

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, February 12, 1990.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of Honourable Members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us today the 1990 Labatt Tankard Provincial Men's Curling Champions, the Duane Edwards team from Deloraine who will be representing Manitoba in the Labatt Brier to be held in Sault Ste. Marie. The team is composed of skip, Duane Edwards; third, Kelly McMechan; second, Don Williams; lead, Jack Edwards; and fifth, Philip Edwards.

On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon and wish you all the best at the Brier.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): I wonder if I may have leave to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Arthur have leave to make a non-political statement? The Honourable Member for Arthur.

Mr. Downey: I first of all want to thank all honourable colleagues for allowing me this opportunity for a non-political statement at a very important time today. I just want to, as the Member for the Arthur constituency, congratulate Duane and the team members on an excellent good sportsmanship curling game and wish them well in the Canadian championships which are to be held in March. We all wish you very much the best in those games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (1335)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish leave to make a non-political statement.

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

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also want to offer our congratulations to the Edwards team. Many of us watched the game last evening. It was a very, very exciting game. We knew the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) would be standing today to offer the congratulations.

We are all very, very proud of the Manitoba Bonspiel, the tremendous competition throughout our province. The fact that it went down to an extra end to decide the championship was very, very exciting. All the best in the Sault on behalf of all Manitobans. Thank you.

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

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I just want to make it clear that this is a non-partisan feeling here today. We wish the Edwards rink all of the best in Sault Ste. Marie. We are very proud of them.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: I would like to draw Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have from the Pointe des Chênes High School and from Prince Edward Island, twenty Grade 11 students, under the direction of Giselle Craft. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz).

Also, from the Minnedosa Collegiate and also from Prince Edward Island, we have fifty-six Grades 11 and 12 students under the direction of Pat Heuchert. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer).

We also have 11 students from Inter-Culture Canada. They are part of an international cultural exchange.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Care Surgery Delays

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, a young boy breaks his leg playing hockey on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday all go by without this child receiving appropriate surgical attention. Meanwhile, he is given morphine to alleviate the pain and subjected to 22-hour fasts.

On what basis in this province is a 16-year-old denied appropriate treatment and at what cost, emotionally and physically to the boy, and financially to the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, those are exactly some of the questions that I have posed upon learning of this situation from the news this morning.

I say without equivocation that I find those circumstances at the Health Sciences Centre to be most distressing. I have asked for management and the physicians involved in the care and treatment of that individual to provide me with a full detailed report as to the nature of the delay that young man has experienced, much to his personal distress and no doubt the distress of his family.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, under this Minister's administration of the Health Department, elective surgery waiting lists have gotten longer and longer causing unnecessary pain and suffering. Now the wait for emergency patients equally gets longer and longer. Does each and every incident have to make the front page of the Winnipeg Free Press before this Minister responds to the necessity of providing appropriate care?

Mr. Orchard: It is with interest that I take my honourable friend's questions. What my honourable friend fails to acknowledge is that in the last two years, because of a substantial increase in funding to health care, we have undertaken more surgical procedures as a guideline than ever before in the history of the Province of Manitoba. That range is from such procedures as open heart bypass surgery to other more routine and sometimes called elective surgeries.

Mr. Speaker, within the Health Sciences Centre budget this year, there was an increase of 7.78 percent year over year. That is almost twice the inflation rate. In addition to that an additional \$180,000 was provided to allow the Health Sciences Centre to undertake 20 hours per week of more surgical theatre operating time.

Mr. Speaker, this Government has adequately resourced the health care system. We have not cut back, as my honourable friend would allege, but provided more resource for more procedures to be undertaken.

Underspending

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this Minister underspent in the health care budget last year, some \$28 million plus. Now he will argue that hospitals spent their full budgets. However, he had the flexibility to use his savings in other areas to alleviate pain and suffering and to provide additional funds, already fully budgeted and approved by this Assembly. Why did he not do it, and why does he allow this deterioration in our health care system to continue?

* (1340)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I can understand the weak applause for that question because it completely belies her understanding of the health care budgeting. Possibly she should let these questions go to her Health Critic who understands the system and the way hospitals are budgeted and funded a lot more than she does.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell my honourable friend, because she is now backing off of the original position that she took, that the lapsed funding was in the hospital system

because that was false when she made that allegation some six months ago. The hospitals spent their entire budgets, and indeed some more monies, which we provided for them to undertake the kind of care of citizens in this province that we believe is appropriate. The savings we achieved in the health care budget, in general, were because of maintaining vacancy rates of civil servants, hardly an area where we want to continue to spend money. Maybe the Liberals do, but we have chosen that to be an appropriate place to achieve some semblance of financial control.

Federal Funding Zero Growth

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): My next question is to the Premier. All Manitobans were shocked on Friday when our Premier stated, and I might add the only Premier in the nation to do so, that in order for the federal cousins to get on with the economic priorities they have set themselves, this province was prepared to accept zero growth in funding from the federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, zero growth to the provinces would result in \$79 million less monies to the Province of Manitoba. Just how does our province and our Premier intend to maintain services if he allows the federal Government to cut almost \$80 million in funding?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we now have an indication of what Liberal economic understanding is all about. The Liberals, and I might say that in this particular case we agree with them, say that there ought not to be an increase in taxation in this country. The fact of the matter is when they had an opportunity to vote for a reduction in taxes in this province, they voted against it in our provincial budget.

I will assume that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is being honest when she says she does not favour increased taxation in this country, such as the GST. The fact of the matter is that you have two choices then, either to increase the taxes or to keep your spending down. The fact of the matter is, she has to decide what she wants.

I have said that we are against increasing taxes. Our people in this province, in this country, spend too much on taxes as it is. Therefore I am prepared to be consistent and to be fair and to say that we do not want the spending to go up. If that spending does not go up for the federal Government, it does not go up in transfers and equalization payments to the provinces. We are prepared to be treated fairly; that is all we ask, to be treated fairly. You treat yourself the same way as you treat the provinces and we will accept that, but she cannot have it both ways.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, without any increase in taxes, there will be additional revenues to the federal Government. What we want is our fair share in the

Province of Manitoba. Where is the Premier (Mr. Filmon) going to come up with the \$22 million loss in revenue to post-secondary education and health care if he allows zero increases from the federal Government?

Mr. Filmon: We have said that the federal Government must treat the provinces exactly the same way it treats itself. If the federal Government is able to keep its spending increases to 4.5 percent, which would be less than what their increases were last year, then we would have to be prepared to accept that. The fact of the matter is that we are going to judge them based on fairness. They must treat the provinces fairly, Mr. Speaker. That is the issue that we are dealing with.—(interjection)—

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

Mr. Filmon: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that they will be fairer than Liberal Governments were, because it was the Liberal Government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau that started to reduce the equalization and transfer payments in this country. It was the Liberal Government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, whom she worships, who started to unilaterally change the method by which equalization payments are made across this country that resulted in reductions to provinces that we think are wrong. That kind of negative policy we do not agree with.

* (1345)

Mrs. Carstairs: The federal Liberal Government kept the rate at or above the rate of inflation. This Premier (Mr. Filmon) is prepared to accept zero rate of inflation when the inflation in this community is 4.7 percent. How is he going to accept zero percent in equalization when the entire purpose of the equalization system is to provide equality of services from one province to another?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I said that we are prepared to accept the same rate of increase of transfer and equalization payments as they provide to themselves, to their own expenditures. If she is telling me that the federal Government is going to bring in a budget with no increase in its own expenditures, then that is a great surprise to me. I would be very, very surprised if they are going to be able to keep their rate of expenditures at zero percent.

The fact of the matter is we will be judging them based on fairness of equality of treatment versus us, versus their own budget. We think that is the only way that we can be reasonable and consistent, unlike the Liberals who want to increase expenditures by \$700 million in this province alone, which means \$700 million of increased taxes for people. We do not think that is a reasonable way to go. We do not want to see the taxes of people in this province increased.

Health Care Surgey Delays

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Last May we tabled documents in this Chamber

demonstrating a cutback in terms of the budget at the Health Sciences Centre. Eventually that was rectified, but there has been the longstanding problem of the resources and staff at the Health Sciences Centre for needed operations, a claim that was made by over 500 nurses outside of this building in the April period in 1989, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is this. Is he satisfied with the statements of his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) today in terms of the situation at the Health Sciences Centre and other health care facilities, or is he believing or starting to listen to the statements of the Health Sciences professionals themselves who said there is a shortage of cash at the Health Sciences Centre preventing staffing of operating rooms for longer hours? My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in terms of that position in our health care system.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) last May tabled some whatever sourced information on budget at the Health Sciences Centre, which never was identified as being any official documentation of the Health Sciences Centre, and uses it today as some sort of a justification for our providing the Health Sciences Centre 7.78 percent increase in their budget in the past year.

Mr. Speaker, my honourable friends with the New Democrats, if they do not believe that 7.78 percent increase in budget at the Health Sciences Centre is sufficient, then do they believe that the additional \$180,000 above that to provide 20 hours per week more operating room time is insufficient? If they believe all that, then I simply have to ask my honourable friend at what point in time does the New Democratic Party indicate what is enough in the health care field, because that is the critical question—

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

* (1350)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, what is enough in the health care field is operating rooms are working to the benefit of Manitobans. My question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is: is he now listening to the nurses and health care people and the articles that are coming forward in the media everyday about the crisis in our health care system? Is he now willing to listen to another side of the health care coin, that is the patient side of the health care situation where we have waiting lists going up in elective surgery, where we have patients in hallways while beds remain vacant in other facilities, where there are thoughts now of American companies coming into Manitoba? Will the Premier please get a hold of the health care portfolio and start providing health care assistance consistent with patients' needs, not just rhetoric in the Chamber?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, if we were to eliminate rhetoric in this Chamber, we would disallow the Leader of the Second Opposition Party (Mr. Doer) from posing questions. Because if one thinks that the health care system had absolutely no challenges facing it on May

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9 of 1988, when I was sworn into this office, then one ought to reconsider some of the actions of the Government that the questioner was part of at the Cabinet Table.

There were no consultations with the hospitals in Winnipeg and Brandon in 1987 when this Government said, there shall be no more deficits and you shall close 120 beds permanently in the health care system. The first time ever in the history of this province, Government dictated the closure of acute care beds in the health care system.

Now that same individual with hypocrisy stands up and says, well, we should have more beds. Possibly they are the ones they closed.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with operating time at the hospitals. We are dealing with people in the hallways. We are dealing with empty beds at Deer Lodge Hospital.

My question is to the Premier: will he now meet with his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and get a handle on the situation that many of us have been alleging for a number of months, that the Minister of Health has created all these committees that have been running around the province for the last two years, but there is no action, no decisive action going on? There is inadequate staffing in many of the key areas of our health care system, notwithstanding some of the percentage increases. As the article said today, the money is going to facilities but there is a shortage of cash for staffing at operating rooms.

Will the Premier get a handle on that and overrule his Minister of Health, so we can get the adequate staffing levels so that a boy that is sitting in a hallway for four days, that kind of situation or similar situations will not happen in future?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier on I am expecting a full report from the Health Sciences Centre as to the circumstances that have stimulated today's question. But it was not a committee that raised the amount of monies available to the Health Sciences Centre by 7.78 percent this year over last year. It was not a committee that added \$180,000 to the surgical budget to add 20 more hours per week, over a thousand hours per year of surgery at the Health Sciences Centre. It was not a committee that added \$600,000 to the operating budget of the St. Boniface Hospital to provide more surgical theatre time. It was this Government making decisions to allow more procedures to take place in our hospitals than ever before in the history of the Province of Manitoba, because we are funding them at more than double the rate of inflation.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, one has to always look at the year-end numbers with the Minister of Health to know what the actual funding is, because you do not know what is underspent and what is overspent with the Government.

Universal Health Care Government Commitment

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a final question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). It is a policy question in my opinion for the Government, not a decision for a committee as the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has just outlined.

Last Friday, the Minister of Health outlined that they would not at this time consider the use of for-profit medicine in the United States. Would the Premier clearly put on the record that he is in favour of universal health care and not at any time would his Government look at a for-profit system in the United States that is presently working in the Province of Manitoba or attempting to work in the Province of Manitoba with health-care patients, health-care patients, by the way, that we have alleged before are caught in undue waits for heart surgery at the Health Sciences Centre?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) was told by the Minister of Health on Friday, his allegations were not accurate or correct about the individuals who were presumably operating within Manitoba under private health care, which is absolute nonsense. He told him about some recent graduates in Minnesota, and the whole premise of his discussion was absolutely false.

We believe in providing universal health care for the people of Manitoba to the best possible level we can afford. We have made that commitment a very strong priority by giving increases for two straight budgets of more than double the rate of inflation to the funding to health care in this province. We have taken off the freeze that was put on the development of health care facilities in this province by the New Democratic Party when they were in Government. We have been moving consistently over the past 21 months to overcome many of the major problems that were left for us by the New Democratic Party Government.

Remand Centre Construction Start

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae).

Tragically, another charged but not convicted young man has died at the Winnipeg Remand Centre. As the Minister will know this is certainly not the first time this has happened. While ultimately not all suicide attempts can be stopped, I believe we have a duty to do what is possible to prevent disturbed individuals who come into our custody from killing themselves or indeed injuring others, yet our treatment at the Remand Centre of these troubled individuals is embarrassingly inadequate, a fact that has been well known for years. After years of promises from this administration and the last administration, absolutely nothing has been done.

Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Justice, this Minister has promised twice to begin construction on a new

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Remand Centre and twice he has broken his promise. When will construction begin? When will a new facility be available for occupation?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The tragic events of Saturday morning are, of course, a matter of profound regret to the Government of Manitoba, and the sympathy of the Government is extended to the family of the inmate involved.

* (1355)

Mr. Speaker, it is a poor time for the Honourable Member to be raising a question respecting the construction of a new Remand Centre to which this Government is committed. The circumstances relating to the unfortunate death on Saturday morning are the subject of a police investigation, the subject of an internal investigation, and no doubt the subject of an inquest. I think the Honourable Member does no service by raising questions that we do not know whether those questions have anything to do with the incident on Saturday morning. I think it is ill-advised of the Honourable Member to raise it in this context.

Medical Observation Unit

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): I am sure the Minister does regret the question, Mr. Speaker. The fact is that two years ago another person committed suicide. There was an inquest and a judge made a recommendation. That recommendation was for a medical observation unit which still does not exist at the Remand Centre. The common excuse has been that we are building a new Remand Centre, so we do not have to put in the medical observation unit.

My question for the Minister is, will the Minister now come to grips with the problem at the Remand Centre and recognize that we are at least a year and one half away from occupation of a new facility and beef up the medical observation facilities at the Remand Centre?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The Honourable Member brings into the question another matter which may or may not have any application to the incident of Saturday morning, that being medical facilities available. Inmates requiring special or ongoing medical treatment are transferred to the Headingley Correctional Institution Medical Unit where help is available. The decision in cases like that is made by the institutional physician who serves both facilities. So let not the Honourable Member say or suggest or allege that medical attention is not available to those who need it.

John Howard Society Recommendations

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, let not the Minister indicate that the recommendation of the judge in 1987 has in any way, shape or form been met by this administration or the last one.

Finally, for the same Minister: why has this Minister failed to respond to the proposal put forward by the

John Howard Society whereby individuals who are not dangerous but just unable to make bail are assisted so that we are not warehousing any more people than is strictly necessary to protect the public?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Our department is indeed looking at ways to ensure that those who are not required to be in custody are not kept in custody any longer than they need to be. The Honourable Member refers to a judge's recommendation as the result of an inquest. I should say that, I believe, there have not been any suicides in any Manitoba facilities for some three years, so that needs to be said as well.

Mr. Speaker, the recommendation of the judge that there be medical services available, those medical services are available. If they are not available at the Remand Centre, which is true, the Honourable Member should not suggest that means they are not available, because they are available.

Summer Youth Employment Services Funding Reduction

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): The federal Government once again appears to have moved to make decisions without the consultation of the provinces, Mr. Speaker; \$300 million over the next five years to help fight the federal deficit, not new money but re-allocated from the Summer Youth Employment services so valuable in our province to assist high school and university students to earn money for tuition and other expenses. Maybe there are more jobs than students in Toronto, but in Manitoba our eager students are known to line up with sleeping bags the day and the night before the Summer Youth Employment Office is open, Mr. Speaker.

To the Premier, what communication has this Government had with the federal counterparts re this decision?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice on behalf of the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach).

Mrs. Yeo: Can the Premier tell me what monies will our province receive, in light of the statistics that Manitoba has the highest percentage of population in all of the western provinces which has not completed high school, 45 percent; 44 percent is the Canadian average? What monies will be targeted for Manitoba?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice, as well, on behalf of the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach).

Mrs. Yeo: Well, Mr. Speaker, 3 percent administration fees on Canadian student loans, cuts to federal funding for post-secondary education, and the GST; it is not a good time to be a student in Manitoba.

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Native Education Student Aid

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Can the First Minister tell us what funds will be specifically targeted for aboriginal students in Manitoba, in light of the fact that the concern for Natives was highlighted in the Winnipeg 2000 Report just recently released?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I might indicate to the Member opposite that this Government has been very, very generous in providing programming for Native students and in looking at new opportunities for Native programming.

We are working co-operatively with Swampy Cree Tribal Council, established a Northern Bachelor of Nursing Program which was announced in The Pas last fall. We have continued the ACCESS Program which allows Native students to go into specialized training at universities, including medicine, law and engineering—a program I might indicate that we have increased the funding to, that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) said she would cut if she were in Government.

We have made a commitment to Native education and training and we, Mr. Speaker, will continue to provide increased and generous funding for training for Native people in this province.

Bank of Canada Rate Impact Manitoba

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, last week the bank rate was raised to its highest level in five and a half years to 12.79 percent. This spread between the bank rate and the inflation rate is 7.5 percentage points. This is an all-time historical high and, of course, will contribute to the decline of our economy even further.

Is the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) simply going to live with this without any protest to Ottawa, or is he prepared to communicate his dissatisfaction to his Tory cousins in Ottawa, particularly the Minister of Finance, or the Governor of the Bank of Canada, on the eve of a federal budget?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, let me indicate to my honourable friend from Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) that this Government is alarmed at the continuing increases in the bank rate. It is unconscionable at the level at which we find that rate today, it is approaching a status of usury almost. Let me indicate to the Member that we are fully well aware of the impact it is having on businesses and consumers in this province.

