain that it is in total conformity with the Budget presented by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) on August 8 of this year and subsequently passed by this House.

Although I am advised that certain technical amendments may be forthcoming, I am satisfied that Bill No. 30 generally gives effect accurately to taxation measures foreseen by the Budget and, in addition, makes certain technical changes to the Act required by the first phase of federal tax reform.

I do not intend at this point to repeat in detail my Party's criticisms of the August Budget. These criticisms are well-documented in Hansard. I will limit myself to reminding the Minister of Finance, in the spirit of cooperation, that the province's accumulated deficit is in excess of \$11 billion and that the growth rate of Government expenditures cannot continue to exceed the growth rate of Government expenditures cannot continue to exceed the growth rate of the provincial economy. Government spending is projected to grow by 6.7 percent before extraordinary items during the current fiscal year compared with the Minister's estimate of economic growth below 6 percent before inflation adjustment.

* (1150)

I also remind the Minister that the average Canadian family's income is up more than seven times since 1961, but that the same family's taxes have gone up more than 15 times in the same period. The Conference Board of Canada has estimated that growth in Canada will fall by half in 1989. It occurs to me that there is a relationship between these two facts. Unless the Government wishes to be the main engine of economic growth in Manitoba, the growth rate of Government revenues cannot continue to exceed the growth rate of the provincial economy.

In light of the Government's plans to increase Manitoba collections by 9.2 percent and income taxes

by 8.4 percent during the current fiscal year, the minor tax relief measures provided by Bill No. 30 fail to strike me as being adequate. It concerns me particularly that the Bill contains no measures to boost consumer confidence. The private sector, which must be stimulated as an engine of economic growth instead of being taxed into oblivion, is composed of business and the consumer. Consumer confidence and business confidence go hand in hand. Without one, the other loses its significance. Tax relief measures that ignore the importance of consumer confidence are ill-conceived, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the Minister to approach with some urgency the provision of a confidence building measure of tax relief for the consumer. I suggest to the Minister that such a gesture could stimulate business activity far in excess of the cost to the Treasury. I renew my recommendation that the Government start a gradual reduction of the 2 percent flat tax on net income.

On Monday, I had the pleasure of attending an economic briefing presented by the Royal Bank of Canada. The bank is a highly competent financial forecaster and presented a best case forecast of 2.2 percent economic growth in Manitoba in 1989. The bank emphasized that we are entering the seventh year of economic recovery, an unprecedented recovery in the post-war period, and that its best case forecast is subject to substantial downside risk.

I must warn all Honourable Members that our \$11 billion debt obliges us to take determined measures to prevent an economic downturn that would threaten our debt-servicing capacity and put severe strains on our social programs.

We cannot afford not to use the tax system to build consumer confidence, Mr. Speaker. In addition, we must address the problem of the competitiveness of our tax system vis-a-vis other jurisdictions. I have mentioned in previous debates that most Canadian provinces exempt production machinery and pollution control equipment from sales tax. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) does not dispute my concerns in this regard. He has himself circulated to Members an inter-provincial tax comparison that documents these concerns in detail.

Because of the financial constraints within which we work, we may not be able to rectify all instances of uncompetitive Manitoba taxes immediately, Mr. Speaker, but we can take one immediate action to prevent an accelerated flight of capital and labour from Manitoba.

Each of us as individuals can use our persuasive powers during the current federal election campaign to ensure the rejection of the Free Trade Agreement negotiated with the United States by the present federal Government.

If the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is concerned about the competitiveness of Manitoba's tax system vis-a-vis other provinces, he must be absolutely dismayed about its lack of competitiveness vis-a-vis the 50 states. I point out that none of the 50 states is burdened with an accumulated deficit, while our tax system must service \$11 billion in debt.

To conclude this portion of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, the Official Opposition does not take issue with the specific provisions of Bill No. 30. Rather, we take issue with the absence of certain key measures to stimulate economic growth by restraining taxation and by improving the competitiveness of our tax system.