Furthermore, specific to the question, Mr. Speaker, there has not been one occasion over the last two months, over which time I have had several conversations with Minister Wilson, that this has not come forward as a major point, and that I have not made a strong pitch to him to influence Governor Crow to reduce the bank rate. Furthermore, the Governor

of the Bank of Canada was in my office just previous to Christmas at which time I implored upon him to reduce this rate as it was having such a negative impact upon the regions of this country.

Economic Growth Projection Downgrading

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance and I certainly agree that high interest rates do discourage business investment and purchase of durable goods, vehicles, residential construction and so on, contributing to the slow-down of our economy. Is the Minister of Finance now going to revise downward the economic growth projections for the Province of Manitoba for the year 1990?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I guess the full response to that question will come when we bring forward a budget. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the economy across Canada, across the nation, is slowing down. Forecasts of the national economic growth are now in an area under 1.5 percent, although Manitoba's economic growth was still forecast in the area of 2 percent as an average of all the forecasters. Certainly, I accept the fact that the national economic growth is being downgraded, yet Manitoba still is in the top two of ranking for economic growth in this country.

All-Party Task Force

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, the labour force survey Friday shows that there were 8,000 less people in the labour force in Manitoba compared to last year. In other words, there is a mass exodus occurring of the work force. Will the Minister be prepared now to set up a task force to address this declining situation and to look for ways and means to offset this decline and, particularly, this mass exodus of workers, 8,000 people?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Member opposite had the courage to make reference to last week's labour statistics and unemployment figures for the Province of Manitoba, because again it points out the stable base that this Government is trying to set into place to launch itself off into economic growth for the 1990s. Indeed, with respect to the tax decreases that we provided and our attempts to also hold back Government expenditure growth, which the Liberals in particular are insisting we increase, is bearing out fruit.

We have a situation now where we have, again, the second best rate in unemployment. We have a situation today where we have an annual rate that is down below 7 percent. Obviously, we have a situation where economic growth in this province is well postured for the decade coming forward.

Mentally Handicapped Employment Program Funding

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): The Premier (Mr. Filmon) took as notice on Friday a question regarding Premier Personnel from the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis). I should remind the Member for St. Johns that Premier Personnel and their services, which are a very valuable and good service, are provided through a Canadian job strategy funding from the federal Government. Last year we had provided them with emergency funds. I do have a letter from them and will be meeting with them shortly to discuss their funding needs.

Urban Native People Government Strategy

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): My question is for the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey). Between the years 1981 and 1986, Winnipeg's Native population grew by 70.6 percent. In this population, unemployment levels are unacceptably high and average household incomes are astoundingly low. In fact, in the inner city, 71.9 percent of the Native household incomes are below the poverty level.

My question is to the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs. Just what, beyond the tabling of a consultant's report last November, is the Government's plan to address the needs of the urban Native people?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for that question. One has to look a little further than just the immediate statistics, but to why those numbers have been caused and the reason for the migration of a lot of our Native people to Winnipeg, I guess one would have to point, first of all, at the failure of the previous administration to create meaningful employment opportunities in northern Manitoba, particularly for the Native people, still sitting with some 90 percent unemployment as the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) quite often is putting on the record. They are their figures, not ours, so they are the failure of the previous administration.

Second, we are working aggressively with the leadership of the Native communities in Winnipeg to work further on the Urban Native Strategy that was struck by this Government. Meaningful options are being put in place by the Native leadership themselves supported by the province and other levels of Government.

Urban Native Strategy Recommendations

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): Recognizing the validity of some of the Minister's comments about the previous administration, which of the Urban Strategy Report's recommendations is the Minister actually acting on? Which of its recommendations has he actually implemented?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we are working aggressively to put in place—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, we are putting together aggressively the Native council.

Urban Native People Government Strategy

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): I missed part of the answer there, largely I think because the Minister did not have a chance to complete it. I will give him another chance. When will the Minister announce a definitive action plan?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): I regret that the New Democratic Party takes so lightly the urban Native people and the needs for employment opportunities and a real need to it. It is deplorable. I have never seen such a hypocritical Party sitting in here pretending that they are helping the Native people and laughing at everything that is being suggested in dealing with those individuals. It is deplorable and disgusting and the Native people should get an apology from the NDP.

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

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, first of all, the Minister was clearly not dealing with the question that was raised.

Second of all, if we were laughing, it was at the inanity of the Member's answers and the fact he is not dealing with the concerns of Native people here in Manitoba and makes light of it by his rhetorical—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

* (1410)

LynnGold Resources Inc. UIC Benefits

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, in December of last year, the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) wrote to the federal Government requesting that the Unemployment Insurance Commission give special consideration to the lump sum payment that was provided to the province to workers who were laid off in Lynn Lake.

I am wondering if the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) can tell us today whether he has received a response to that letter and a request to give special consideration to that lump sum payment for the purposes of UI benefits.

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Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have received their request and we are dealing with it. The Minister for Labour (Mrs. Hammond) is in correspondence with the Minister of Labour in Ottawa, and we will be getting a report back from them shortly.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, that is how this Government operates. It is about two months late. People in Lynn Lake, laid off miners without income, are now being sent letters by the Unemployment Insurance Commission indicating there is an up-to-\$726 overpayment because of the lump sum payment that was provided by the province.

Will the Minister now undertake to contact the Minister responsible for UIC immediately so that these unemployed workers are not penalized in this capricious and unfair manner?

Mr. Neufeld: The Unemployment Insurance Commission has taken the position that the \$1,200 given to the workers by the Manitoba Government constituted wages. We are of an opinion that does not constitute wages, and we are endeavouring, on behalf of the workers of Lynn Lake, to obtain that money back from the federal Government.

Mr. Storie: I have a further question to the Minister. Will he take action immediately to prevent the reduction of payment to unemployed workers of up to \$180 per month? Will he take action immediately to prevent that so these unemployed people can feed their families?

Mr. Neufeld: Mr. Speaker, I have already said that we are making every effort to obtain a change of heart by the federal Government, by the Unemployment Insurance Commission. We cannot, of course, prevent the Unemployment Insurance Commission from deducting any monies at all that are coming to the workers. We are making every effort to make certain that the workers are not penalized to the extent that they have been.

Manitoba Driver Licences Photo ID Charges

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): This Tory Government is nickel-and-diming the Manitoba motorists to death. First of all, we had the 1-cent per litre tax, and now we have a \$4 per year tax upon the driver licences.

My question to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) is: why is he implementing the \$4 per year extra tax on the driver licence effective 1, April 1990, when the actual photo ID will not be implemented until '91 and '92?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, the answer is quite simple, and I have forwarded all that information to the Member previously. The fact that we will be having implementation costs that are starting now, we have the cameras that we will be establishing, we do the training that has to be done, there is a lot of work involved, and that is why we are implementing the \$4 charge April 1.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Photo ID Tenders

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): That answer, he did not provide for us in the briefing paper. So let us get that on the road. I have it right here and I can provide it for him.

Would this Minister please tender all of the contracts on behalf of the photo ID that he awarded to an Ontario firm, National Business Systems, and all of the bidders here in Manitoba?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I hope the Member is not indicating that we should do away with the tender system. What we did, we consulted throughout. Opportunities were given to people in Manitoba and across Canada, in terms of who would come up with the best proposal, and we accepted the best tender.

Photo ID Sites

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary, again to the same Minister. This \$4 additional fee per year on a driver licence, is he going to assure this House that all the employees in the designated rural areas are going to be hired from the specific areas, not brought in from Winnipeg or Toronto?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I have some difficulty with that question because, by and large, we have a system that we are using that we will be implementing, where we will be using these present sites where we give driver testing. These are the places where the photo licences will be taken. We are not looking at employing more people in the rural areas.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might have leave for a non-political statement.

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

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, as we spoke near the end of the Session of 1989, it was a year of tremendous change worldwide with the major and exciting opportunities for freedom and democracy that opened up in eastern Europe, 1990 could be just as exciting and eventful a year in terms of world history.

Yesterday, I know that all Members of this Legislature, as well as Manitobans throughout our province, joined with freedom-loving people throughout the world in welcoming the release of Nelson Mandela after some almost 28 years in prison.

A lot of forces contributed to the release of Nelson Mandela, not the least of which is the movement that supported him in an unflagging way throughout his years and years in prison. The commitment of his family, the commitment of his friends, and people throughout the South African community, no doubt led to the changes that we are now seeing in Government policy in that area.

I believe that it has been a key element, Mr. Speaker, in this fundamental turnaround of attitude by the South African Government, that many nations throughout the world have given their support through calls for sanctions and other forms of protest.

Members of this Legislature, I think, can take some sense of gratification in the efforts that have been given by all three Parties, speaking out from time to time, in the interests of assuring that the South African Government ultimately put aside the apartheid policies that they have been following, regrettably over many, many years, but, as John Kennedy once said, while we are gratified, we are not satisfied, there is much more to be done.

One man is out of jail, but he is not yet free. We must continue with our commitment to support the forces of freedom in South Africa. We must not relent. We are making progress, but we cannot stop until apartheid itself has ended.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Leader of the Opposition have leave to make a non-political statement? Leave. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, we are free at last. Those are the words of a Negro spiritual and yet probably brought most eloquently to mind by Martin Luther King when he spoke on his march in Washington in 1963. Those words, which helped in many ways to bring justice to the black people of the United States, came very quickly to my mind when I watched Nelson Mandela emerge from prison after 27 years.

For the years of his life between the ages of 44 and 71, he had been lost in his human person to his people in South Africa, but he was not lost to their hearts and to their minds. A quarter of a million of them gathered yesterday to pay tribute to their natural leader, although he was quick to eschew the title stating that a leader needed to be democratically elected.

The Liberal Caucus welcomes the release of Nelson Mandela, and we welcome his opening words which were, "I greet you in the name of peace," recognizing as he did that there was still much work to be done.

* (1420)

We also urge our Prime Minister to stand firm on his position that sanctions be not lifted until the achievement of full democracy in South Africa, for both

blacks and whites, is brought to fruition. As we celebrate with South Africans this new achievement, let us rededicate ourselves in our own community to the eradication of racism, and with its accompanied agony to all those who suffer from it.

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

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker and Members of the Chamber, I want to join with the other Leaders today in commenting on the release of Nelson Mandela. I think it was a very proud moment for all people in the free world to watch his release from prison and the subsequent speech he made to the people of South Africa.

I think we also have to know and pay attention to the fact that, yes, one person has been set free from prison, a very, very important leader in the struggle against apartheid, but apartheid still remains in South Africa and still today it remains in South Africa, a country that constitutionally has different provisions, different rights and different treatment for people on the basis of colour and race.

Mr. Speaker, we must rededicate ourselves to work with the community-based groups across Canada and across the free world that are continuing to make the struggle their struggle. All of us I am sure have joined in candlelight vigils in various communities across the country to bring attention to the conditions in South Africa and the conditions in the South African Constitution.

We must rededicate ourselves in this Chamber I believe to continuing on, on the struggle for the South African people with Nelson Mandela's release yesterday. We must continue to be vigilant on the issue of sanctions, an issue that has been a matter of debate across, again, the commonwealth countries and other countries of whether it works or whether it does not work. Nelson Mandela clearly stated yesterday that the sanctions must be kept on in order for all people to be free and equal in South Africa in terms of the South African people. Nelson Mandela also made very strong statements on the need for democracy and freedom in his country in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, we must also work with the South African people to remove the state of emergency in South Africa, another statement that was made by Nelson Mandela yesterday in his eloquent address to the world. Perhaps our House Leaders today could join with other municipalities in passing certain resolutions, because there is a resolution, Resolution No. 50, before this Chamber and perhaps today would be an appropriate day for all Parties to continue on, not just on our non-political statements, but to perhaps pass some resolutions in terms of our all-Party agreement on apartheid and what we must do. Thank you very, very much.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I have a committee change.

I move, seconded by the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections be amended as follows: the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux); Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? (Agreed)

The Honourable Member for Gimli.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I also have some committee changes.

I move, seconded by the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Gilleshammer for Burrell; Helwer for Praznik.

I move, seconded by the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections be amended as follows: Driedger, the Minister of Highways and Transportation, for Downey; and Burrell for Helwer.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS (No. 5)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition)—

What new programs, including inservicing of social workers, has the Department of Family Services initiated in order to deal with the current and growing problem of the use of the street drug, crack, by young Manitobans?

HOUSE BUSINESS

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to call the Bills in the following order: Bills 31, 35, 19, 84, 70, 47 to 52 inclusive, 57, 59 and 60.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): On House Business, I am wondering, in looking ahead to Private Members' hour today, whether there might be leave to deal with the anti-apartheid resolution—move it up on the Order Paper. There was a general sentiment I think expressed earlier about concern on the issue. I am wondering if there might be agreement from all Parties to move that up to the top of the Order Paper.

Mr. McCrae: I will commit myself to discuss that privately with the House Leaders.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Government House Leader.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 31—THE LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), Bill No. 31, The Labour Relations Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les relations du travail, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan). The Honourable Member for Churchill.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, as unaccustomed as I am to public speaking I find myself once again standing, speaking to a Bill which, if it passes this Legislature, will take away the opportunity for Manitoba employers and employees to resolve irreconcilable or at least otherwise irreconcilable differences of opinion, that arise during contract negotiations, through a measure that would prevent strikes and lockouts. That is why we once again carry on with this debate.

We believe it is important that if this Bill does proceed through this House it does so in a manner that every Manitoban knows exactly where the different Parties in this Legislature stand on this very important issue to them.

(Mr. William Chornopyski, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

That is why I have taken some time not only to deal with the statements and the reasons behind the repeal of final offer selection, as enunciated by the Government Members, but also have taken a fair amount of time to enunciate the reasons and the stated opposition to final offer selection by Liberal Members in this House.

I only wish that more Liberal Members had spoken on this Bill. I really quite frankly do not need to hear much more from the Conservatives with respect to final offer selection, because we heard it all when the original Bill was passed by this Legislature, when the New Democratic Party administration was in power and working to better conditions for working people in this province, and to create a fairer, more equitable society both in the workplace and outside the workplace. We heard them talk about how final offer selection and other progressive labour legislation, which had been brought forward by the New Democratic Party over the years, would result in a dark cloud hanging over the Province of Manitoba; it would scare business away; it would drive employers to other areas and it would interfere with negotiations.

You know we even found the Conservatives in the somewhat unusual position of defending the interests, or what they believed to be the interests, of unions with respect to final offer selection. I have to say that it would be inappropriate for me to talk about that position, in which they found themselves, and sincerity in the same sentence and so I will not. I will not in any way—

An Honourable Member: No sincerity, is that what you are saying?

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Mr. Cowan: Well, now the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) almost pushes me into making a statement that you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, may find somewhat unparliamentary, and I am not going to do it. I am not going to say that they would be insincere when they line themselves up with labour. I am not going to say that is a somewhat obscure reason.

An Honourable Member: Hypocrisy.

Mr. Cowan: Now, see, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) goes at it again and talks about hypocrisy. I am not going to do that.

An Honourable Member: That is not unparliamentary.

Mr. Cowan: He says it is not unparliamentary so perhaps I will say in fact it is quite hypocritical for those people there, the friends of big business that they are, the enemies of working people that they are, to sit in their place in this Chamber and suggest that they are doing anything that will benefit working people at the expense of big business because they just could not bring themselves to do it under any circumstances. That does not just -(interjection)-

The Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) makes a good point. It is a point which I am going to dwell upon in my comments for a little bit of time. If my House Leader (Mr. Ashton) would watch the quorum perhaps we could dwell on it for less time rather than more. I cannot say how many Conservatives are in the Chamber at the time, but it would appear to me that there would probably not be a quorum if it was relied upon them to—I am sorry, I was distracted one moment by my colleague, the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), who asked a very important question today with respect to the way in which a Conservative Government in Ottawa is taking money out of the pockets of laid-off miners and others in Lynn Lake by decreasing the amount of their unemployment insurance by the same amount which they were paid out under the payment of wages fund.

* (1430)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe if they had an opportunity to put that matter of final offer selection in Lynn Lake, the matter of vacation pay and severance, that they would be prepared to do so. If it went to final offer selection, I can assure you we would not have the type of situation today where the miners and the workers in the mill and the other employees in Lynn Lake are suffering such dire economic consequences of an action over which they had no control because any arbiter would see the justice and the fairness in their particular case and would also see the reasonable way in which they have approached that particular problem. I would guess, without fear of contradiction, that an arbiter would rule in their favour.

Why do I make that point on a somewhat related matter? I make that point because final offer selection is all about fairness, equity and the sharing of power. I know there are certain circumstances when other groups in society who find themselves in a position

where the people with whom they are negotiating or discussing issues or trying to resolve differences have more power than do they and they find themselves unable to effect the type of change they would want to be able to effect, even although what they are asking for is fair and just. I say that not pointing my finger at any one political Party or any Government because I believe it would be a matter that would transcend partisan politics, that from time to time there are groups in society, that want to see a change in the status quo, that cannot effect that change in the status quo, even although it would be right and just and fair, because they do not have the power to do so.

They would be willing, I am certain, if we were to extend this legislation to beyond the realm of labour relations, from time to time to sit down and try to test their challenges against the process of final offer selection. I know that in those instances we would probably come up with a more fair and more equitable circumstance than we do when brute power is tested against brute power. There is an unstable relationship there or, as the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) says, there is not a level playing field.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I make that point because I think it is something we should all think about and consider from time to time. I think that instead of being in this House today trying to take away an innovative way of resolving disputes from working people in this province, we should probably be in this House today trying to find ways to expand that process, so that others will have the opportunity to do so and to use it.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is the wrong approach that this Government, along with their friends, the Liberals, along with their friends, big business, have taken with respect to—I believe that we have a quorum problem right now. We are going to give the Conservatives one chance to get some Members in—I see that they have done that—so that I have an opportunity to continue on with my remarks. I believe my remarks today are very important to the general public.

I will caution the Conservatives that they have a responsibility to make this House work. They are the ones who want to see this legislation ramrodded through the House. They are the ones who are forcing the sort of impasse that we have here today because of their lack of reasonableness. If they want to live up to their responsibility as legislators in the Government, I would hope that they would keep their Members in the House so that we at least have a quorum. The next time -(interjection)- the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) says, how many Members do we have? The Member for Arthur was the Acting House Leader who fell asleep in his seat the last time a quorum was called in this House and let his numbers so dwindle that for the first time in my memory and for the first time in the history of the House, for probably two generations, a quorum was called.