I make the assumption at this point that a Member of the Second Opposition Party will rise to repeat their criticism of supposed tax breaks for Inco and the CPR in this Bill. Considering that this Government projects some \$100 million in increased mining tax revenues during the current fiscal year, I consider the assertion of a tax break for Inco absurd.

The Second Opposition Party has also criticized the absence from the Bill of an increase in the motive fuel tax on fuel for railway engines. The present rate, I point out, is almost triple that of any mainland province other than Saskatchewan, and I am tempted to label the New Democratic Party's position absurd in this instance as well, but their position is more than absurd, Mr. Speaker.

I am first and foremost the Member for Transcona in this House and I want the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) to know that I genuinely resent his Party's position on the motive fuel tax. Because of the extensive railway maintenance facilities in Manitoba, our province is a substantial net beneficiary of Canada's railway industry. The Canadian National Railway provides 2,000 highly paid industrial jobs in my riding.

With rumours circulating in my riding that part of Prime Minister Mulroney's hidden agenda is the transfer of these jobs to the Point St. Charles shops in Montreal, the last thing I want to hear from the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) is a proposal for punitive taxes that would justify the Mulroney plan.

The New Democratic Party formerly prided itself on its friendly attitude toward my constituents. I urge the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) to reconsider and to cease and desist from making remarks that, on behalf of the people of Transcona, I find very unfriendly indeed.

While I am on the subject of punitive taxes, Mr. Speaker, I must refer to certain comments placed on the record by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) in introducing Bill No. 30 which imposes a punitive tax on leaded gasoline. We support this tax and indeed commend the Minister for a measure consistent with our call for punitive taxes on pollutants and polluting firms. However, Mr. Speaker, I completely reject the Minister's assertion that punitive taxes tend to fall on those least able to pay. In fact, well-crafted taxes fall on those targeted to pay.

* (1200)

The Minister must be aware of the concept of elasticity of demand either on the short-term or the long-term large price increases, due to punitive taxes on products, tend to reduce demand for those products, to cause financial loss to the producer and to force the producer to cooperate with public policy. The Minister must know that his Government is able to craft taxation measures that have the principal effect of making pollution a non-paying option in this province. Punitive taxes are always

distasteful but pollution threatens our environment, our economy, our quality of life and our lives themselves.

I might add that the Liberal Party proposes to balance punitive taxes on pollutants and polluting firms with the sales tax exemption for pollution control equipment. I also might add that a majority of Canadian provinces support our approach, Mr. Speaker.

On Thursday of this week I joined Robert Greenaway, Joey Hydrochuk and Derek Bousquet in making a presentation on pollution to Grade 12 students at Transcona Collegiate under the direction of their teacher, Mr. Hugo Peters. If the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) had witnessed the knowledge and well-informed deep concern of these fine young people, I know he would be more committed to using the tax system to fight pollution.

Mr. Speaker, I await with anticipation the Minister's amendments and I assure Honourable Members of my personal undivided attention to their remarks on this Bill. Thank you.

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

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 34—THE MUNICIPAL AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), Bill No. 34, The Municipal Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert. (Stand)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Acting Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, you have called all the Bills on the Order Paper?

Mr. Speaker: On the Order Paper, all those that were—yes.

Mr. Manness: I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), 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 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 Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Department of Education; and the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) in the Chair for the Department of Health.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—EDUCATION

* (1210)

Mr. Chairman, Harold Gilleshammer: I call the committee meeting to order on Estimates of the

Department of Education. We are on item 1.(g) Administration and Professional Certification: (1) Salaries \$893,900.00. Shall the item pass? The Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise a few questions on an item that was raised this morning in Question Period that deals with the Bachelor of Nursing in The Pas. I am not sure this is the appropriate area to raise it on, but I feel that I could—

Mr. Chairman: This is Professional Certification—the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus).

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Mr. Chairman, if I remember correctly, through you to the Minister, we were speaking about speech therapists and their accreditation and identification here. Have you set standards for the speech therapists to participate in the programs in Manitoba?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Which programs are you referring to?

Mr. Angus: If I remember accurately, and correct me if I am wrong, we are talking about speech therapists, lack of same in the province and in the education system.

Mr. Derkach: Well, Mr. Chairman, the speech therapists are certified through the Certification Board of Manitoba.

Mr. Angus: It is Manitoba Education that does it. The question, Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, was, the number of speech therapists who are in the school system who were attending to children, and the accreditation of them, the qualifications that they have to have to participate in that.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I will take that question under advisement and will get back to you with the specific details of that. I do not have the numbers in front of me.

Mr. Angus: While you are taking it under advisement, Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, perhaps you would be kind enough to indicate whether or not it is accurate that individuals have to have a Master's Degree in order to be able to perform this service in the school systems, and whether or not that actually, in real terms, restricts the potential and/or the numbers of people that can actively participate in this program for the betterment of the end user? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Derkach: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we will take that under advisement as well.

Mr. Angus: Thank you.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Following on from my honourable friend's questions, I wonder if the Minister could tell us what the present procedures are in the department with respect to facilitating speech therapists

and the training of speech therapists, and the recruiting of speech therapists to Manitoba schools to deal with the problems that students face, in particular, at the early ages and the early years in our school system?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, the training is done at the university levels, of course. In terms of recruiting, we have actively sought to recruit as many speech therapists as we can. As a matter of fact, there are some vacancies still around the province where we do not have adequate numbers of speech therapists in place. Certainly we have travelled across the province to try and ensure that we can hire as many speech therapists to look after the needs, and at the present time, it is no secret that the demand outstrips the supply in terms of speech therapists.

Mr. Edwards: In that regard the question that I was specifically asking was what programs are in place to facilitate not just the recruitment of speech therapists, but also Manitobans going and taking speech therapy, and it is my understanding that requires going to school somewhere outside of the Province of Manitoba, and, in particular, I think that the University of North Dakota and other American universities.

Mr. Derkach: The Member is quite correct in that there are no programs available in Manitoba at the universities, but the students who are interested in the training are certainly eligible for the student aid support. We encourage participation in those programs through bursaries and that sort of thing, but in terms of having courses at our universities in Manitoba right now, we do not have that capability.

Mr. Edwards: Given that there is this dire need in the school system, and I do not think it is an understatement to call it a dire need, and given that Manitoba does not have the educational resources, I recognize there is a bursary program where the Province of Manitoba oftentimes supplements student loans from the federal Government. However, I am aware of at least one other province, being Saskatchewan, that I think has a similar problem to ours and has gone out and specifically recruited Saskatchewanians who are interested in pursuing this and given specific funding to those people to leave the province to take the necessary training on the understanding that they come back and serve in Saskatchewan once they have received their training. That has been, to my knowledge, an extremely successful program in Saskatchewan.

I wonder if the Department of Education in Manitoba has considered that, using Manitobans who are from Manitoba who will want to come back to Manitoba and who want to serve Manitoba children as speech therapists, and supporting them specifically to go and take their training, as they must elsewhere, coming back to Manitoba to serve our children. Obviously, as with everything else, I think it is particularly hard in the rural areas, not just Winnipeg.

Mr. Derkach: This kind of initiative has not been undertaken in the past and certainly is something that we have been talking about in terms of the shortage of speech therapists in the province. Certainly it is an

interesting concept and one that we will be considering in our future plans in terms of the Department of Education.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Yes, I notice in the Salaries, a situation where there is an item on the bottom of the page explaining that one position was transferred in from Municipal Affairs in relation to rewriting The Education Administration Act and The Public Schools Act. Could the Minister indicate whether this was a need identified in the administration, or what brought this transfer on?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Minister, this was done under the former administration.