If he has some comments to put on the record right now with respect to that, let him speak. The fact is, and the history of the matter is, that he was the Member who was most responsible for the lack of quorum in

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this House in the previous instance. If he cannot do his work now, then let him not take umbrage at the number of Members in this House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister for Northern Affairs, on a point of order.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Mr. Deputy Speaker, first of all, it is unparliamentary and inappropriate for this House to identify whether Members are or are not in this Chamber. That is unparliamentary, which the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) should recognize. That is the point of order which I am rising on.

He may, Mr. Deputy Speaker, want to make a lot of to-do about whether there is a quorum or whether there is not. I can tell you that he just has to look at the support that he has for the speech that he is giving and the Members of his Party that are here before he starts to criticize other individuals.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): To the same point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is unquestionably a quorum in this House at present. It is certainly unparliamentary to refer to the absence of Members. I would suggest that no point of order exists at present, and that we get on with the extremely interesting comments of our colleague, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan).

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Member for Transcona is quite correct. The Honourable Minister did not have a point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Downey: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on another point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs, on a point of order.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point of order that I was trying to bring your attention to, Sir, was the fact that it is unparliamentary to talk about the presence or absence of Membership in the Assembly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Member for Thompson, on the same point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): If I might be of assistance to the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), who may not have read his Beauchesne's recently, and I do apologize, I have the Fifth Edition of Beauchesne's, not the current edition, but the Fifth Edition of Beauchesne's, 316 Subsection (c), states that it has been sanctioned by usage that a Member while speaking must not refer to the presence or absence of specific—specific—Members, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

What the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) was pointing to was the fact that this Government, which

has been trying to push this through, ram this Bill through, could not even get a quorum of its own Members in this House. There were about four or five Government Members, which is quite parliamentary to refer to without referring to the absence of any specific Members. There were only four or five Government Members sitting here on the debate that they have decided is so important that it has to come first on the Order Paper, that they are going to refuse adjournments, they are going to deny Members the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is highly irregular, not only for those Members not to have a quorum in here but then to get up and criticize the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) for making reference to that. As I said, Beauchesne's is clear, there was no reference by the Member for Churchill to the absence of any specific Member. His comments were totally in order, and I would suggest before the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) interrupts the proceedings of this Legislature again he get out his Beauchesne's, get out his Rule book, and learn the Rules, something he has not done in the many years he has been in this Chamber.

* (1440)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I thank all Honourable Members for their advice. The Honourable Minister did in fact make a point that you should not refer to Members. However, I recognized the Honourable Member for Churchill. The Honourable Member for Churchill has the floor.

Mr. Cowan: I very deliberately did not reference specific Members, or at least I attempted not to reference specific Members. If I inadvertently did so, I certainly apologize for that, but I believe that if I did not do so, those who have suggested that I have violated the Rules, and in fact I have not violated the Rules, should apologize to the House for disrupting what is a very long speech that will take some time to unfold and causing a digression and extending the time which is required to make the points even further.

I, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have some familiarity with the Rules. I do not know them all, but I do know the ones that come into effect more often than not. One of those Rules is relevancy. The rule of relevancy is such that I must really address myself to the principles of the Bill before us, and I would like to get back to that without being distracted by Members of the House unduly so that I cannot keep my remarks as relevant as they should be.

When I sat down the other day—it seems like so long ago—I was addressing my remarks and directing my attention -(interjection)- no, the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) says the Liberal position, but I did that previously and people have taken note, and I will do it further and people may take note as well. I was addressing myself specifically to the comments of the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) when he introduced the first Bill to repeal final offer selection in this House a couple of years ago.

I was at point six, I believe, so I will carry on from there. I do not want to repeat myself and go back over the first five points other than to say that in each of those instances when I laid out for the record again what the Minister of Labour had said when making his comments on the Bill, either in committee or in a news release or in this House, I also attempted to show where others either agreed or disagreed with that particular comment.

The trend that was created throughout those remarks and my commentary was that he found agreement most often with Liberals and big business with what he had to say and disagreement most often between those who had actually studied final offer selection, as it has been used here and in other jurisdictions, and understood the process and the record of final offer selection a bit more than either, I might add, the Conservatives or Liberals or big business do.-(interjection)-

As the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) says, the Manitoba experience is very clear. Let me just come to that when talking about point six. What the Minister of Labour, the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery), had to say at that particular time was that the final offer selection will create division between unions and their members.

I find that somewhat hard to reconcile with the process of final offer selection, which can only take place at a time when the majority of the members agree to the final offer selection process under the legislation. If it needs the majority of the members to agree to that particular process and the majority of the members are also the majority of the union, which they are, then how is it that the majority of the members are working against their own best interests? How does the fact that there is an option for final offer selection create a division between unions and members, unless there is a misguided sense of what unions and members are, unless there is a bias that separates unions from their membership? -(interjection)-

As the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) says, in the vast majority of the instances the unions agreed—well, the membership agreed with the recommendation with respect to final offer selection, and I think that in fact was the case, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to comment just a bit on the exact comment by the Minister of Labour a few years ago, and what the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) said just a few weeks ago in this House with respect to final offer selection, because again what we find is the criticism that they hold of final offer selection is fairly much one and the same. They have again bound together in spirit and in mind and are approaching this issue from the same perspective.

What the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) said, and I quote, he believed that final offer selection weakens unions. That is pretty much the same. What would you do with a union except weaken it if you create division between unions and their members? That consequence has to flow from the act of weakening the union.

I will suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that anything that creates division within a union, and you notice I used

a somewhat different terminology than the Member, because I think unions and the members are the same—I think perhaps what he was trying to say is that it would create division within a union itself—but anything that does create division within a union weakens a union. Anything that creates division within a group of individuals who have a common objective, whether it be labour negotiations or whether it be negotiations for other principles and issues, will tend to weaken the group. Anything that weakens the group will in fact tend to act to the detriment of their ability to negotiate fairness and equity, whatever the question might be.-(interjection)-

Well, I am going to put that comment from the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) on the record very clearly, because I want the Members of the rail union in Transcona to know where their MLA stands with respect to final offer selection. He said we do not support outside interference in the unions—in their internal affairs, he now adds.

Now I would ask the Member for Transcona, does he believe that final offer selection creates that sort of interference in the internal affairs of the union? He could nod his head yes or no or stand and take his feet and answer the question if he wishes on a point of order, but I am looking to him. Is that what he believes? The Member for Transcona says they will save debate for later, but what we have been asking them to do all along is get to their feet and say what they think and say what they believe and make their case and defend their suggestions, their allegations and their assumptions with respect to final offer selection.

They sit on their feet day after day after day after day after day refusing to enter into the debate, because as the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) has said and the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) believes, as does the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) and those others on that side, they believe that final offer selection is wrong. They have said they believe it is wrong. They have said they believe it does intrude into the internal affairs of a union, unless the Member for Transcona disagrees with the Member for St. James.

Yet when we ask them to stand to their feet in the traditional practice in this House and make those comments known, to live or die politically by their convictions and their principles, have they any, they refuse. When we ask them from their seats to clarify—it does not take much courage to nod your head yes or no, does not take much intelligence to nod your head yes or no, either you believe it or you do not believe it—they say we will save our comments for the debate later.

Well the fact is they have had lots of opportunity in all sorts of different ways to put those comments on the record, and they have refused. I think that itself belies either the fact that they are in disagreement among themselves, and that would tend to weaken a caucus just as it would tend to weaken a union, or they really do not believe what they are saying. Sure they are all Honourable Members, and I assume that they believe what they are saying or they have nothing to back up that which they say and they are afraid of

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getting out on the record a statement which has no substance in fact and cannot be documented and cannot be backed up and cannot be supported in any form whatsoever by those who take an unbiased and impartial view of final offer selection.

I will tell the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) right now that he may have the luxury of silence in this Chamber on this issue, but he will not have that luxury on the doorstep during the campaign that is going to be coming up in this province to determine who is best suited to represent the constituents of Transcona, and others in this province.

An Honourable Member: When?

* (1450)

Mr. Cowan: Well, the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) says: when? I do not particularly care if it is this week, next week, next month or next year, to the extent that when it happens, the New Democratic Party will be the only Party that will be able to say that it has consistently defended the rights of working people in this province at every occasion, while the Liberals and the Conservatives have jumped into bed together—that is a political bed, Mr. Deputy Speaker—in a very generic sense, jumped into bed together to fight against the interests of working people in support of big business, and it goes beyond just the dichotomy, or the dialectic in society that exists between working people and big business.

What it really typifies is the approach to power because there are people in this country, and people in this province, who historically have had power and been able to exercise their will, and been able to influence the way things happen. They have done so on a number of occasions at the expense of those without power.

I do not care if it is a union or if it is an organization representing different groups in society, or if it is an individual who stands up for their rights, whether those rights be labour rights, or whether those rights be societal rights, or whether those rights be Treaty rights, or aboriginal rights, or whether those rights be the rights which we all take for granted. Consistently, it has been the New Democratic Party, and the CCF before it, who have stood up for the rights of those individuals in those groups, because we believe that there is not an equal sharing of power in society today. We believe that there is an imbalance. We believe that it is not entirely fair out there. Let me tell you, we do not have all the answers, Mr. Deputy Speaker -(interjection)-

The Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) says, we do not have any of the answers. He would be far better suited heckling the Prime Minister and his Tory cousin, the Minister of Finance, Michael Wilson, than heckling Members on this side of the House who are trying to stand up for Manitobans against what is going to be a very devastating budget that is going to come down from the Conservative Government in not too many days, and coupled with the goods and services tax is going to create economic hardship throughout this land.

So he wants to best use his time. If he wants to make the most effective use of his criticism, let him

criticize those in Ottawa who are bringing such destruction, economic destruction, to people throughout this province, and not worry quite so much about what it is we stand for, or do not stand for, with respect to this particular debate.- (interjection)-

Mr. Cowan: Well, now the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst), and I think I heard him right—I will ask him to clarify if I do not—

An Honourable Member: He does not have to.

Mr. Cowan: As the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) says, he does not have to clarify if he does not want to, but I think he would have the courage to do so.

I think he suggested I was being an apologist for the unions, and I should stop being an apologist for the unions. He shakes his head, yes, in concurrence with that, I believe.

Actually, if I could refer to his absence, I would welcome him back because he told me he was not going to be listening to my words today, and yet I find myself honoured and privileged to have him here listening to those words. I hope that, without referring to his absence -(interjection)- okay, okay.

As the debate unfolds it becomes more and more interesting, because what we are talking about now, and the Member for Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) talked about union bosses—now I understand better what the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery), in his own inarticulate way and stumbling manner, was trying to say when he said that final offer selection creates division between unions and their members.

Excuse me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would be prepared to give my commitment to the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), or other Ministers who have to attend to their business, that we will not call a quorum in the House today. They can go to their meetings, because I note that they have people waiting for them. I do not want to subject any more people than I have to to this very long and labourious speech. We will not call a quorum for the rest of the afternoon. Why are all those generic Members rushing for the doors, not to refer to any specific Member? Have a good meeting.

An Honourable Member: Turn it on and listen . . .

Mr. Cowan: No, no, the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) says, to turn it on and listen in her office—but wait, I did not mean to create a stampede here. I know there is other business that has to be taken care of, and we do not want to, in any way, stall that.- (interjection)- You may have missed some, but you will not have missed it all. I can guarantee that to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), who said that he is certain when he listens again to this in a hour he will not have missed a darn thing.

An Honourable Member: I think that quote is on the record.

Mr. Cowan: What the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism said when I talked about unions was—he

clarified himself, and he said union bosses. So I am going to guess—and it is only conjecture—if it is unfair, let the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) come in and tell me that is the case. I am going to suggest that what the Member for Portage really meant to say was that it creates division between union bosses and their members, because that is what I believe is the philosophy and the approach of the Conservatives. They believe that unions are not groups of individuals who band together in perhaps one of the most democratic processes possible to ensure that the collective good of all the members is dealt with in a fair and equitable fashion.

The fact is that they do not believe that. They believe that there are union bosses that try to control the membership, that try to hold sway over the workings of the union. I think they believe those union bosses do not believe in democratic process. I will tell them, there are no union bosses in the way in which they believe there are union bosses. There are leaders within the union movement, and there are leaders who ask for this type of legislation, not because it benefited union leaders per se, but it benefited the union members per se. There is an old saying in the union movement. It is one which I have tried to shape a large part of my approach to public policy issues around. That is, and I quote, "An injury to one is an injury to all." The converse of that saying is, "A benefit to one, indeed, can be a benefit to all." -(interjection)-

Well, I only wish that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism would have the opportunity to take to his feet to speak to this Bill again, because he has I think some very insightful comments to put on the record. I would like him to be honest, open, forthright and frank with how he feels about unions when he has an opportunity. I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I am the last speaker on this portion of the Bill. If I were to sit down to allow him opportunity to speak without leave I might lose my opportunity to conclude my remarks, so I will not do that. Perhaps there is another way that we might be able to offer him another opportunity to speak, and perhaps the Liberals other opportunities to speak over the next number of days. If we do, I hope they will take advantage of that offer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, final offer selection does not create differences or division between unions and their members because unions and their members are one and the same. It would be impossible to separate them. It is a process that calls for and requires a majority vote, and the majority vote implies the collective will, and the collective will should be followed, just as we have majority votes in this House. It is the same process.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I alone do not say that. Mr. Bellan, in his comments—and I will just reference the article again, because it has been a couple of days since I referred to it—the Osgoode Hall Law Journal, an article entitled, "Final Offer Selection: Two Canadian Case Studies and an American Digression." It is an unbiased article. What Mr. Bellan says, and I will have to get the point in front of me, that both favoured the use of FOS for the next round of contract talks. Now that is a reference to two groups that had used final offer selection. It was the union that favoured the use

of final offer selection, along with the employer. Both groups favoured it.

Now why would a union favour something that in their experience had created division among its membership? They would not. It would not be in their best interest to do so. Why would the Manitoba Federation of Labour come out so strongly for final offer selection if they felt it created division between members in a union? They would not, because it would not be in their best interest to do so.

* (1500)

The fact is that unions are supporting final offer selection because it does just the opposite. It results in a more fair set of negotiations which benefits their members. It avoids strikes which oftentimes splits membership up terribly, particularly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you have a situation where you have scabs trying to take away the jobs of workers who are on strike. Think about how that splits a membership.

I have seen a fair number of strikes. I have studied a few. I have been involved in labour disputes from a number of different perspectives. I can tell you that there is no more animosity created in any circumstance in the workplace between members of a union themselves than when there is a strike where the employer attempts to continue to keep the operation going through the use of strikebreakers, scabs, or replacement workers. However you want to term them, they are one and the same. Jack London had a very good poem or description about scabs. I do not have it with me at this particular time, but there may be an opportunity to read it into the record later on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you are not familiar with it, or if there are others who are not familiar with it, I recommend it to you. That poem in itself shows how much animosity and how untenable a workplace can become when scabs are used just by the way in which it describes scabs.

Final offer selection is a way to avoid that situation. As a matter of fact, it has been used to avoid that situation. It does prevent strikes and lockouts.

I have seen strikes where members of a group, a work team or family take different sides on the issue, sometimes because they are forced to, sometimes because some are management and some are employees, sometimes because they have different philosophical approaches and different principles with respect to labour unions, their right to strike and their right to undertake work action of any sort.

I do not believe that final offer selection, if it was everything negative that both the Liberals and the Conservatives, and big business as well, say it is, could ever create the type of division that is created when families are split because of a labour dispute, when brothers fight with brothers, when sisters fight with sisters, when mothers and fathers fight with their children. The tensions of a strike are so incredibly hard on the family itself that that sort of bitterness is inevitable if the strike goes on long enough and if there is a division of opinion as to how to proceed through it.

Even at its worst, even at the worst sort of image that Liberals and Conservatives can conjure up in their mind, final offer selection is not nearly as disruptive and could not result in nearly the division that the alternative does, the alternative being a strike or a lockout.

When the Minister of Labour says that he believes final offer selection creates division between unions and their members, and when the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) says he believes it weakens unions, what they are doing is ignoring the democratic nature of the labour movement in this province, across this country and indeed throughout the world in almost every instance. It betrays a rather cynical view of unions.

I want to read the notes that I had written in trying to focus my comments before I heard what the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) had to say, and I will read them verbatim. They are speaking notes that allow me to try to focus in on an issue. Under item 6, creates division between unions and their members, under the heading of Member for Portage (Mr. Connery), final offer selection. The notes I wrote in red, in handwriting are: (1) it ignore the democratic nature of unions, (2) it is a cynical view of unions, (3) it is a typical Tory perception, and next to that I have, labour boss, and next to that I have, leaders take direction, and (4) I have, why would unions support it if it created divisions?

I did not even have to hear the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism say from his seat today that he believes union bosses are the problem because that is a historical perception of the Conservative Party. It is an ideological approach that has resulted from the blinders that they have put on them by big business, and it is one that is being shared by the Liberals. I do not know why, but I think they may come to change their mind on that over time—if not on this particular Bill, over time. I think there is probably a bit more hope for them than there is for the Conservatives because it is so ingrained in the Conservative ideology and philosophy, but they are becoming to look more and more like Conservatives every day. While I believe there is hope, it is something that I cannot be assured of, given the experience with this particular caucus and particularly their Leader who tends to take a fairly right-wing approach to economic issues, and the experience that we have seen in this House over the last little while, particularly the experience around final offer selection.

We have heard the Liberals say and the Conservatives say that it is going to weaken unions by creating division. We have heard that the opposite takes place and we see that the unions themselves do not believe that. What is interesting is that the Conservatives and the Liberals, in the way in which they are approaching this debate, suggest to us that they know more what is better for the unions than the unions themselves, because I can tell you that it is most likely that I would not be standing up here defending final offer selection if working people themselves did not support it to the extent that they do, if the majority of trade unions in the Province of Manitoba did not support it, because I consider the "majority will" to be something that should be considered very strongly. The "majority will"

of trade unions with respect to what they would like to see happen with labour relations does provide some guidance to all of us if we believe that those democratic institutions have wisdom that comes with collective responsibility and collective decision-making. We do believe that to be the case.

Now continuing on with what the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) had to say in his comments, he said that he was concerned that final offer selection would be, and I quote: an imposition of third parties on the other parties. I actually paraphrased that rather than quoted it because I did not have all the wording in front of me. It would take me a minute to look it up in my notes here and I do not want to delay this any more than it has to be in order to make the pertinent points. The fact is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what he is saying in that is that the Conservatives are opposed to final offer selection because they believe the arbitration decision, the decision of the arbiter, is an imposition on the other parties -(interjection)-

Well, the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) says exactly what it is. It is not an imposition but it is an agreement to have, in effect, one of the party's decisions. It may be the union's party in one instance, it may be the employer's in another but the fact is it is not something that the arbitrator pulls out of the air. That is as opposed to conventional arbitration, and that is the difference. I would be far less supportive of this type of legislated arbitration if it was conventional arbitration, because that in fact does allow for and encourage the imposition of an agreement on both parties rather than the choice of a final offer package.