This move, this transfer was done under the former administration and of course it was done in order to—this individual is a lawyer and it was done to facilitate some attention to The Public Schools Act, yes.

Mrs. Charles: Was this a permanent transfer or is this person available to be back into Municipal Affairs after the item has taken place?

Mr. Derkach: Yes, the transfers could go back and forth and if necessary the position may be transferred back.

Mrs. Charles: Could the Minister give any indications of what changes are being contemplated?

* (1220)

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, in a general sense, I guess there are no broad changes being contemplated in this Session to The Public Schools Act, but certainly we know that there are—much of the school Act is somewhat out of date and certainly we have to take a very close look at possible changes in the future. That is what this individual is looking at and making recommendations to me as Minister about it but, at this point in time, I cannot be any more specific than that.

Mrs. Charles: I want this item—not being my critic area, I am supposing that somewhere either in The Public Schools Act or The Education Administration Act there is a reference to the collection of taxes to be collected for the educational system. Could the Minister indicate whether this is an item under consideration for revamping in these Acts?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, this is not in the school Act. That aspect of it is in the Municipal Act in terms of how taxes are collected.

Mrs. Charles: Realizing that, it is a consideration that perhaps this school Act or The Education Administration Act should be considering ways and means of collecting these taxes since it has been a dispute well recognized this year?

Mr. Derkach: No, Mr. Chairman, we are not considering that at this time.

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Mr. Angus: Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, on the speech therapists issue again, it is my understanding, undocumented and I do not have any proof, that there is a considerable waiting period for the assessment of children who may have some form of a speech impediment or difficulty in learning to speak properly. It is also my understanding—and this remains to be verified and this is part of the question that the Minister took as notice that once the children get into the school system that there are speech therapists available and that the waiting time is not nearly as long, that there is a more reactive process once the children are in the school system.

My contention is that once the children get to the school system, it is oftentimes very, very difficult to start correcting the problem and it takes a lot more energy and a lot more resources. I am asking your opinion or your intervention in relation to utilizing those speech therapists in the school system to reach out to the community to assist those children before they actually get to the school system in some way, shape or form, thereby (a) addressing the problem at the source; (b) reducing the ongoing incremental costs to the school systems by getting children into the school system who have already had the problem addressed.

Now I recognize that we are transversing Government departments and it may take some cooperation between the two departments, but I would like your comments of your opinions on the practicality of the idea.

Mr. Derkach: I guess if we were up to date with regard to waiting lists in the school system, then certainly we could be approaching the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to try and coordinate an effort of this nature, but it is very difficult when we in fact have a waiting list and then we have areas that do not have a speech therapist. So I think we would be criticized by officials in the school system who would say we are not looking after our own needs and, at the same time, we are reaching down into the needs of the health field.

I can appreciate the concern and certainly recognize it very fully but, until such time that we have adequate numbers of speech therapists, this is going to be a very difficult problem to address.

Mr. Angus: I appreciate that it is a complicated and a deep problem, one that goes beyond the surface appearance. I also recognize that when you come to dealing with children who have this type of difficulty, there is a great deal of anxiousness on behalf of the parents to address the problem. So it is a very emotionally charged issue, but I suggest to you, and again would like your comments, with the current method of addressing the specifics of the problem, we are doing nothing more than digging ourselves deeper and deeper into the hole.

As you get more and more children from the alleged 19-month waiting list of addressing the problem into the system, with the problem compounded, you are going to get further and further and further behind so that, unless the school system and those people who are part of the speech therapy program in the school system recognize that they have got to go beyond the

existing elastic parameters and address the problem at the source, in conjunction with being in the school—and I appreciate that it is not an easy instantaneous solution-type problem. I would hope that the Minister would acknowledge and recognize that they have got to start getting to the source of the problem if they ever expect to reduce or eliminate the backlog that they are starting to develop within the school system now.

Mr. Derkach: Well, Mr. Chairman, of course we understand the problem is growing and not diminishing in terms of the backlog. If we had the resources in terms of the people who are qualified to handle the situations, we would certainly be reaching into the pre-school area. It would be very difficult for us to justify that and, at the same time, allow the backlog that is now in place in the school system itself to build up, in addition, in those areas where we do not have speech therapists that are crying for them. It is certainly difficult to address this situation.

But recognizing that, I think one of the ways to resolve that is to encourage actively more of our graduates to enter into the profession so that we would have larger numbers of speech therapists in the province, qualified speech therapists.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, did you suggest earlier that you were going to be setting up a program in the Manitoba area and reviewing the standards and trying to address the problem? We recognize a need that needs to be filled and we know that we have lots of anxious students graduating from universities who are anxious to get into the field of social services and help people, and it seems to me that we have a natural potential marriage here. Did you say that you were going to be putting some efforts into addressing this within our own school systems in Manitoba, either at the community college level or at the university level?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Chairman, I said that it is a situation that we are going to address. I did not say that we were going to be developing programs or developing extra bursaries. I think it is premature for me to say the exact approach that is going to be taken, but in fact I can indicate that we will be addressing the situation and exploring, I guess, ways in which we can address the shortage.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Minister, as in the inadvertent release of the documents that the department had prepared concerning illiteracy, do you or have you commissioned any reports from your department or have you got any substantial documents that would indicate that you have been made aware of this problem and that a course of action has been identified for you?

Mr. Derkach: I can tell the Honourable Member that certainly, in dealing with the requests and the numbers, we are aware of the needs within the school system. Certainly we have not taken a look at what is required in the Health area because that is not under our jurisdiction. So, in effect, there has been no report prepared for me by either the Department of Health

or my department in terms of course of action, in terms of marrying the two departments in this specific area.

Mr. Angus: That is fair.

Mr. Chairman: On item (g)(1) Salaries, shall the item pass?

Mr. Angus: No, no, no, wait a minute.

Mr. Chairman: The hour being 12:30 p.m., committee rise.

SUPPLY—HEALTH

* (1210)

Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko: I call this section of the Committee of Supply to order, please.

This section is continuing to consider the Estimates of the Department of Health. We are presently considering item 1.(c) Health Advisory Network—the Member for Ellice.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Chairperson, further to a question yesterday in regard to the Health Advisory Network, we had discussed the subcommittee of Promotion of Wellness and the Mental Health subcommittee. He also talked about the northern health issues. I am wondering if the Minister could indicate to us, other than the Health Advisory Network, is there any special committee or a portion of his department that will be looking at northern health issues?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Chairman, those issues of course are always subject to discussion within the department. The Standing Committee on Medical Manpower always has that role in the background, of physician recruitment, including northern Manitoba as well as rural Manitoba. Hopefully, over the next short while—I simply have not got all the pieces put together—but the Standing Committee on Medical Manpower may well be assuming a little broader role over the next number of months to address manpower issues in a more complete form. Certainly SCOMM is one area that we are investigating northern physicians.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, the Minister had indicated that the Health Advisory Network would be looking into the teaching hospitals. I am wondering if the Minister could tell us, will this Health Advisory Committee be dealing with the whole area of early discharge from hospitals and looking at options for community care? Is this one of the areas that this Advisory Network would be dealing with?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Chairman, not with the teaching hospital review. That is more narrow and more specific. In terms of the second phase involving all of the Winnipeg hospitals in terms of their role study, certainly there is no question that aspect of change in medical delivery will come up as part of the discussions. As my honourable friend well knows, that has impact on how

service is delivered within the institutions, what beds are used for. As you move to more ambulatory, outpatient and day surgery procedures, you have a declining need for beds. Certainly that will all be part of the broader hospital study, not specific to the teaching hospital.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister tell us, is it this Government's philosophy or belief that where appropriate supports are available that this Government would believe that community care is the better option, being a better quality of life where supports are available, better than institutional care? Would that be a philosophy or a direction this Government would be moving towards?