Now, what did the Liberals have to say with respect to that concern? Well, the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) said, and I quote, that final offer selection, quote, subverts the underlying principle behind our labour relation system as it stands today. That is to say the parties do not know what is best for the workplace. A third person, someone who may have no knowledge of the workplace both from the employee side and the management side, is the person best able to decide how this workplace is run.

Again that is a bit longer and a more convoluted way of saying what the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) said, but in fact it leads us to the same suggestion that there is an imposition by a third party which cannot therefore be nearly as good as what the other two parties would come up with themselves.

The Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) also says that, and I quote, with final offer selection "what you get is a contract that the parties do not feel they have participated in," which again implies that there was an imposition of that contract on the parties, rather than the negotiation.

What that shows to me is that he does not very well understand final offer selection, and he has some ideas about final offer selection which are not in keeping with the reality of the Bill that legislates a process in the Province of Manitoba and is not in keeping with the reality of what has actually happened when final offer selection has been used in Manitoba.

* (1510)

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I am going to spend some time, if time permits, going through the case histories of where final offer selection has been used in Manitoba. What the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) will find when he listens to this—and we will help him to that conclusion, what conclusion I believe he will have to come to, in spite of his bias and his prejudice against final offer selection—he will have to come to the conclusion that in fact in almost all the instances what final offer selection did allow for was successful negotiation at the table.

How is that an imposition on the parties? What it is—well, let me answer my own question. It is not entirely a rhetorical question. It is an imposition, and the imposition is on the parties that do not want to negotiate, and it imposes upon them a very strong and compelling reason to negotiate.

When final offer selection is applied for, what you find in most instances is that the negotiations themselves finalize without the necessity of the selector choosing a package. Oftentimes they conclude without it even having gone to a selector. (interjection)- The Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) says only five out of 72 went to the selector, and that is probably in the range. The fact is that a very small minority went to the selector because the others were successfully negotiated.

Let us take a look at what we have. We have one of the parties applying for final offer selection because they feel that the other side is not bargaining in good faith with them. That is the essence of it.

Remember we go back to the philosophy of negotiation. Negotiation is a process where one or more parties wish to change the status quo and have a different idea of how those changes should take place or even whether or not changes should take place.

What they do is they sit down, they outline the issues that they have a disagreement on, and then they begin a compromise, a trade-off, a quid pro quo. Some are crunch issues, some are strike issues, some are lockout issues, where one party says to the other party we will go no further and there has to be some sort of disruption in the workplace before we will be able to resolve this one.

We are not going to change just on the basis of wanting to negotiate a deal, and that happens. It happens more where final offer selection is not an opportunity or an option, but it does happen even in those cases.

So what happens in final offer selection is that when you reach that point, normally you would have to have the following occur: one side would cave in, maybe both sides cave in on different issues, but there would be a caving in on certain positions, or they have to exercise some sort of power. The power available to the workers through their union is a strike or a slowdown, a work to rule or other sort of job action. What that does is, it disrupts the workplace. It creates unrest in the workplace. It lessens productivity. It creates an economic disadvantage, not only for the workers themselves, but for the employer and for society as a whole. It oftentimes results in violence that is

unnecessary and can be prevented. That is because we have come to the point in the negotiations where brute force becomes the factor which is going to determine the outcome of the negotiations. Now that force does not have to be physical force. It could be economic force, or it can be psychological force, or it can be a public relations force, but it is force nonetheless.

On the other side, if it is the employer that wants to stand by an issue to the extent where negotiations are impossible, their options available to them are to reduce the work force in some way or another as an economic penalty and a financial disincentive to the employees, or to lock them out. We have seen that happen far too much.

If you want to talk about an unbalanced, unfair, inequitable tool, then it is the lockout where the employer himself or herself, notwithstanding where they may be from, notwithstanding what influence it may have over them directly, can lock out their employees, shut down the place and throw them all out of work at their whim. They can do it in a capricious way or a well thought out way. They can articulate it or they can just put a sign on the door, but the effect is the same.

At their whim they are shutting down the workplace and throwing others out of work. That is unfair. That is inequitable. There is no vote there. There is no majority decision. There is no democracy involved there. It just happens. So there could be the lockout, or they can do something else. They can shut down the plant. They can shut down the plant and walk away from it, and that has happened too. Whether they lock employees out or shut down the plant, what they have done is use their economic brute force from their position of power in order to impose their will on working people in this province. It affects not only those individuals and their families, but it affects our entire society.

We believe, as do labour unions for the most part believe, that there has to be a better way than “duking” it out in the streets or shutting down plants or throwing up picket lines around plants in many instances. Now let me reiterate and reinforce my last phrase, “in many instances,” because final offer selection is an option but it is not an alternative to the strike in every instance. You will not have issues of principle or major shifts in policy come out of the final offer selection process, and I will explain why that is. What you will have, where those are not issues under contention or issues that can be resolved in another fashion, is a number of minor issues that are holding up the negotiations, blocking the negotiations being resolved by a third party.

I would suggest to you that a union that takes major issues and issues of principle to final offer selection or an employer that does that would probably be not acting in their own best interests, because you can lose as well as gain in the process.

The fact is, we have talked about the winner and loser syndrome, and that works well on minor issues. It is far less painful and there is far less of a difference between the winners and losers with final offer selection

than some of the other methods of reaching agreement. The fact is that it should be used in those instances more so than where major issues are at stake.

What happens when you do not have final offer selection is that those groups have to resort to brute force. I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when that happens we are all disadvantaged, and it works to all our detriment.

To get back to the point of the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), you do not find that there is that sort of imposition, because the participants themselves shape the final package. They decide what goes in that final package. Most of the issues do not get to the selector. There are only a very few minor issues that get to the selector that may be major in the eyes of the participants but really can be resolved through an arbitration process.

Let me go back to where I was a moment ago. I was talking about how you get into final offer selection. You sit down and you start to negotiate and you want change.

Let us say there are 10 items on the table from management and there are 10 items on the table from labour. They sit down and five of those items are compromise items. In other words, let us assume that position 1(a) and position 1(b), 1(a) being management and 1(b) being labour, are on—let us pull something out of the air. The easiest thing to talk about is wages.

Let us assume that one of the issues is wages. The employer says: I can afford to provide an increase in this set of negotiations of X dollars. The union comes back and says we need an increase of Y dollars. They have arguments that will back up their requests. The employer will use the argument of the necessity to remain economically viable and profitable, because that is, in large part, their reason for being in business. They will have selected facts and figures that back up that argument.

I would like it much more if they open their books entirely to their employees to back up those arguments. That very seldom happens. So we have to take our information from what they tell us and from what we can conjecture through the use of third party research documents, whether it be a stock report or whether it be some sort of other documentation, industry trends or some sort of public domain information.

On the other hand, the employees will say we require Y amount of an increase because the cost of living is such and such—and that is usually what it is based on in most part—or we are behind industry standards and they will use information as to what other employees in like industries under similar circumstances receive, or maybe it would be in a dissimilar industry but one which would set a general economic trend.

* (1520)

They will also say that in some instances they require a catchup. Now what usually happens in most negotiations is there is a bit of give and take and a tug of war that goes on. Somewhere along the middle line between X and Y, in other words X plus Y over

two, you have an agreement reached. That is general. That does not always work that way, but that is generally what happens.

The parties going into negotiations know that they are going to pad their side of it, because they are going to come down to find some middle ground. They want to try to buy their own offer, which set up the parameters, established the middle ground where they want to be in the end. That is what is called splitting the difference. It is a very common technique in negotiations. As a matter of fact, you and I may use it in our own negotiations from time to time if we are going to buy, say, an item where there is some judgement allowed as to the value of the item—a car. We offer a thousand dollars less than the person is asking for. We oftentimes do that on the assumption that we are going to end up paying \$500 more than we offer and \$500 less than that person would like. That is a very common technique at the table and in all sets of negotiations.

As a matter of fact, let me tell you why it is almost necessary to do that from time to time. I hope the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) has a series of questions on this, so I am going to elaborate on it just a bit. Let us assume, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you wanted to buy a car for \$10,000, and the person offering the car wanted \$12,000 for the car. You went in and you offered the individual \$8,000 for the car figuring that he or she is going to want to split the difference, and you are going to end up at 10 where you want to be, and the person says I will take the \$8,000.00. Well you have a problem, because if that person does not want to negotiate a bit, it tells you that they had either way overinflated their original price and you offered too much while trying to split the difference, or they did not have a car that was worth \$8,000.00. Otherwise, they would have tried to get even an extra \$100 or \$200 or \$1,000 from you.

Splitting the difference not only is a standard negotiating technique, but it is a good negotiating technique because it allows both parties to walk away feeling they have gotten something. It allows one party to walk away saying, you know I got \$2,000 off the price that guy was asking, and it allows the other party to say, you know I got \$2,000 more than that person was offering. That makes good negotiations. That is win-win negotiations. Oftentimes it has very little to do in what the value of the car is, or the item. That is splitting the difference. We have taken item 1(a) and 1(b), the two different negotiating positions, off of the table by splitting the difference.

Let us assume that there are a number of other language items in there. One, the employer asked for what is commonly termed to be a rollback or a concession. Let us say that there is a clause in the collective agreement that says there is to be a 35-hour work week, and the employer wants to be able to have their employees work for them 37 hours. What they do is they say, let us move back, we want to take that 35-hour clause out and we want to put in a clause of 40 hours, hoping to split the difference. Unions have fought very long and hard for reduced work weeks. It used to be that when people went to their jobs, they went

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to their jobs for 16 hours a day or more, seven days a week.

Outside of MLAs and Cabinet Ministers, that is not the practice very much more, but in fact—and those who worked within the Chamber—but the fact is that over the years there have been historic and monumental struggles on the part of working people for a shorter work week, culminating in what is the standard work week now, the 40-hour work week. That could not have been one without strikes and lockouts. That was a type of issue that required that sort of resort to economic force. It was a battle. If you are interested in the history of it, I can probably bring in some books and read about some of the more significant milestones in that particular battle, but I will not on this occasion.

I will say that in my sense most unions would very much resent that and would not agree to it and would not go to final offer selection where there was an opportunity for the employer to impose that in that way. They would say no.

It may be that the union is trying to strive for a 32-hour work week as opposed to the 35-hour work week, because that is the next goal with respect to trying to create better working conditions for working people. The reason they would like that is because a 32-hour work week allows us all to have more time with our families and to carry on with other pursuits that are important to us.

By the way, I should also mention that doctors probably work that 16-hour day, seven days a week, from time to time, as well as others in our society. I do not want to elevate any or to isolate any by those comments.

The fact is, a 32-hour week would allow us to have more time with our families, more time at leisure pursuit. More importantly, because labour is a collective—and labour does not only think about itself in its own individual circumstances but it thinks about what its circumstances might be under different scenarios. It knows it may be that they are out of work for a period of time, because the economy suffers either temporarily or in a more structural way. The fewer hours that we work as individuals, the more hours will be available to others as a collective.

In other words, if you have 10 individuals and they are working 40 hours a week, that is 400 hours. If you want to get those same 400 hours out of individuals who are working 20 hours a week then you need double the amount. That formula would hold true in varying degrees with respect to any number that you wanted to choose.

The lesser the work hours are generally in society, the more jobs there will be for individuals. They do not want lesser work hours at the expense of wages. What they try to do is incorporate some wage increases into the contract so that when they work 32 hours a week they are maintaining at least an equivalent hourly wage and an equivalent weekly wage or salary wage, as the case may be.

I would suggest that in most instances—and now we have positions 2(a) and 2(b)—where that happens you

will find—I am sorry, what you really have is positions 2(a) and 3(a) and 2(b) and 3(b)—you will find that both parties drop those particular issues. In other words, they say now is not the time to go for the 32-hour week. Now is not the time to go for the 37-hour week. Those issues are taken off the table. Throughout the course of negotiations different issues are taken off the table and put on the table as individual circumstances warrant and as the negotiations themselves unfold.

That leaves us now with seven issues that are left to be discussed under this scenario that results in final offer selection under the present legislation. I am not going to go through all the specific issues. Let us say that the same process is used to get us through 4(a), 4(b), 5(a), 5(b), 6(a), 6(b), 7(a), 7(b), but 8, 9 and 10 (a) and (b) we cannot get through. They may be relatively minor issues or they may be more major issues, but the fact is, for some reason it just cannot be agreed upon by the parties as to how they will resolve those issues, and we have what is known in the business as an irreconcilable difference. The irreconcilable difference, because it is not easily resolved, is going to result in either one of the sides caving in entirely or perhaps sharing the caving in or a resort to economic force, whether it be strike, walkout, work action, work slowdown, temporary work stoppage, rotating work stoppage, the shutdown of a plant, or cutbacks in the work level in the production at a plant.

In all of those instances the employer suffers, the employee suffers and society suffers. Do you know the way the issue is resolved, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Do you know how we finally come to a conclusion? One side beats the other side into submission or so threatens to beat the other side into submission that they crumble—that they crumble. What does that mean?

* (1530)

While they are standing there beating each other into submission, society as a whole suffers, because we have violence on the picket line, because the emotions run very high because the stakes are very high. We have lost production; we have families that are living off strike pay or in some instances not at all. If you want to see how that affects a community, just go to a one-industry community such as the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) is familiar with from her experience, or I am familiar with, or even Dauphin. Where you have a major employer that goes out on strike you can see the economic hardship that is created for community residents ripple throughout that community from one end to the other, bounce back itself, and as that strike continues over a longer and longer period of time, oscillating back and forth, creating more and more disruption, creating more and more hardship, you can destroy a community just because the parties do not have a way to resolve their differences without resorting to economic warfare.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

An Honourable Member: And the services are lost to the community.

Mr. Cowan: As the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) says, during that period of time in many instances

services are lost to the community. You know, there are strikes where the employer and the employee themselves never fully recovered, never recovered what they lost during that period of time.

There will be, even under final offer selection, strikes of that nature because those are strikes that are fought over the crunch issues. If we can do anything, and final offer selection is not perfect, it is another tool, but if we can do anything, let us at least move toward reducing the industrial conflict rather than putting in place circumstances that exacerbate it. Let us at least do that, and that is what final offer selection did. It took us in a step along a path, and there were other things that could and should be done over time, but the fact is that it was an option that we felt had come of time and one which I believe has worked and will continue to work if given the chance.

So what the Liberals and the Conservatives are saying is that they either do not believe it is working, and I have tried to show them how it is, or they do not want that option. We start this part of my comments on the basis of the Member for Portage la Prairie's (Mr. Connery) concern about the imposition of a third party's decisions on other parties. As the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) says, the Liberals and the Conservatives and their big business friends do not want this legislation even if it does work, even if it does make things more fair generally. The question is, why? We have tried to deal with that. I think we are going to have to come back to some more philosophical discussions later on in my comments in order to truly flesh that out, but we will have time to do that I am certain, Mr. Speaker.

Without commenting on any absence or presence in the Chamber, it is nice to see you back in the Chair. I am wondering how much time I have left.

I just want to remind, while I have the floor, that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) did promise to ask some questions when he came in the Chamber earlier on—I am sorry, I cannot refer that he was out of the Chamber. When I first noted the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) talking to me, he did promise to ask some questions. I have been trying to provide a bit of a basis for those questions but even some joyful and good-natured heckling might help.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I just want to advise the Honourable Member that I am indeed working on a series of questions that I hope to put to the Honourable Member later on in the week.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister does not have a point of order.

Mr. Cowan: I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, because I know the questions will be relevant, I look forward to the opportunity to answer them at length when they are first posed, or even perhaps throughout a series of

debates and discussions following their first presentation in this House.

However, I want to go back to what Professor Bellan has to say with respect to those who believe that final offer selection results in the imposition of terms and conditions on two parties, both parties which are going to create problems. What he has to say first I think it reinforces what I said about the process of final offer selection.

By the way, let me just continue my scenario because we now—I was distracted momentarily—have three issues that are outstanding. We can resort to the strike or the lockout or other type of economic force or we can take it to final offer selection.

How does the process work? Within the time frames that are allowed for under the legislation one or more of the parties ask for final offer selection. That is the right way it should be. It should be the ability of either party to ask that the majority of the workers consider whether or not they want final offer selection to be used to help them resolve what are otherwise irreconcilable, or at least difficult to reconcile, differences of opinion that have arisen during the course of the negotiations. It is also I think fitting that the majority of the workers who are going to have those terms and conditions, if it is agreed upon to have a selector and the selector makes a decision, put into effect in their workplace to determine whether or not they want that to happen.

What we have is a situation where they ask for—but when we developed the legislation, and our legislation differs from other jurisdictions with respect to this particular part of it and I think it is an important difference with what happens elsewhere under final offer selection—what we legislated mandatorily into the process is that the parties can continue to talk even though they have asked for a selector. We did that because we believe that the request for a selector itself forces the parties to bargain harder because parties do not like to give up their ability to shape their own future if there is at all an opportunity to do so. Because the strike and the lockout and the different forms of them, economic action by either the employer or the employee, do create a risk for the participants in the process. Oftentimes you will see a strike vote taken or a threat of a lockout presented, but you will not see it actually take place. What the parties have done in either instance or in both instances, if they do both, is they have increased the level of risk for the parties to negotiate.

Quite often you will not see serious negotiations take place unless there is the threat of a strike or a lockout. That is part of, what I like to refer to in my experience as, the dance of the negotiators. That dance happens right from the very first time when they trade proposals to the shaking of the hand when they conclude the agreement.—(interjection)—The Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) references to other dances from time to time. I think in a lot of ways there is some similarity.

What you have is a negotiator or a team of negotiators for either team, for other side, looking at each other, eyeing each other and sort of putting their proposals,

sliding them forward, on the table in such a manner so as to not tip their entire hand, but to make clear what they believe are the issues that should be discussed during the negotiations. Then that carries on in a whole series of different ways, including some posturing from time to time. Body language is very important in negotiations, including verbal dancing as well as actual physical movements that betray the process that is unfolding.