Mr. Orchard: In terms of a philosophy that guides the kinds of decisions we are making, and hopefully the kind of policy thrust that will put on is twofold. First of all, it is quality of patient care; and secondly, it is an effort that will hopefully result in us delivering more efficiently and cost effectively health care services in the province. I do not think there is any argument whatsoever that the kidney crushing process—I always mess up the name—is a goal that is endorsed apolitically in this House and, indeed, in the health care field. - (Interjection)- Did I just say "kidney crushing"? -(Interjection)- I think I said "kidney stone crushing," because I would not want to scare off potential patients.

At any rate, as a general direction, that accomplishes two things that fit those broad goals that I indicated. First of all, quality patient care and certainly over the long haul of use of that kind of technology, reduce the cost to the system. The hotel cost, if you will, of the system, because you are not having people in acute care beds recovering from surgery for 10 to 14 days. In a more general term, and of course this is the argument you get into with technology and investigative technology. What is the role of CAT scans and the newest resolution process, magnetic resonance imaging? The proponents indicate that with the new imaging technologies that you no longer do exploratory surgeries. Remember when they used to try to find out whether you had cancer, you often got opened up surgically. That is rarely done now because of the new imaging techniques. That fits with the philosophy of better patient care and better delivery of service.

But if my honourable friend is saying are we going to rush headlong into community-based services—no, because there is that balance that you want to maintain, of quality of care, and cost-efficient service delivery. Where appropriate and where economic, certainly services will be moved out of the institution. That is something that has been going on, I guess, for probably 20 years if we wanted to go back that far, by governments of all political stripes across Canada and North America. That is a goal we seek to further with the quality of care and the cost-effective delivery as the two founding principles upon which decisions will be based.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, will the Advisory Committee looking at health care and community health care, will they be involved with having access to the

data from the Price Waterhouse Review in regard to one particular piece of our community care, and that is Home Care?

Mr. Orchard: Certainly, whenever appropriate that report, Price Waterhouse, is available to anyone who inquires in my office as long as copies remain. I might put out the standing offer to Members of the Legislature, if you are not going to use your copy of the Price Waterhouse Report, the requests have been substantial, and if you turned them back in, we could make sure that interested individuals got them.

Ms. Gray: While we are speaking about Home Care and reviews, I was quite interested today to see the activity identification for the Seniors' Directorate, in which the activity identification is to coordinate the fragmented reporting functions of Continuing Care, Home Care, Personal Care Homes and the Well Elderly Program. Now all of these programs are within, currently, the jurisdiction of the Department of Health. I am wondering if the Minister would comment on perhaps, as a Member of Cabinet, why the decision was made to have the Seniors' Directorate specifically deal with these particular health programs, Continuing Care, Home Care and Personal Care Homes and the Well Elderly Program?

Mr. Orchard: What is the general thrust and intent there is to make sure that—and it is not only within the Department of Health, because other departments of Government offer program support, particularly to the Well Elderly, including Community Services, including Housing, including Lotteries, because lotteries funding does go to support some activities and recreation that are focused on Well Elderly, etc. So one thing that you quickly find when you inherit Government is that there is a diversity of program availability, not only targeted at the seniors but across the board, offered by a number of departments. First-blush inspection is that if you have two or three departments providing financial support to a given activity, you have to question whether you have adequate understanding of how those funds are being used to provide excellent service, if you will.

Ms. Gray: Since the Minister seems to be quite familiar with the programs offered to the elderly, could he perhaps tell me what services the elderly are offered in the Community Services Department?

* (1220)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I would love to take all that sort of time talking about services throughout Government. But surely my honourable friend would want to deal with the Health Estimates and the programs we are offering in Health. The appropriate place to ask that would be when we get to such lines as Gerontology, Continuing Care, Personal Care Home line in the Health Services Commission where those programs in the Department of Health, which are the Estimates we are dealing with now.

My honourable friend had a month and a half or two months with Community Services to pose those

questions, and surely she would not want to waste time with Health to do it here again.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, my reason for asking the question was, and the Minister has alluded to the fact that we had a month and a half to ask questions in Community Services, and, yes, we did. In fact, I think the Minister will find, and I am not sure how well informed the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) was, that services to the elderly in her department, they are not a priority. The only way that they are services to the elderly in Community Services is if it within another program mandate such as an elderly person happens to have a mental handicap, an elderly person happens to be involved with the child welfare system in the sense that they may have guardianship of children, so that within that department they are not specific programs.

I asked that question because I do have a concern about the level of understanding of this particular Government as to the issues and the system of what departments run what programs. In Community Services Estimates, again, when I brought up the area of residential care system, which spans two departments, Community Services and Health, the Minister of Community Services indicated that the Minister responsible for Seniors would be dealing with that coordination. Now, we find out that in fact this is not mentioned at all in the activity identification, and the entire activity identification relates, by and large, to the Department of Health.

I have a lot of difficulty because I am not sure that the opposite side of the House, the Government, has an understanding and an appreciation of the various Government departments because for a Department of Seniors, which was to be an advocacy group, now we find out that the Government has changed their mind, and the Seniors is going to be looking at the reporting functions of programs which are in the Department of Health.

This is why I asked the question, because I do not feel that the Government has an understanding or an appreciation, and they have decided to present in this House one or two statements as to what is going to occur. I have a lot of difficulty in thinking that a Seniors Directorate, where there are only two staff years allocated, is going to be able to adequately deal with the fragmenting of the reporting functions in major, major programs such as Continuing Care, Personal Care Homes and the Well Elderly.

I am asking the Minister, first of all, was he aware of this, and what are his comments about the role that the Seniors Directorate will take in these areas which specifically fall in the jurisdiction of his Department of Health?

Mr. Orchard: One thing I want to assure my honourable friend, so that she does not go home and not sleep securely tonight, seniors citizens under this Government will receive as high a quality care as is humanly and economically possible. Through this department, in the Personal Care Home line through Gerontology, through Continuing Care, we have increased budgets in all of those areas.

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I have done this on the record, something I seldom do, but I give the previous administration, who I constantly was attacking, credit under their support for seniors' programs, that they started to really mobilize in 1985 to provide some seed funding, if you will, a modest amount of funding to community organizations to get seniors involved in a volunteer way of providing enhanced services in their communities. That is good policy and good program and we are going to continue with that.

In addition to that, a Minister responsible for Seniors will be the Government's focal point for seniors to call with where they are not sure how they can access a given service. As I have indicated, and as my honourable friend knows, because she worked in Regional Services, a number of departments will provide a number of services to seniors in a number of areas.

To have a Minister responsible for Seniors reflects two things on behalf of this Government: a) we recognize that the seniors of this province are a growing segment of our population and the program development and needs in focusing is an important issue. I am proud and pleased that we are the first Government in the history of this province to recognize that with a specific function of a Minister responsible for Seniors. That does not show less interest. That shows more interest in where we want to go in terms of provision of services, coordination of services.

I know my honourable friends maybe wish they would have thought of a ministry for seniors so they could have put it in their election platform, but unfortunately they did not. We did, and we have delivered on it. As my honourable friend, the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld) meets with more seniors' groups, as we did yesterday morning, and becomes familiar with the strengths and the gaps in service programming to the senior citizens of this province, as given to us in meeting with various seniors' groups, the policy direction, the focus will change because we are dealing with a very mobile population—mobile population is not the word—a very dynamically changing population, whose needs are dynamically changing. We want to, as best as possible, be responsive to those changing needs and demands amongst the senior citizens, but we cannot do it in isolation. We cannot do it with the all wisdom and knowledge that the previous administration presumed they had in their front and second bench and Cabinet. We intend, with the Minister of Seniors (Mr. Neufeld), to involve the senior citizens' groups in consultation so that we do not develop our programs in isolation to them, the receivers and the deliverers often of those programs.