The reason that the strike vote or the threat of a lockout works is because it does increase a risk. The difficulty is that sometimes it increases the risk to the point where you have a strike or a lockout. What would be nice, I think what would work better, is if you were able to increase the risk in a more gentle fashion, build it up in a different way and not have to resort to the actual use of economic force which has such dire consequences from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to put back on the record a comment I made earlier, because I note some Government Members are counting before they are leaving the Chamber. I just want to give them my assurance that our Party and I do not think the Liberals will either call a quorum this afternoon. I know that I am speaking at some length and some of them have business to attend to, and we do not want to have to keep them in the Chamber just to listen to what I have to say, because there is going to be more opportunity to do so. So I note they are counting; it is not necessary. We will not be calling a quorum. If you have other business to attend to or if you have to go back to your offices, meet with constituent groups or constituents—(interjection)—I said that for this afternoon only. If necessary, we will continue on with that, if it works well.

I think that is a responsible way of carrying out what we believe is action necessary to stop the repeal of final offer selection, but at the same time not disadvantaging third parties who are not party to this debate and discussion to the extent that they have to wait around to listen to what is being said here. I will not take it as a philosophical, as a personal, or as a practical affront if they leave. That includes Members of my own side. I would just ask that one stay in the Chamber to heckle from time to time and keep things moving.—(interjection)—

Well, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has been strangely quiet throughout this debate, but I think he knows there is more to come and he is saving himself for a more appropriate—

* (1540)

An Honourable Member: Why do you not read a telephone book, Jay? The NDP Members are beginning to.

Mr. Cowan: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says NDP Members are beginning to read telephone books. I would ask him when that has transpired. I would also ask him in this House—(interjection)—it has not. I will also ask the Minister of Finance if he wants to, cares to, to listen to my comments, because I have tried to, and I think I have, put more substance in my

comments to date than has been provided for in a lot of the debate in this House in all the times that it has been debated here before.

As a matter of fact, I was just about to read from an unpublished paper with respect to the risk factor. Had he been listening to me earlier, he would recall that I was talking about the fact that there is already a risk factor that sometimes causes negotiations to conclude on the basis of what would happen if they do not conclude. In other words, you have to put some pressure on the parties to make them give up a bit of their positioning in order to find the common ground.

I am speaking from an unpublished paper which was actually a paper done by a university student in labour relations with regard to final offer selection. I quote from that paper, and it is quite recent. It is within the last year and a half, I believe. It deals with the Manitoba experience as well as experiences in other jurisdictions. I quote, generally speaking most of the literature concedes that FOS does increase the risk factor and therefore creates a strike-like effect with respect to the cost of disagreement.

He quotes an article from a Mr. Clifford Donn and that article is from a publication called Industrial Relations which is a resource book for labour relations personnel, for those who like to review the area of labour relations. It is the 1977, Volume 16, October edition of the Industrial Relations magazine. The article by Mr. Donn is entitled Games Final Offer Arbitrators Might Play.

What he says and I quote from the book itself now, referencing that it has been taken from the paper. This is Mr. Clifford Donn speaking. Consequently objections to the lack of discretion and subsequent likelihood of poor quality or inequitable arbitration awards means that final offer procedures are functioning exactly as they were designed to function. In some, the evidence reported here suggests that the lack of arbitral discretion has been having its intended effect. So the intended effect, and that is why final offer selection differs from other forms of arbitration, is to increase the risk that you may not get your package and therefore it is better for you to negotiate that which you can by consensus.

So let us go back to the scenario which I was describing before. We now have the final offer selection applied for. A selector may or may not be appointed, but just as is the case when a strike vote is taken or when a lockout is threatened or when a work action, a slowdown or rotating work stoppages or the shutdown of a plant are being contemplated or threatened, the risk element is there.

The risk, of course, is that once you get to the final offer selector the more issues that the final offer selector—

An Honourable Member: The Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) maybe does not know that.

Mr. Cowan: No, I am certain that the Member for Fort Rouge does know it. I would look to the Member for Fort Rouge for some, I think, counterargument when

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I finish my comments. As I indicated earlier, my House Leader (Mr. Ashton) was perhaps listening. There may be other opportunities for other Members of the House to speak before this Bill gets to committee yet. If they do, I would like to see an analysis of some of the comments that we have put on the record presented.

I would be particularly interested in hearing what the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) has to say, because I believe that he tries, and in most instances succeeds, not all, as none of us in all instances succeed, but he tries to be very logical and very consistent in his approach.

I would ask him to go through the logic of final offer selection and take a look at the comments that the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) has put on the record, which very much parallel the comments that the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) and other Conservatives have put on the record and to look at the comments I have put on the record, and I would appreciate his constructive criticism. I can tell him that I would consider it as intently as he has considered my constructive criticism of his approach and that I would be prepared to acknowledge where in fact there are points of difference that might be able to be discussed at some length at a later date.

However, I do not want to be distracted from the scenario—

An Honourable Member: Do not let me.

Mr. Cowan: —I was outlining—

An Honourable Member: I did not think that was what I was doing.

Mr. Cowan: I said to the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr), do not let me distract him from the scenario I was painting and he said, do not let me. He did not think that is what he was doing, but I can tell him that when you are as long into a speech as I am, anyone who looks intently at you distracts you.

In essence, having any sort of an audience whatsoever sometimes gives cause to focus directly on the point being discussed with that audience, sometimes at the expense of the general comment, which you are attempting to make.

The general comment which I am attempting to make, with respect to final offer selection, is once the selector has been appointed, or even before the selector has been appointed, there is provision in the legislation, and it was put there purposely for discussions to continue on.

What we have found in almost all instances out of five, less than 10 percent was an agreement actually imposed by an arbiter. In all the other instances the matter was resolved through negotiations before it was necessary for the selector to choose one package or another. In many instances, it was resolved even before the selector received the packages. The reason for that is it had created a risk element, which pulled the parties together, and they had to try and resolve their differences if they could.

The fact is that you do get agreements that you might not otherwise have gotten and therefore you have avoided the imposition of an agreement by a third party. That is not the case in conventional arbitration, by the way. In conventional arbitration, Mr. Speaker, the arbiter can choose from either package and matter of fact can make up awards entirely of his or her own without any reference at all to the entire package, although it is not good arbitration and could be challenged. It in fact has happened and does happen and probably will continue to happen.

Final offer selection has a risk element to it because that is not allowed for and it would not work if it was conventional arbitration or based on conventional arbitration. It would not work unless it did exactly the thing that the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), the Conservatives, the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) and the Liberals are expressing as their concern. Unless there was some risk, it would not work in the way in which it has.

By the way, that is the same reason that first contract legislation is working in this province. The Conservatives, even although they were opposed to it, as was big business when it was first brought forward, have not repealed first contract legislation. If you look at the arguments that they have on final offer selection they are almost exactly the same arguments that they had with respect to first contract legislation, yet they have not repealed it. That says something to me.

An Honourable Member: That is right. It is working.

Mr. Cowan: The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says, because it is working. If it was not working, you would think they would want to repeal it. It has had more time to become a part of our labour relations climate and become more a part of the process. For that reason, even although they were opposed to it, they fought it bitterly. They said things I am certain today they regret and will read it back into the record for them perhaps a bit later so they will have more opportunity to reflect upon what they had to say.

An Honourable Member: Tomorrow.

* (1550)

Mr. Cowan: As the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), my MLA, says, maybe tomorrow, if not tomorrow, the next day or the day after or next week. The fact is that they said all those things about the dark cloud coming down, descending over Manitoba, driving business out of Manitoba, and all the dire consequences and loss of employment that were going to happen as a result of first contract and it did not. It did not happen as a result of final offer selection, which brings me to the next point that the Minister made, the Minister of Labour, when he was introducing the first Bill to repeal final offer selection.

I do expect I will have an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to get around to what the present Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) said when the present Minister of Labour brought in the Bill to repeal final offer selection

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during this Session, and what some other Members said in other debates to try to show the relevancy of their general approach to final offer selection.

What did the Minister say? He was talking about the problems with final offer selection and the quote was: we will have to determine will business remain in Manitoba if we do not have a good business climate. The context in which he made that statement was that he obviously believed we would not have a good business climate if we had final offer selection.

I want to make the point that Members of the Conservative Party also said in the past, as did Liberals, that they believed we would not have a good business climate if we brought in final offer selection. I have to make the point that Conservatives also said that we would not have a good business climate if we brought in the changes to The Labour Relations Act, which were brought in under the Schreyer administration. They fought that using the same arguments.

Now they stand up in the House and talk about what a good labour relations climate Manitoba has. Why does Manitoba have one of the better labour relations records, with respect to work disruptions and the impact on the economy of all the provinces? It is because there is progressive legislation.

Why is the legislation progressive? Because it tends, or it attempts, to deal with the inequities that have been in the system since the imposition of the master and servants legislation so many years ago, which has resulted in residual management rights clauses in contracts and the residual management rights approach in legislation.

Every time labour legislation came forward that made it easier for people to enter into a collective unit, to reach collective agreements, to bargain, to improve their working conditions through greater power, the Conservatives argued against it because it went contrary to what they so strongly, fervently and traditionally believe, in and that is management rights over worker rights.

Every time we brought forward legislation that provided for greater worker rights, they said it would create a business climate in Manitoba that would result in failures, that would result in businesses moving from this province, that would result in businesses not moving into this province, it would result in businesses not expanding in this province. Mr. Speaker, that has just not been the case.

Now they brag about the labour relations climate that we have, as they did in 1977 and 1981. I will tell you, they did not try to roll back the clock in 1971 to 1981 no matter how right wing the Member for Pembina, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), and their colleagues were in the Lyon Government. They did not roll it back.

I have to pay some small tribute because I think what he did with respect to labour relations was so much overshadowed by the way he devastated the North as Minister of Northern Affairs. I have to pay a small tribute to the Minister of Labour under the Lyon administration, the Member for Thompson of the Day for not allowing

the Government to do what it naturally was inclined to do, and that was roll back labour legislation. I wish he had been as progressive with respect to not letting them roll back the progress we had made in the North on the part of Northerners. That is his legacy. He is known for having done that work rather than for having stopped the rollback of labour legislation.

I think he stopped it because he did have some history of involvement with the labour movement. I think he had some empathy with respect to the workplace and the need to balance out the workplace and to provide for greater rights for workers. I know that Government wanted to roll back workers' rights. I know that they wanted to deal with the issue of mandatory dues in the Rand formula. I know that they wanted to expand the rights of what they called conscientious objectors to labour unions. I am sorry, I have to backtrack because they did roll back one area. They rolled back time and three-quarters for overtime in a special sitting. They did come in and do some other things at the policy level. For the most part, they did not undertake this sort of action which is going to result in less rights for workers, because they had someone, at least one person, who knew something about labour and could empathize with labour. I think that is lacking in the present Government.

What is the Minister of Labour, previous, the Member for Portage, saying when he says that one of the concerns they have about final offer selection is that it will have that negative impact on business? That is also, while the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) did not say it directly, an underlying theme of what they had to say throughout the debate and in the halls, that this will create a bad business environment and will result in business failures.

If you want to do something for business in this province, Mr. Speaker, let us get an agreement right now to take this Bill off of the Order Paper, to let it die on the Order Paper, start the work on interest rates and start to do what we can to fight interest rates in a united front, in a common front. The interest rate increases do far more to devastate business, result in far more business failures and result in a far worse business climate than does anything else in this province.

If you really want to make for a better business climate, and at the same time help ordinary Manitobans who suffer interest rate increases when their mortgages come due, when they have to buy items on time which they sometimes have to do, because of the lack of employment that results from the recession that results from higher interest rates, let us talk about that. Let us agree to not carry forward the repeal of final offer selection. Let it go through its five-year lifespan and then we can decide what to do with it, but let us not repeal it at this time. Yet, let us use this time productively to strategize, to plan, to organize and to speak out strongly against high interest rates and increasing interest rates.

If they do not think that is enough to occupy our time, then let us spend our time telling the world why it is we are opposed to the goods and services tax, not just as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) does

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from time to time, mumble some perfunctory opposition here and there so as to remain politically onside with the people in this province.

Let us really develop a plan to attack the goods and services tax, and to use all of our collective energies to ensure that the Mulroney Conservative Government in Ottawa does not have an opportunity to add insult to injury, by not only allowing for the increasing interest rates time over time over time, but also imposing upon this country a goods and services tax which is going to destroy small business, which is going to take money out of the pockets of Manitobans whether they are business owners or whether they are working people or unemployed. That is going to hurt. It is not final offer selection.

As a matter of fact, final offer selection helps create a favourable business plan because I will tell you if employers are looking at where they want to locate, they look at a number of factors. Some of those factors involve workers. What do they like to see in their work force? Well, they like to see an educated work force, because the type of work forces that are required today are such that technology is becoming an increasingly important part of the workday life. The better educated your work force is, the more able they are to deal with the technology of the day. But more importantly, the more able they will be able to be to adapt to new technology, which is going to come as night follows day.

They also want to see a stable work force. They want to see people that, when they take on jobs, they maintain those jobs, because it costs a tremendous amount to hire and to train, and to let go employees. The longer service your employees are, generally, the more productivity you will get out of them. Particularly, if you are in a business where there is a constant turnover, and you consistently have to train new employees and bring them up to speed. So that is something that they like to see in their work force.

They also like to see in their work force, a work force that is healthy and is able to work. I am looking at it just from management's perspective here for the time being, or as best I can from management's perspective and what I think they would like to see, what they have told me they would like to see. They would like to see stable labour relations. That does not mean that they want to see right-to-work legislation such as we see in the States, where you attack the unions' so-called right-to-work legislation, where you try to destroy the unions. They do not want to see that, not in Manitoba, not in Canada, maybe in Tennessee, maybe in Florida, maybe in Georgia they want to see that, or Texas or Arizona, but not here. They want to see workers that have certain rights.

They may disagree as to what those rights should be and how much power workers should have as a result of their taking collective action in the workplace, but they do want to see them have the right to organize and the right to try to build a better workplace. I will tell you that, if you try to oppress any individual in any circumstance, over a period of time you will lose that battle of oppression. Throughout the period of oppression, you will have worked against your goal if

your goal was more productivity or if your goal is a more fair and equitable society. Finally, when that oppression ends, you will have disruption and instability that will further push you away from goals to which you should subscribe.

* (1600)

So let us take those issues and see how they relate to final offer selection. They want to stable a labour relations climate; they do not want strikes and lockouts. Well, we said very clearly that strikes and lockouts are being avoided, can be avoided and will continue to be avoided by final offer selection in the process that it provides for which results in resolving disputes without having to resort to economic violence, economic violence being a lockout or strike or a rotating work stoppage or the shutting down of a plant or cutting back of hours or a work-to-rule campaign.

So in the majority of instances it allows for those issues to be resolved without that economic disruption that works against the employer and society and all of us in general. We have had a labour relations climate that is second to none in this country under final offer selection. That is not entirely due to final offer selection. There are other pieces of progressive legislation that are in place that provide for that stable labour relations climate. Those pieces of labour legislation do so provide for a more peaceful climate because they tend to balance out the sides, and you do not have a side that feels that they have to fight, fight, fight for everything that they hope to accomplish. You have a side that knows that within the legislative framework, they are able to negotiate, to bargain, to impose their collective will from time to time and have other collective wills imposed upon them from time to time in a reasonably progressive fashion, and over time they will accomplish their goals.

If you do not allow for that to happen, if you say or develop legislation that puts one side down and puts one side up you will create not more stable labour relations over time, but less stable labour relations over time. If you need to analyze that from a different perspective, just look at what is happening in South Africa today versus what has happened in other countries that have taken different routes.

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that in every circumstance, over time what has happened in South Africa will happen elsewhere, because the oppressed will rise up against those who oppress them and they will get public sentiment on their side. It may take time. It may take energy. They may suffer failures throughout the process, but they will in time accomplish that goal of fairness and that goal of equity because it is something which we should all seek to accomplish. It is something which provides for a better society and a better world, and for that reason it will be accomplished.

Much better, much better, Mr. Speaker, and it would have been much better for South Africa to have sat down on the first day and started to negotiate the abolition of apartheid rather than try to impose apartheid through oppression of the majority of people in that country. Had they attempted to negotiate from

Day One they would have ended up in the same spot that they are going to end up 10 years from now, but they would have saved lives, suffering and poverty throughout the process.

It happens in a country. It happens in a workplace. It happens wherever there is inequity, unfairness and wherever one side seeks to oppress another.

An Honourable Member: That is happening with the Tories and Liberals—oppression.

Mr. Cowan: To bring us back to final offer selection, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says, it happens with the Tories and the Liberals.

I would suggest to you that this speech would not be required if all the Parties in this House attempted to sit down and negotiate a resolution to what appears to be an irreconcilable difference in approach right from the start. I think we will probably end up with a much similar situation to that, which we are going to end up with at the end of this speech and many other parliamentary procedures and practices which are going to unfold over the next number of days, to ensure that they cannot railroad, through this House, a Bill which is going to take away the rights of working people.

Mr. Speaker, we offer again, as we have on so many occasions previously, the opportunity to negotiate our way out of this impasse, to find a way through using mutual consent and consensus building to develop a win-win situation. I believe it is possible.

I am not saying that what the Conservatives and the Liberals are doing is in any way oppression or in any way compares to what is happening in South Africa or even in many workplaces right here in this province, but I am saying their actions have been oppressive. They have been oppressive because they have attempted to take away rights of individuals in this House to do their job.

An Honourable Member: Look what they did to the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper).

Mr. Cowan: The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says, look what they did to the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), and I am going to come back to that before I conclude my remarks.

I want to get back to the point I was making with respect to the Minister of Labour when he said that he felt business might not be so inclined to remain in Manitoba if we did not have a good business climate. He suggested that one of the things, not the only thing, but one of the things that was resulting in his mind in a less than favourable business climate was final offer selection.

You know how he came to that conclusion. He read an article in the *Western*—what is the paper from?—*Western Report*. It is a very opinionated publication from Alberta which addresses issues usually from a perspective more right of centre than centre or left of centre. He read an article in that magazine—I believe it was in that magazine. I may stand corrected on this. After he had read the article he happened to meet a

consultant—and I am trying to piece together what he said in his speech, from memory—he met a consultant in an elevator and they had a discussion about the business climate in Manitoba. I guess between floors four and seven or whatever the consultant, who had written that article, was able to convince the Minister of Labour that final offer selection was creating a business climate in Manitoba that would encourage business people to leave the province and would discourage business people from expanding in the province or coming to the province. The fate of thousands of working people in this province, in large part, rests on the basis of a conversation that the Minister of Labour had with a consultant in an elevator several years ago.