I do not know where my honourable friends in the Liberal Party are coming from, but they seem to have this hangup about our Minister responsible for Seniors. Would you prefer that we now go to the senior citizens of Manitoba and say, look, we are a minority Government and we are under pressure in the House because the Liberal Party does not like our Seniors' Minister so, therefore, we are going to have to remove him from that job and cancel the Seniors' portfolio. And there will be no Cabinet Minister around the Government of Manitoba speaking on behalf of seniors

because that is what the Liberal Party appears to want. I want to tell you, on this side of the House, we do not want that because that is why we named a Minister responsible for Seniors, and that is why he is doing his job of consultation and development of policy and program.

I do not know exactly from the tenor of the questioning where my honourable friend wishes to go and, if they are concerned about how the Seniors ministry ought to focus in on the portfolio and what it ought to be doing, let us hear their proposal. We are open even to suggestions from the Liberal Party.

You did not think of it before the election, to have a Minister responsible for Seniors, and I know that you are greatly disappointed that you did not have the understanding of their needs and their desires that we did. I can understand that, but swallow your pride as a Party and stand up and give us your best suggestions as to how you think our Minister responsible for Seniors can effectively develop policies that are needed, coordination of program and services that are needed. We will listen to you.

I want to tell you my honourable friend, the Member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) is the finest Member that has come out of Rossmere constituency for years and years and years and years. I want to tell you that the Member for Rossmere is a breath of fresh air, a beacon of light and knowledge and enlightenment in the senior citizen community of Manitoba. He is one of, and I will use the direct quotation of my honourable friend, the Member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst), he is one of the straightest-shooting Ministers in this Government, present speaker excepted.

I want to tell my honourable friends that if they have difficulties with this Government who wants to establish a ministry of Seniors and have a Minister in Cabinet responsible for seniors, speak your mind or forever hold your peace. I want to say to you that this Government, this Party recognizes that seniors are an important and growing component of our society. They are the people who built the very foundations of our economy and our province upon which we now prosper and are able to provide the kind of services to all Manitobans. If it was not for those senior citizens and their dedicated efforts to Manitoba, we would not have that capability.

* (1230)

On this side of the House, we are proud of the senior citizens for doing that for us, and our method of saying thank you to the senior citizens on behalf of the people of Manitoba is the commitment made by the Progressive Conservative Government to establish a ministry responsible for seniors. We are proud of that, we are deeply proud of that, Mr. Chairman. We intend to continue to work with the senior citizens in this province and because we have a Minister responsible for Seniors does not take away my obligation as the Health Minister to work with those seniors' groups and find out their wants and needs in the medical delivery programs that I offer. That does not take away from the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) and her role in

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consulting and talking to the senior groups in Manitoba. It is a complementary system because we work together in that regard on this side of the House, and our efforts and our focus and our direction and our attention will yield results and benefits for the seniors of Manitoba.

And that, I would think, would be a goal welcomed by all Members of the House, including the Liberal Party that does not seem to want us to have a Minister responsible for senior citizens, and I am ashamed to say that.

Mr. Chairman: The hour being 12:30 p.m., I would ask that the committee rise and I will call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 12:30 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Monday.

HANSARD CLARIFICATION

In Volume XXXVII No. 61, on Thursday, October 20, 1988, page 2330, right-hand column, the Honourable Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism), on speaking to Bill No. 20, The Water Rights Act, said: "But my suspicion is that the Bill presently before us, Bill No. 16, is probably here illegally . . ." It should have been Bill No. 20.