An Honourable Member: Incredible.

An Honourable Member: Unbelievable.

Mr. Cowan: I have two descriptions of that. The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says it is unbelievable. The Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) says it is incredible. I believe it is both, but I believe, beyond that, it is typical, because it shows how little thought and how little research and how little information goes into the development of Conservative policy. I am glad that I have the opportunity to speak directly to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) on this next comment. It may take me a moment to find his comments. I am sure if I cannot put my finger on them right now I will have time later tonight.

An Honourable Member: Did he speak on this?

* (1610)

Mr. Cowan: He spoke on final offer selection some time ago on the first repeal, and I have it here. Out of that vast array of research material I have with me, Mr. Speaker, I was able to put my finger on the comment within a matter of seconds, and you know what, I do not think that in any way should be taken as an indication that I am well organized, but should be taken rather as an indication of the importance that I have placed on what the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) had to say when he spoke to this Bill not that very long ago. I believe, when coupled with what the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) said, it gives us some insight into what the real agenda is. Let us play real agenda for a moment, Mr. Speaker. I believe that what we have here is what is typically termed a—

An Honourable Member: Hidden agenda.

Mr. Cowan: A prize goes to the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton)—re-election next time around. We have a hidden agenda that only surfaces here, there and about when certain Members of the Opposition or the Government stand in their place and really have an opportunity to speak their mind.

What did the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) have to say that I find so indicative of what that hidden agenda might be? The Minister of Natural Resources

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started out his comments telling us why it was important to bring the Bill forward, and I will quote from him. He said: why is this legislation here, Mr. Speaker? It is because we promised the people of Manitoba that it would be here should we be elected. That, if anything else, is a pretty good reason. One of the reasons why the general public develops a cynicism about all politicians is because they do not always carry out their election promises.

Well, if they develop a cynicism because politicians do not carry out their promises, then the Minister of Natural Resources better sit down and have a heart-to-heart talk with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). The Minister of Health is contributing to the level of cynicism in this province in a way that it has never been contributed to before, because they have failed to implement even 10 percent of their election promises with respect to health. They have failed to do what they said they were going to do on behalf of the people of this province when they were elected and they will continue to fail to do so as long as they have that Minister of Health. He is incapable, because the Government is incapable of keeping those promises.

Mr. Speaker, Will Rogers once said about filibusters, with regard to those undertaking them, that the people pay for wisdom and they get wind, sometimes long wind, but also I hope there is some wisdom in my comments today.

If the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) really is concerned about cynicism and the impact of a Government that does not keep its promises, with respect to cynicism he should also look in the mirror. He should look in the mirror, because he promised a full public inquiry with respect to the fire situation in northern Manitoba this year. Instead, what we have is a series of public relations meetings hastily called throughout the province that in no way provided the type of opportunity that he knows is needed, that he promised for Northerners and others to review the actions of this Government with respect to the forest fire situation this summer.

Those are not the points I wanted to reference directly. When he was talking about this legislation, and when the Member for Lakeside references "he" in here, he is referencing the Minister of Labour. This was the time the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) was Minister of Labour and he brought forward the first Bill. What does he say? I want you to relate this to what I just said about their concerns about the business climate.

He says, I do not think the legislation goes far enough. What legislation? Final offer selection legislation. I appreciate that under the pressures of time the current Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) and this Government, has hardly had the time to take the appropriate measures to really study what shape and condition our labour legislation is in in this province, to avail themselves of the kind of expert advice and in-depth studies to bring about what I would call is needed—major reform of labour legislation in this province.

I think the hidden agenda starts to become apparent as we now start to see Bill No. 31, an Act to repeal

The Final Offer Selection Act. I want the Liberals to listen to this very carefully, as the tip of the iceberg, because if they get away with repealing this legislation, it will not be long before other pieces of legislation are under the scrutiny of the Conservative Government in order to create major reform if the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) has his way. He is a very powerful and influential Cabinet Minister in that Cabinet. He has gotten his way to date, and he will continue to fight to get his way even at the expense of working people in this province. If that does not provoke a question, I do not know what will.

Mr. Speaker, the agenda becomes more fleshed out as we read further through what the Member for Lakeside had to say not that long ago. Here is what he says. This is, I believe, before he was in Cabinet. Quite frankly, I think the Premier (Mr. Filmon) made a mistake by not putting him in Cabinet right away, but I am glad to see him in Cabinet now. I wish he would use his position to undertake the public inquiry which is required, but there will be another time to speak to him about that directly.

In the meanwhile, I want to focus in on Bill No. 31 or in this instance I believe it was Bill No. 41. That was the previous legislation by the Conservative Government to repeal final offer selection. What he said, we from—and we, speaking of the Conservative Government—time to time draw up regulations, pass Bills, that make life a little more civil, that make our conduct a little more fair in the manner and the way in which we interact with each other, but a Conservative wants to do that as unobtrusively and as little as possible. Most Liberals want to do the same, although perhaps a bit more.

Well, we get the old intrusion argument again, the Third Party argument again. We see what the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) was saying about intrusion into the workplace, and the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) was saying about unwarranted interference starting to flush itself out a bit more, and the comments from the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) who was then not a Minister, but the Member for Lakeside, but his words speak as loudly whether he is a Minister or a backbencher, or whether he is in Cabinet or out of Cabinet, they portray what I believe to be is the traditional Conservative approach and ideology, because among other things the Member for Lakeside typifies I think the traditional approach of conservatism in this province. He is the anchor, he is the one that draws his own Members back to their roots when perhaps in a minority Government situation or another Government situation they start to stray from what are very hard rock, well-established Conservative principles. If only the Liberals had someone of the same calibre and the same nature and the same ability to direct them in a philosophical approach.

Mr. Speaker, what do we take from those comments? We take that the Member for Lakeside, who I think is exemplifying and enunciating and articulating traditional Tory philosophy—in other words, that philosophy that would rule the day if they were in a majority Government situation.

It is not quite as lively today as it was the other day, Mr. Speaker, and it does take something away from

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the speech. What we are seeing again is an alliance of the Conservatives and Liberals because just as they have aligned themselves to ramrod this Bill through, they have also aligned themselves not to provide the type of spark and spontaneity which is required by any speaker in this House to carry on from time to time during the course of their debate, and we have seen very little heckling from Members of the Liberal benches and even less from Members of the Government benches. I think for certain that is a tactic to oppress the spontaneity and the liveliness of the speech that we saw the other day in this House and, quite frankly, we New Democrats will not stand for that sort of oppression, but we will indeed carry on in spite of their efforts, through tactics and strategy to ramrod this Bill through the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, what else did the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) have to say? He said, and he was talking to the, actually he was speaking directly at me in this comment. I had not noticed that until I just reread it. I will read the whole paragraph. I want to thank the Member for Lakeside for this encouragement, for this advice and for this suggestion. I think that he was somewhat precognitive when he suggested that this work should be done, that he had a premonition that this day would come.

* (1620)

He is quoted as saying, and this is over a year ago that he said this: Mr. Speaker, I believe it is incumbent upon a group, it is incumbent upon this Minister of Labour, it is incumbent upon the Government, not as has been suggested to bow to the wishes of the Chamber of Commerce or to big business. I asked Honourable Members opposite and the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) particularly, who is pretty adept at doing his research for any presentations that he makes in this Chamber, I asked him to do the research, to do the reading and to put on the record precisely what the Conservative Opposition then said about this kind of legislation when they were sitting in those seats and what we promised we would do if given the opportunity to sit on this side of the House.

If ever there was an invitation to read into the record the record, that is an invitation to do so. I intend to avail myself of that invitation sometime during the course of this debate. I have not read directly into the record all that they said. They have said much over the years with respect to labour legislation. I will read into the record some of the things which they have said over the years with respect to labour legislation.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I have it before me. It will take me one minute to find the exact quotes. Maybe I ought to put it into perspective. I am going to read from a speech that I made some time ago. It is about what Conservatives have said consistently throughout the years with respect to progressive labour legislation.

First, it is important that we put Conservatives' specific complaints into the proper historical perspective. We need to do that because what they are saying today is not very much different, as a matter of fact it is no different, from what they have said on

each and every occasion when an NDP Government brought forward progressive and innovative labour laws.

Every time, without fail, every single solitary time new labour legislation is brought before this Legislature by a NDP Government, the Conservatives respond in what has become a timeworn and typical fashion. They can be expected to do so. They can be counted on to respond in the fashion in which they have always responded, and again they have responded in that way.

The Liberals have not yet developed that tradition in this House so that we can make that particular statement. Given what we have seen to date, they are well on their way to developing that same sort of knee-jerk reaction to labour legislation which finds themselves pushing themselves back into the seats of big business and sidling up to the Conservatives, cheek to cheek, jowl to jowl, side to side, to fight against the interests of working people.

What happens with the Conservatives historically, and what is happening with the Liberals at present? The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says that there is some hope for the Liberals and that we still hold out some hope for them. I do not know. The reason I do not know is, the ones that probably have the most at stake because they are not really representing the interest of their working people, the working people who elect them or their constituents are the ones that have been the most silent on this Bill. For that reason, we do not know if there is hope yet, because they give us no indication. They have left the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), who speaks from a particular perspective, do their speaking for them. They have let the Member for St. James set the agenda. They have let the Member for St. James put on the record all the negative anti-labour things that he has. They have not stood up to him in this Chamber. We know not what has happened in their caucus, but we can assume that either they did not stand up to him in the caucus before he came in here and made those silly statements, or they did and they are weak in caucus.

If they did not stand up to him in the interests of working people, then they do not deserve to represent working people. If they did stand up to him and they failed, then we deserve stronger representation in working-class areas than we are getting from the Liberals.

What happens though? What happens? Every time the Conservatives opposed progressive labour laws, they are quick to point out and to try to get us to believe that they are not anti-labour. That is what they say every time. The fact that they do anti-labour things and the fact that they bring forward anti-labour legislation, and the fact that they roll back labour legislation that works for the benefits of labour would lead one to believe that if they are not anti-labour, they do not know how to do what they want to do, or they do not really know what they are.

There is an old labour saying—I think Munroe from Woodworkers in British Columbia, Jack, quite often says it. He says, if it walks like a duck and it talks like a duck, it is a duck. If it walks like an anti-labour MLA and it talks like an anti-labour MLA and it imposes

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anti-labour legislation, or at least it does not speak up against it—

An Honourable Member: Does that mean it is in favour of working people?

Mr. Cowan: That does not mean that it is in favour of working people, and if it is not in favour of working people, it is anti-labour.

Let them try to kid us as much as they will. It is jovial. We all take it in the spirit in which it is intended, but as much as they say they are anti-labour, they are betrayed by their very actions, historically and right up to the present time.

If they say they are not anti-labour, yet they are opposed to legislation which gives labour more rights, they have to come up with an excuse for doing so, a rationalization. What do they say? They say they believe that New Democratic Party legislation gives the unions too much power over business and that it is not a matter of being unfair now, but it is a matter of being unfair with the change.

We have come to this Chamber, as New Democrats, because we believe there is unfairness in this society that needs to be dealt with and rectified. We believe that there is a power balance that needs to be equalized. We believe that big business, I am referencing directly here, the large corporations, the multinationals and now the transnationals historically have had too much influence over the workplace and the economy at the expense of working people. That we believe.

* (1630)

Interestingly enough, and I am actually speaking from notes that I prepared for a speech a year ago, and probably some of them have already found their way in the Hansard, but I want to repeat them in a somewhat different context now. I am quoting from the speech. Interestingly enough it is exactly the same argument they use when it comes to improvements to workers compensation. It is not that they are unsympathetic to injured workers. It is just that they are more worried about the ability of their business friends to pay their assessments than they are about the ability of the worker, too injured or too ill to carry on their work, to pay their bills and feed their families. It is the same old story every time.

An Honourable Member: The Tory story.

Mr. Cowan: The Tory story, as the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) said. What we have seen with this Government with respect to workers compensation is exactly what we saw with the Lyon administration, because it is a traditional Conservative approach from an historical perspective, and I believe we will see the exact same results. When the Lyon administration came in, they reduced the assessments that business pay to workers compensation, and they made it more difficult through policy changes, not legislative changes but policy changes, for workers to get the compensation to which they were entitled.

What has the Conservative Government done, this administration, this new administration? They have

reduced the assessments that businesses pay to workers compensation and we as MLAs and I am certain they, whether backbenchers or Cabinet Ministers on the Government side or on any side of this House, are receiving more and more complaints about delays in receiving workers compensation benefits as a result of policy changes, not legislative changes. It is the same old Tory story every, every time.

An Honourable Member: The sorry Tory story.

Mr. Cowan: As the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), both articulate Members of this House, said in tandem, it is the same sorry Tory story.—(interjection)—The Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson) says that she thinks I am getting sleepy. Well, if I am not getting sleepy, I am the only one in the Chamber who is not.

Do you mind if I sit while I speak, Mr. Speaker? The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) has hit it right on the head, and not only did he do it spontaneously, but what he said is almost exactly what I said in my speaking notes which I was reading from. I will just show them to him to make certain. Their bias, both historical and current, is essentially a pro-business bias. The Conservative bias is a pro-business bias.

If one accepts the fact that the interests of labour and business are not the same in all instances then, well, I believe that they are the same in many instances, but they are not the same in all instances. One would also be safe to assume that on occasion the needs of working people, working men and women, the needs of labour will be different from that of their employers. That is especially the case when their employer is not a resident of their own community, but some board of directors on a transnational or global corporation that knows not of what happens in the community itself but has an interest that is entirely disassociated from the interests of the community, and that happens. As a matter of fact, it does not even have to be transnational, it can be a national organization or it can be a provincial organization.

An Honourable Member: CNR.

Mr. Cowan: See, now the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak)—and I was waiting for him to make that interjection—says, or CNR, and in fact it can be CNR. I want to come back to CNR and final offer arbitration. I want to come back to that in a bit. He says, no, they do not. Maybe he should read up. We will give him some time to read up on the national transportation Act before I make my comments directly.

Let us get back to what I was saying a year ago and what is important in the context of this speech. Governments have to address those needs and a Conservative Government will quite naturally address the needs of labour and business differently than would an NDP Government, or a Conservative and a Liberal Government would address them in much the same way and that way would be different.

Historically Conservatives and historically Liberals have sided with their business friends and their

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corporate sponsors and that is understandable. Quite frankly, I come in here all the time and side with what I consider to be my working friends, with people who worked in the plants and the mills, with my labour friends. I make no apology about siding with them because they are the people who I believe sent me to this Chamber to represent their interests. Had they wanted someone who represented business interests in this Chamber, they would have sent a Conservative or a Liberal to this Chamber. They made that choice, and I take the responsibility that they have given me the privilege of fulfilling very seriously—and I want to make no bones about it, if I have to choose sides between big business and between labour, I am going to choose sides with labour. I am proud to be able to say that.

I believe that what we are being shown by the actions of the Conservatives and the Liberals here today is that when they are asked to choose sides they choose the side of big business. They will on every occasion. I think the Conservatives are comfortable enough with that concept that they are proud to stand and say, yes, we do choose sides with business. They will not say big business or the corporations. They should, but they try to hedge a bit and say, business. I think you will find that they will take their place and say that.

I have not heard the Liberals say that yet, but I think they should be very forthright when it comes time and when they are asked that question, on whose side do you stand? That is the question that separates us in this House on almost every occasion. That is the question that our constituents, the people who want to make decisions on whether or not to send us to this Chamber or to remove us from this Chamber, base their decision.

One of the questions that people are most often asked in different surveys is, who represents your interest most? They are asked that question because it is believed that different Parties represent interests differently. If they believe that the New Democratic Party represents their interest most, they will elect a New Democratic Party Member, and they usually do that if they are in labour. If they believe that business represents their interest most, they will elect Liberals or Conservatives.

Going back to my comments though, Conservatives, after they side with big business, invariably go on to say that it is not the working person who will benefit by progressive changes to legislation but rather to use their words, and I quote, "It is the union bosses who will benefit at the expense of the ordinary worker." That is exactly what the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) said in his comments when he said that final offer selection will weaken unions. That is exactly what the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism said, when he talked about union bosses earlier today as being different from unions and union members. That is what the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) meant when he talked about the fact that final offer selection would create divisions between unions and their members. They were talking about union bosses because that is their concept of the world. That is the excuse that they always use.

Now the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) asked me to put on the record some of the things that Conservatives had said in the past with respect to labour legislation. I am going to do that now. Listen to what the previous Member for Sturgeon Creek said when major changes were brought to The Labour Relations Act by an NDP Government in 1972, which at the time this speech was written was 15 years ago—it shows you how old this speech is, because it is now 17 years ago.

An Honourable Member: Who was that?

Mr. Cowan: Well, the Member for Sturgeon Creek, Mr. Johnston, -(interjection)- and the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) says, a fine man. I think that the Member for Arthur and the Member for Sturgeon Creek think a lot alike with respect to philosophical issues. They share a common basis and a common ideology, and what did he say? He said, and I quote from 1972, the heads of those unions—it also must be noted that he earlier calls them greedy union mongers in his speech. In this comment, he says, the heads of those unions, let me tell you, those guys are not for the working man. They are just out to put their hands in the working man's pocket again and drag money out of them.

That is what the Member for Sturgeon Creek, a Conservative Member, had to say when we were bringing about progressive legislation in 1972, because they were opposed to that progressive legislation. They thought it would destroy the business climate in this province, because it would destroy the labour relations environment in this province. They now say that we have the best labour relations climate in the entire country because of that legislation.

* (1640)

They were wrong in 1972. They were wrong in 1980. They were wrong in 1986. They were wrong last year. They are wrong today. They will be wrong as long as they continue to clutch on to those outdated ideological beliefs that pit working people against their leadership and pit working people against business.

They are wrong, wrong, wrong. There is nothing entirely inappropriate or strange about them being wrong, but do not let them repeal final offer selection out of their wrong-headed approach. It will not be them that have to pay directly for their ignorance and for their wrong-headed approach, but it will be the people that have sent us to this Chamber to represent them.

Do not let the Liberals side up with them, sandwiched in between Tories on one side and big business on the other, to collaborate in that repeal of final offer selection, which they know will hurt constituents in Transcona and in the Kildonans and all across the city. If they do, let them be prepared to pay the price on the doorstep and in the election.

The next argument that is used by the Conservatives is that Manitoba does not need any changes to our labour legislation because everything is working just hunky-dory, fine and do not worry about it, thank you very much, things are going the way they should. They

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will continue to work fine as long as an NDP Government does not change the law. That is the old investment in the status quo again.

An Honourable Member: Is that the Tories or the Liberals?

Mr. Cowan: That is the Tories, but it could be the Liberals.

An Honourable Member: Okay, it gets confusing.

Mr. Cowan: That is the old investment, ideological investment, in the status quo. Why? Because the status quo has historically benefited employers, big business, over working people. Earlier we talked about the master and servant Act, much of which is still residual in management rights Acts, and residual in the approach of labour legislation historically. That is why they favour the status quo, because labour legislation does not normally take away rights of working people. It gives power to working people. If it is a pie in which they work a power, if it is a zero sum gain, then what takes away—

An Honourable Member: Speaking of a zero.

Mr. Cowan: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says, speaking of a zero. I hope he was dreaming about what the GST will be when it finally gets put in place. I assume not, because he is one who is in favour of consumption taxes. It is not a matter of having a zero GST. It is just a matter of how much money the GST should take out of the pockets of Manitobans. That is what he is more interested in, not the fact that it is taking money out, but whether it should be nine or seven and on food or not on food. It is a matter of tinkering. It is not a matter of principle with that man. You want to talk about a zero in respect to having any sort of impact on the federal Government, that man is in a deficit position, rather than just a zero position.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Cowan: What is interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is what I was saying a while back, and I think it holds true today. I will quote it from the speaking notes directly: It is interesting that the only time the Conservatives have something good to say about labour relations in Manitoba is when the NDP Government has announced changes to that legislation. Let me explain. Day after day after day after day the Conservatives will lament the labour relations climate in this province until it comes time to make changes to the law. Then all of a sudden, because we are changing the status quo now and they are opposed to that, all of a sudden, as if by a miracle, overnight the labour relations climate in this province is among the best in the country.

If you do not believe me just read, as the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) suggested we do in research, what they have said historically every time changes have been announced. They say there is no need for changes because we have the best labour relations environment in the country. At the same time,

as soon as we are not changing the legislation, they lament how bad it is and how bad the environment is.

They say that because they believe it is just the right balance of power and furthermore it will stay that way unless that nasty NDP Government changes the laws.— (interjection)— He did not say anything to me at all, to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), he is still under orders.

Let us look at what Mr. Spivak had to say in 1972.

An Honourable Member: Is this Spivak, the Leader they hatcheted?

Mr. Cowan: Yes, it is, the Leader that suffered some difficulties at the hands of his colleagues—the Conservative Leader in 1972. The Bill was being introduced. What did he have to say when the NDP introduced major changes to The Labour Relations Act?

An Honourable Member: Was he for or against the changes?

Mr. Cowan: Well, he was opposed to changes because he was a Conservative. On what did he base his opposition? I quote, he said: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have labour relations in this province which are the best in the country.

An Honourable Member: The best?

Mr. Cowan: The best in the country—1972. Furthermore, he goes on to say: with this new NDP legislation we will upset the balance and conditions will worsen. In praise of the existing system—well, actually, that praise went on year after year. That praise of the existing system must have come hard to their lips, given that an NDP Government had already been in power for a while and continued in power for a while. The world, at least in Manitoba, had not come crashing to an end.

Let us see what they had to say in 1982 when the first contract legislation was debated.— (interjection)— Well, some Members find this perhaps a bit long, and I apologize for that. I do feel it is important, particularly for Members who did not sit through this part of the history, as did some of us on this side, to understand that history is in fact repeating itself. The only difference this time is they have the help of the Liberals with respect to their arguments. The Liberals are saying much the same things—

An Honourable Member: Hard to believe.

Mr. Cowan: No, it is not hard to believe, but—

An Honourable Member: Hard to understand.

Mr. Cowan: Well, it is not hard to understand if you understand the natural alliance between big business and the old line Parties. The old line Parties being the Liberal and Conservative Party, and—

An Honourable Member: Tweedledum and tweedledee.

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Mr. Cowan: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is becoming somewhat agitated from a seat in the back row.

An Honourable Member: He is probably trying it on for size.

Mr. Cowan: Well, no, I think he looks better in a seat in the front row, because I think he is an asset to us—

An Honourable Member: A what?

Mr. Cowan: An asset to us when it comes to the matter of trying to very clearly point out that it is still a very right-wing Conservative Party. He typifies that right-wing approach.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowan: He says from his seat, hear, hear, hear, hear, in the standard legislative practice of accolading a statement by saying hear, hear, hear, showing agreement with it and indicating support. He is proud of the fact that he is right wing. Well, he should be. I am proud of the fact that I have a left-wing perspective in this House.

An Honourable Member: I want to see the union leaders eating at Dubrovnik's and flying first-class, too.

Mr. Cowan: The Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) says from his seat that he wants to see the union leaders eating at Dubrovnik's and flying first-class, too. I guess that is a logical Tory extension of the words of J. S. Woodsworth, who said: we seek for others that which we seek for ourselves.

The fact is that I want to see a world where everybody has enough food on the table, no matter where they eat, and everybody has an opportunity to travel to the places in the manner in which they would like to travel, and not just a select few, whether that select few be leaders of business or leaders of other organizations, have that opportunity.

Until everyone can eat at Dubrovnik's and fly first-class then I think there is elitism in this society. That says nothing against Dubrovnik's and that says nothing against the fact that there are first-class tickets and seats available to people. What that says is there are privileged positions in society that allow certain people advantages over other people. Whether those advantages are power, financial, the chance to eat in a fancy restaurant or to stretch your legs in a first-class flight from time to time, matters not to me. What we want to see is more balance of power. We want to see a more fair society, more equitable society. So I thank the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) for his interjection. It has been helpful. I think it is further defying what it is they seek. They may seek it for others as well, but they do not seek it for all. Until they seek it for all, then there is an injustice. That is against which we fight today and on and on.

* (1650)

In 1982 when first contract legislation was debated, we heard from the Conservatives and their business

friends about what a fine labour relations environment we have here in Manitoba. What they say is how any new NDP labour legislation would upset the delicate balance that serves us so well and would bring ruin and despair down upon our collective heads. Yet they said we had a fine labour relations environment in 1972, and that the NDP legislation would wreak havoc on the province.

How can they, after 10 years of that legislation, say we again have the best labour relations climate in the entire country and this new legislation will bring havoc down on the province from an economic perspective? It does not even matter that it is a very hypocritical statement, but do they not have any pride? Do they not have any pride of what they say? Do they not want to at least to be believed? Do they not want to at least be able to substantiate what they say with fact? Well, let me tell you what happens.

Obviously not, because after all that diatribe that we had against union bosses and unions and upsetting the balance of first contract legislation—remember they have not yet repealed that legislation, nor have they indicated any desire to do so outside of the Minister of Natural Resources in saying that he thought this legislation did not go far enough—again we have more changes to labour legislation 1984 and the Tory band played on.

Remember the infamous June 26, 1984, advertisement, the one that was done by the Winnipeg and Manitoba Chambers of Commerce along with the Manitoba Mining Association and other employment groups, employer groups? Remember the headline, dark cloud over Manitoba. The advertisement spoke in great depth as did Members of this Legislature of the Conservative side speak in great detail about the peril that Bill No. 22, more labour legislation from the NDP Government, meant for all Manitobans. Remember that ad and how it starts. Let me just quote that ad and how it started. Quote, up to now—does this sound familiar—

An Honourable Member: No, let me guess.

Mr. Cowan: The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) wants to take a guess so I am going to give him—

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): We have a good climate of labour relations in Manitoba—the best.

Mr. Cowan: Hey, look at that, look at that. Both the Member for Thompson and the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) had the right analysis of what I was going to say.

Up to now—I am quoting them again—our management in labour relations in Manitoba have been in relative harmony. What happened to that despair? What happened to the dark cloud? What happened to the havoc it was going to wreak? Relative harmony, this is in 1984, June 26. Listen to this, because we are going to get the old Tory argument of the best in the country. Indeed our record for solving problems through discussion at the bargaining table is outstanding compared to other provinces, outstanding indeed.

That is 12 years after the fact that everything was going to fall apart according to the Conservatives in the Chambers. What else did they say? They went on to say that any changes of labour legislation would bring about the end of the labour relations world as civilized men and women know it. What did they say? The advertisement went on to predict, 1984, first contract legislation, that, quote: free collective bargaining as we know it in Manitoba is finished, a thing of the past.

Five years, over five years, they are still bargaining, last I looked. That sentiment was repeated time after time after time in this Chamber as Tories took to their feet to say that labour legislation was the best in the country, the climate was the best in the country, and peril would result if we changed.

It did not prove for first contract legislation.- (interjection)- Wait, they add those on, it was a very long ad. It warned and I quote: Big Brother will now make decisions for us. Big Brother will now make decisions for us, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, the Manitoba Mining Association and other employer groups had to say in 1984.

While first contract legislation is Big Brother ruling over us, why are the Tories not removing it? Because they were wrong in '84, it was not the case. It was a typical scare tactic on their part. They know it now and they are too ashamed to stand to their feet and say, yes, we were not telling entirely the truth in 1984. It did not come to pass that way. We were wrong. We were wrong in '72. We were wrong in '82. We were wrong in '84. Otherwise, they would repeal it. What else did their friends and they say about it?

Here we get the Member for Portage's (Mr. Connerly) argument about the climate. The ad forecast, and I quote: many young Manitobans will have to leave Manitoba to find jobs elsewhere in a country facing a huge unemployment problem. Bill 22 is a complete disaster for Manitobans.

Again, we heard that from the lips of the Member for Brandon West, the now Attorney General (Mr. McCrae). We have heard the same sort of comments from all Members of the Conservatives. It was not true then. They were wrong then. They are wrong now. They are basing their opposition on that same philosophical objective that is to decrease power for working people in the plants and workplaces. They are using the same, worn-out, long disproved rhetoric to try to justify their action.

Listen to this. Chambers felt that business, both big and small, would flee the province to escape this legislation. Business has been driven from this province and Manitobans have been driven from this province, but it is not because of the first contract legislation, final offer selection, or labour legislation generally. It is because of a Conservative approach at the federal level that is exacerbated at the provincial level that calls for high interest rates, free trade and the type of competition which is going to drive businesses under or out of the province.

Listen to this. We have a quote here from an Opposition Leader of the Day, who is now Premier (Mr.

Filmon) of the province, and I will quote from the article. This is an article in the Free Press, June 30, 1984: Opposition Leader Gary Filmon said the Bill has shattered harmony in labour-management relations. Another article from the same paper dated July 3, 1984, said, Gary Filmon summarized his Party's position. They could not understand why the Government was attempting to destroy the fragile balance between labour and business. This legislation would be just another roadblock to job creation and investor confidence.

Once again, we had changes to our Labour Act. Now the Chamber of Commerce, the Conservatives and now the Liberals are again talking about what a fine system we already have in Manitoba and how well the present legislation is working, notwithstanding the fact that many of them fought against that legislation tooth and nail as it was being implemented by saying it would destroy that balance. What they are saying is, if we do not change it back now we will all suffer unspeakable catastrophes and calamities.

They predicted disaster in 1972 and it did not happen then. They predicted disaster in 1982 and it did not happen then. They predicted disaster in 1984 and it did not happen then either. They were wrong before and they are wrong right now. They cannot have it both ways and still remain credible in their criticism. The labour relations climate cannot be as dismal as they claim it to be 365 days a year, year after year, and then suddenly be healthy and balanced once we talked about changing the law.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are some other points that I am going to want to make in my comments as we go on, but I just want to sum up this portion of them. Then I will continue on at eight o'clock this evening by saying that we have grown used to hearing that sort of dire consequences from the Conservatives, and we believe that it fits well in their ideology. We are not used to hearing it from the Liberals in Manitoba, although we have heard it from Liberals across the country—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

POINT OF ORDER

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

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know how important the debate on Bill No. 31 is to the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) and his colleagues, so therefore in order to avoid the pitfalls that can happen when one's train of thought is broken, I think in order to assist the Honourable Member for Churchill to get his points succinctly on the record with respect to Bill No. 31, I would suggest that we waive Private Members' hour.

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

* (1700)

Mr. Ashton: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have indicated that we would like to discuss a very important issue in Private Members' hour, Resolution No. 50. We have asked for leave to have it advanced to the top of the Order Paper. It deals with apartheid. It could not be more timely, given the release of Nelson Mandela. Without putting down the importance of final offer selection, I believe there would be plenty of time for the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) to continue his speech. While we perhaps appreciate the spirit of the offer we really feel we should not lose this opportunity to discuss the antiapartheid resolution and therefore feel we should move on to Private Members' hour as is the normal practice at five o'clock.

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

Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to echo the comments made by the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). Certainly, we would like to see the anti-apartheid resolution move to the top of the order in Private Members' hour. I think, given the comments that were made in the House today, it is important that we all have an opportunity to speak on this important resolution. Having said that, I think it would be inappropriate to waive Private Members' hour today.

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

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I certainly appreciate the sentiments which move the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) to suggest bringing forward a resolution about apartheid and how we in Manitoba feel about that, but it is because of the content of the resolution—the Honourable Member suggests timeliness, if the resolution said something other than what it does say then perhaps timeliness would be, indeed this would be an excellent time to discuss that particular resolution.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

In view of the very, very significant event in South Africa, I believe the Resolution No. 50, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), is now dated and is of little use to anyone here in Manitoba or in South Africa or anywhere else for that matter. It is on that basis that we would decline bringing forward Resolution No. 50.

It is on that basis that we also would ask Honourable Members to waive Private Members' hour, since we will not be discussing Resolution No. 50, so that the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) can get on with his comments.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader, is there a will of the House to waive Private Members' hour? No. There is no leave to waive Private Members' hour.

The Honourable Member for Churchill—

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the people in the South—

Mr. Speaker: —on a point of order.

Mr. Cowan: On the point, I am going to try to outline a compromise which I think might work. There is no greater need than right now for the people of South Africa to know that people all across this world stand with them. This resolution can in a small way help send that message and can play a productive role.

What I would recommend is that we agree unanimously to bring this resolution forward, that we have one speaker from each Party speak on the resolution, pass it, and then I will continue on with my remarks, if there is leave of the House, on Bill No. 31.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, there should be no doubt in anyone's mind. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) was the first on his feet this afternoon to let the people of South Africa know just exactly where the people of Manitoba stand in relation to their situation.

As I said, the content of the resolution being what it is, it is quite impossible for Honourable Members to agree to that resolution without significant amendment, which could only be worked out informally amongst the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) and other colleagues in the House. So a debate today on the resolution that is contained in Resolution No. 50 would not be fruitful and therefore I suggest we waive Private Members' hour so that the Honourable Member can get back to his what he thinks are very, very important comments on Bill No. 31.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' hour. There is no leave to waive Private Members' hour.

This matter will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), that is Bill No. 31.

Is there leave of the House to bring forward Resolution No. 50? Is that agreed? No, there is no leave.

Order, please; order, please.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

RES. NO. 34—BREAST CANCER SCREENING

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Kildonan, Resolution No. 34, Breast Cancer Screening, the Honourable Member for Kildonan.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), that

WHEREAS breast cancer continues to be one of the primary causes of cancer deaths in women in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the incidence and mortality rates of breast cancer remain constant; and

WHEREAS scientific studies demonstrate that early detection through breast screening

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increases the successful treatment of breast cancer, especially in women over 50; and

WHEREAS mammography and physical examination are components of an effective breast screening program; and

WHEREAS a significant number of women in Manitoba stand to benefit from a screening.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Minister of Health to consider establishing an advisory group comprised of representatives from the Department of Health and interested health professional groups to develop an approach to, and implementation of, a strategy for breast cancer screening in Manitoba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Minister to consider the establishment of a registry for monitoring data regarding the screening, treatment and incidence of breast cancer, treatment approaches and effectiveness of screening and treatment in early detection and cure.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to address this issue of the Breast Cancer Screening Resolution, which was proposed by us at the early part of this Session and later on in the throne speech.

Also, the Government has shown intention to follow our resolution. To date, we have not seen any conclusive evidence and whatever they said they mean by that. I had a very brief discussion with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and according to the Minister of Health they are following some of the recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, I want to put on the record why I think the best cancer screening program should be established in Manitoba. Breast cancer continues to be one of the primary causes of cancer of women in Manitoba. It is the second most common fatal cancer for women in North America. The numbers are staggering. In 1987, there were 548 cases of breast cancer reported in Manitoba, 179 of which were fatal.

Early detection of breast cancer, however, can significantly reduce these statistics. Detecting breast cancer before it has spread to the other parts of the body increases the chances for survival. About 84 percent of the women who have had early detection of cancer will survive for at least an additional few years of fine life.

A breast screening program that will detect the early stages of breast cancer has been implemented in Vancouver, and we shall learn from that experience. That program has been very, very successful. It is worthwhile proceeding in Manitoba, because it will save not only the lives of hundreds of Manitobans but also will save us tax dollars in the near future.

Mr. Speaker, besides the physical examination, something every woman over the age of 20 years should be encouraged to do, an essential part of the screening

program, is mammography. Both mammography and physical examination are necessary for a maximum yield in screening this program, since about 40 percent of early breast cancers can be discovered only by mammography and another 40 percent can be detected only by palpation. In studies conducted of women under the age of 50 years of age, nearly half of the breast cancers can only be found by mammography.

* (1710)

Mr. Speaker, women between the ages of 20 and 40 years should have a breast examination as part of their routine medical care every 2 to 3 years. The importance of regular examinations increases significantly with age. For example, women over the age of 40 should have a breast examination every year. As far as mammograms are concerned, base line mammography should be performed on all women between the ages of 35 and 40 years. Women between the ages of 40 and 49 should have a mammograph every one to two years, and women over the age of 50 should have a mammogram every year.

Women who are in a high-risk category, for example, who have a history of a mother or a sister with breast cancer should have regular examinations supplemented by the mammography.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to you some of the advantages of how it can save us tax dollars and how much it is going to cost. As regard to my primary discussion with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), he has indicated that it may cost anywhere between \$1.5 million to \$2 million. It will save us money in the long run, but the total effect of the saving may not come in the near future, so that aspect has to be kept in mind. How are we going to salvage this program?

Manitoba's geographical situation is very different. Sixty percent of the people live in Winnipeg and 40 percent live in different parts of Manitoba. To satisfy the needs of those individuals a mobile unit can be sent. It can have a centre in Winnipeg and go to one of the major centres like Dauphin, Swan River, or Thompson and regular visits can be made. That is not something which cannot be done.

It will also save money in terms of transportation. It would save money in terms of bringing patients to Winnipeg. It would save us money in the long run. I strongly feel that final details can be worked out, and it will save not only lives but will save hundreds and millions of tax dollars in the near future and we should learn from experience from Vancouver. I will urge all Members of this House to support this resolution.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to congratulate the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) for bringing forward this resolution. I think it is a very timely one, and it is a resolution which, had it not been on the Order Paper, I may have been moved to bring forward myself because the issue that is addressed by this resolution is important to me and to my constituents.

I should say that the community of Flin Flon has been seeking, with the co-operation of the Manitoba Health

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Services Commission and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), in having a mammography unit placed in the Flin Flon General Hospital to service Flin Flon and area.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, some months ago a constituent of mine, who is a volunteer at the hospital, who has been active in the Flin Flon Cancer Society—who incidentally had cancer herself recently, although not breast cancer—was instrumental in preparing a petition of some 1,500 or 1,600 names, which has been submitted to the Manitoba Health Services Commission, and a copy of which went to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) requesting a mammography unit in Flin Flon with the appropriate resources to man that particular piece of equipment and provide that service in the community of Flin Flon.

I should say that the community of Flin Flon is very much like other rural communities, in particular, in that our population is aging very quickly. Flin Flon is perhaps unique amongst mining communities in that it has been relatively stable for more than 50 years. What that has meant of course is that people have lived, worked their working lives in Flin Flon, raised their children and now are retiring in Flin Flon.

We have a disproportionate number of seniors, of aging people, in the community. That, of course, is evidenced by the fact that our personal care homes are full, that we are in need of extended care beds in the Flin Flon area. One only has to walk down the streets of Flin Flon to recognize very quickly that a significant portion of our population is over the age of 65.

Mr. Speaker, we all know what that means in terms of the incidence of breast cancer. I do not recall whether the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) referenced in his remarks the relationship between age and incidence of breast cancer, but it is quite remarkable. If you correlate age with the incidence of breast cancer you will find that after the age of 50 the likelihood of females developing breast cancer is extremely high, and it increases with age. The likelihood of women contracting breast cancer increases with age.

So when you have the two sets of conditions together, when you have a high population of aging people, when you have a disproportionate number also of widowed, single women over the age of 50 in a community, you have an obvious need for some method of preventing breast cancer from becoming a fatal disease.

The name "cancer" in itself strikes fear into the hearts of people. When you are dealing with a form of cancer that if detected at its earliest stages can be treated successfully in most instances then you have a compelling argument for making sure that those kinds of facilities are available and in use in the community.

I do not have to tell Members of the Legislature what a disincentive it is for women in the community of Flin Flon and the surrounding area, in much of the North, to have the necessary screening done when there are no facilities in the local community. When you are feeling relatively well, when there are no obvious symptoms of breast cancer, it is very unlikely that people are going to root themselves up, uproot themselves, I should say,

Mr. Speaker, from their community and take a trip just for the purposes of having the necessary screening, of having a mammography done. That does not mean that kind of screening should not take place.

We are talking about a service which should be available on a more broad-ranging basis and we are talking about a service which needs to be provided in communities in northern Manitoba, particularly where there is ample evidence that the at risk population is much greater than normal.

I would make the case that Flin Flon is that form of community, and I would be interested to note whether the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is going to remark upon this particular resolution. The Minister of Health knows that the community has made the request, a request that was supported by some 1,600 people. The Minister knows that the community is prepared to provide the training necessary for the technician who might operate the mammography unit and the community certainly supports the Cancer Society and individuals of Flin Flon who spearheaded this initiative with the view that this particular service is needed in the community.

I know that the Minister has established a breast cancer screening committee to make recommendations to the Minister, and I also know that the Minister has the report of that committee on his desk. He may have had an opportunity to review the recommendations. What we are anxious to know now of course is whether the province is going to have a province-wide breast cancer screening program in place in the next short while.

The resolution called on the Assembly to urge the Minister to consider the establishment of a registry for monitoring data regarding the screening treatment and the incidence of breast cancer, treatment approaches and effectiveness of screening and treatment in early detection and cure. That is the kind of resolution which I believe is easily supported by Members of this Chamber.

The statistics that I reported for my community, the community of Flin Flon, are probably no different from many other communities, particularly in rural Manitoba. I know that there are other communities in my constituency which also view these kinds of services as necessary services. There are communities not very far from Flin Flon, Snow Lake, Cranberry Portage and Sherridon, who would use the services if they were available in northern Manitoba, if they were available within a reasonable distance from their home community.

* (1720)

I certainly am going to support this resolution. I believe that it is timely because the Minister of Health is in a position to respond almost immediately to this request which will come certainly from many Members of the Chamber and across Parties. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), I believe is in possession of recommendations which would follow very closely the dictates of this resolution. The Minister of Health is into a cycle of a new budget year during which, or in

which he can assign monies from the Department of Health to a breast cancer screening program for the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I would not want to miss this opportunity to call on the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to respond to the petition which he has received from the community, to respond to the letters of support which have come from the Flin Flon Cancer Society, which have come from the Flin Flon General Hospital, which have come from other individuals in the constituency for the establishment of a screening system in Flin Flon itself. I think the size of the community, the size of the female population, the aging nature of that population are all good arguments, good reasons, for the Minister's quick response to the request that has been submitted to him.

So, Mr. Speaker, on all counts this resolution needs to be supported. We are dealing with the phenomena that is I believe the second largest killer, the second most common cause of death amongst women in the Province of Manitoba. I assume those statistics are not much different across Canada. When you consider that a mammography unit in comparison with many other diagnostic tools are available for detecting and screening other diseases, when you consider that the cost is not exorbitant from that perspective, it may be necessary for the Minister to act quickly.

I have to say in all honesty, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and I have had a conversation about the need for a breast screening program. He has indicated that there are a couple of possibilities, one of which is to have a mobile unit. We discussed the relative merits of a mobile program, a mobile screening program, but I believe that the costs that are being incurred currently by the Manitoba Health Services Commission as a matter of course, as a matter of good medical practice, are sent from our community out to have this screening done, that the costs of transporting those patients where the Northern Patient Transportation Program, for example, picks up the costs, or the individual costs, to Blue Cross or health benefits programs, dictate that those facilities should be available on a more regular basis. While I appreciate the Minister's concern for the cost of an installed, dedicated program in various regional centres, I believe that it is a much more health conscious, a much more acceptable proposition than the idea that from time to time a mobile unit will show up in the community to do screening.

I do not have all of the regional figures to give you, but I am certainly willing to guess that the number of screenings that go on at present are far short of what they could be and perhaps what they should be in health terms at the present time. I would be willing to bet that there are many, many doctors who are not advising their patients to have this kind of breast cancer screening done on a regular basis because of the cost they are going to incur or because there are no obvious symptoms. I am going to also say that it is quite likely that even when advice is given by the physician that these kinds of tests be taken, when it means disrupting their lives, when it means travelling to another community to take this kind of test, that in many instances it is not being done.

Mr. Speaker, therein lies the tragedy because we know that when the breast cancer is not detected in its very earliest stages the mortality quickly rises, the mortality level, and we certainly must be incurring thousands, if not millions, of dollars of additional costs in the health care system when we end up treating breast cancer in its more progressed stages. It becomes an infinitely more difficult disease to control. It becomes infinitely more costly when you start using radiation, chemotherapy as a means of controlling breast cancer. Early detection is the simplest answer. As I say, in comparison to diagnostic costs generally, and the cost of equipment to do the screening, it is not inordinately expensive, and we certainly believe, and I know, that the people in Flin Flon and the Flin Flon General Hospital and the medical profession generally in Flin Flon are certainly supportive of having the equipment to do this screening available in the community of Flin Flon.

So, Mr. Speaker, I leave this debate to others. I hope that we will hear from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) before this resolution is either passed or condemned to fall to the bottom of the Order Paper, not to be debated for another six months. I hope that we will hear from the Minister of Health, and specifically, I would ask the Minister of Health to report on the status of the report of the Breast Screening Advisory Committee to indicate to the Chamber whether there will be any initiatives this year with respect to a provincial program of breast cancer screening, and to indicate as well, on a more parochial note, whether the community of Flin Flon and the Flin Flon General Hospital are likely to see an established breast screening program in the community of Flin Flon.

Mr. Speaker, those questions need to be answered on behalf of my constituents and I look forward to the Minister's response. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The Honourable Minister of Health.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne on May 18, 1989, indicated there will be a screening program for the early detection of breast cancer to begin to reduce the number of deaths that result from this devastating disease.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of that, my ministry undertook several steps to bring more focus to the issue of mammography, breast cancer screening, in the Province of Manitoba. I fully recognize my honourable friend's, the Member for Kildonan's (Mr. Cheema), concern in this area, and I say this to him, thanking him for his expression of concern, but I simply indicate to my honourable friend that the main tenet of his resolution has been addressed over the last number of months and that, in effect, the resolution would have little necessity today because some of the things that my honourable friend has suggested have indeed been undertaken.

Let me point out to my honourable friends that breast cancer is, amongst women age 40 and over, the leading cause of death due to cancer. As a result of that, a number of studies have been sponsored nationally, and

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indeed other nations have sponsored studies to attempt to find a way to intervene on the preventive and detection side, so that women can be spared the devastation of breast cancer and indeed, in some instances, death as a result of too late for intervention detection of breast cancer.

* (1730)

(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Orchard: Let me share with my honourable friends some of the most recent statistics that I have for the Province of Manitoba, these are 1987 statistics. In 1987, 548 women in the Province of Manitoba were diagnosed with breast cancer. In that same year breast cancer mortality in Manitoba reached 179 individuals.

There were a number of hospital admissions because of breast cancer, its diagnosis, its treatment in the province in 1987-88 and in that particular hospital year there were just under 9,400 hospital days of care incurred treating women with breast cancer. It is estimated that—and these are estimated figures—that these costs exceeded \$5 million.

So clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the issue in terms as a major health issue to women is an important one in the Province of Manitoba and that is exactly why we undertook, in the throne speech, as part of the new initiatives in the Ministry of Health, designed to serve women in the Province of Manitoba in a more equitable fashion and in meeting their needs in a more realistic way, we embarked upon the implementation of breast cancer screening.

I say to my honourable friend, the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema), that his first RESOLVED, in terms of recommending the establishment of an advisory group, let me indicate to my honourable friend, that was done, that was done in May of last year, some eight months ago. The committee was chaired by Dr. Sharon Macdonald and the membership of the committee was very diverse, representing many interest groups in the issue of breast cancer screening in the Province of Manitoba.

Membership included the Cadham Provincial Laboratory, the Cancer Society of Manitoba the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba, the College of Family Practice Physicians, the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses, the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, the Manitoba Community Health Services, Manitoba Health in terms of Research and Planning, the Manitoba Health Services Commission, the Manitoba Medical Association, the Manitoba Women's Institute, the Radiology Section of the Manitoba Medical Association, and the Women's Directorate within Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a very diverse group of individuals. The terms of reference, as given to them in May, were to assess the options for early detection of breast cancer, to identify the most service-effective and cost-efficient option, to identify a detailed strategy for the planning, development and implementation of the preferred option for the early detection of breast

cancer and to prepare a proposal for the preferred option for consideration by Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the first "therefore be it resolved" of my honourable friend's resolution is in effect of no value today because that committee in fact was struck, held considerable consultation, and has indeed reported to the Ministry of Health with a fairly complete report.

Let me share with my honourable friends some of the basic parameters of that report. Let me share with my honourable friends some of the background which is guiding Government in terms of the decision making. This is not an inexpensive initiation or action by Government. It involves the commitment in annualized operating costs of close to \$2 million per year to provide breast cancer screening for women of ages 50 to 69 in the Province of Manitoba. That would involve a commitment of capital resources close to \$1 million to accomplish that. We are not talking a minor amount of commitment to undertake a breast cancer screening process in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the province is presented with those kinds of numbers, I have to tell you that there is not amongst women's groups unanimous agreement as to whether this is the best expenditure of health prevention dollars. Bear in mind, I think my honourable friends will realize that this proposal is being considered as a prevention and health promotion initiative. There are a number of women's groups who are involved in health care delivery to women in the Province of Manitoba who say that this is a very expensive, first-class and necessary initiative of the Province of Manitoba, but it may not necessarily be the most effective use of very scarce and limited resources. There is not unanimity of opinion across the board as to whether we ought to proceed or not.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is fair to say that this Government believes the initiative to be of sufficient importance that we will be following very closely some of the recommendations that have come forward from the ad hoc committee, which was struck with the membership I laid out earlier in my remarks, and some of the recommendations they have made for the bringing to fruition of this mammography program for the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to deal with the second resolve that my honourable friend has made part of this resolution, that we urge the Minister to consider the establishment of a registry for monitoring, et cetera. That is probably one of the most important recommendations that came out of the ad hoc committee's series of recommendations to Government. The recommendation is that a comprehensive registry must be developed to provide data for both quality control and program evaluation, that the registry be consistent with a national information system, and that the registry interface with both the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation and the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are two very important components to that concept of the registry: first of all, the ability to share uniform data across this nation

with other jurisdictions which may well be undertaking similar programs of mammography and breast cancer screening; more importantly, to provide us data so that we can assure quality control in the program delivery, and that we can undertake appropriate and necessary program evaluation to answer that question that women's groups put to Government, as to whether this is the most effective use of scarce resource in the health promotion and illness prevention program. It is only with that extensive monitoring and evaluation process that we can even come close, I submit, to making that value judgment of this initiative.

* (1740)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in general concepts, the screening initiative involves a number of separate initiatives, if you will, in at least one of the proposals made as a result of very extensive discussions across the province. It involves two permanent screening centres and the investment by the province in a mobile screening system. I have to tell my honourable friend that, prior to having this included in last year's throne speech in May, I had the opportunity to see first hand some of the emerging technologies in breast cancer screening, not only in terms of permanent installations in a health care facility, but also the most current technology available in mobile systems.

I have to say that there are some very impressive advancements today in terms of mobilizing breast cancer screening, the mammography equipment. Clearly, I think that is a very, very viable option to the Province of Manitoba, given that our target population for screening, as recommended by the national study sponsored by the Canadian Cancer Society, of which Manitoba women were substantial participants, they recommended screening of ages 50 to 69. Given that the target population in that range outside of the City of Winnipeg and outside of Brandon probably do not at this time warrant permanent installation, the cost of which can approach \$200,000, the advice of a mobile unit does make some sense in the province. There are additional operating costs associated with a mobile unit as one might full well expect, but it appears to be probably a quite effective potential to bring the service closer to where the women reside in the Province of Manitoba. That is certainly part of the consideration.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, another aspect of the program is the method by which we assure a uniform screening and reading of the radiological films. There are a number of options that are proposed in that regard and certainly worthy of discussion and investigation, because the most cost-effective thing we can do here is to provide a mass screening with a given guarantee of volume, if you will, if that is the appropriate terminology, and thereby negotiate, I believe, something which is significantly below the fee schedule charge made for individual mammography screening process and the reading of those films. I believe that it is in that approach that we will find quite possibly the most effective resource trade-off, if you will, in terms of enabling us to initiate this as a province-wide screening program.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I simply close by thanking my honourable friend for bringing the resolution forward

and by indicating to him and to the House that the suggestions he has made in this resolution have, by and large, been undertaken by the province in the last number of months. We have received very, very excellent and positive input from a wide group of women across the Province of Manitoba, providing us advice on how we may best serve them in terms of initiation of a mammography program, which would provide breast cancer screening on a regular basis to those women who are between the ages of 50 and 69 in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank my honourable friend from Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) for bringing this resolution forward for debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The question before the House—the Honourable Minister of Labour.

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak on this resolution on breast cancer screening. When I was involved doing the Women's Initiative and we went across the province, we spoke to over 1,000 women in the province. We went to 24 communities. One of the areas that came up time and time again was women's health, and of course cancer was one of the areas. It was not an area that we felt we could discuss in length, because it was a topic all of its own. We were there primarily to discuss whatever women wanted; but mainly we were there on family violence and economic development for women.

One of the strong recommendations that came out of the Women's Initiative was for the Women's Health Directorate. We were very thankful that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) chose to bring that program forward and that women would have an opportunity to deal with issues concerning their health. In many cases what has been found has been that, especially as women get older, their problems are sloughed off as just women's problems. This is not an exact thing at all. No one wants their health to be looked at as something that just a tranquilizer will help.

To get back to the breast cancer screening, one of the recommendations that came through from the Women's Initiative as well, especially when we got up North and into the remote areas, was the idea of having mobile vans for breast cancer screening, to bring a mammography program to remote areas. Not only did they feel that this was an area that mammography would be a help, but that there were other areas that the mobile van may well be a good idea for the North, maybe to bring up child specialists for children, gynecologists who might go into the communities and, in this way, have the mobile vans.

The fact that the people that were on this ad hoc technical advisory committee—that was one of the recommendations that they have suggested, that it be evaluated for appropriateness and cost effectiveness prior to further expansion in rural areas. Certainly, it is something that women would welcome. As I look over some of the things that concern women, they especially fear breast cancer probably over any form of cancer.

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When the Health Sciences Centre—I guess it was actually not the Health Sciences Centre, it was the cancer—what is that called, Donald? Yes, the Cancer Treatment Research Foundation. When they did a program, and I do not know how I managed to get on the list, but when they sent out letters to, it must have been thousands of women in Winnipeg, I cannot begin to tell you the number that I knew who quickly phoned in, made an appointment. The appointments were backed up for months and months. It was one of the areas that women very much voluntarily took the opportunity to go and participate in.

I knew a number as well who, further to that, ended up having biopsies. In most cases the ones that I knew well, they were luckily benign. There were a few that ended up having a breast removed, but are still alive thankfully. I think the program is a wonderful help. I think it gives women a sense of comfort to know that there is something like this that although they are doing their own—I am sorry, I cannot think of the term, but in seeing their doctors regularly, especially when they hit a certain age, it certainly is a scary thing. I really appreciate the fact that we get the opportunity to even discuss this kind of an issue in the Legislature and realizing that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has set up an ad hoc technical advisory committee and that they are addressing this very subject.

* (1750)

I think that the figures the Minister mentioned, that there were, in 1987, 548 women diagnosed with breast cancer and that the mortality rate in Manitoba was 179, is a scary statistic. We realize that this is one of the areas that the Department of Health, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has really been on the vanguard as far as making sure that this particular subject has been dealt with in Health.

As a woman I appreciate the effort that has gone into this. As has been said, breast cancer is the leading cause of death due to cancer among the female population over 40 years of age, and although I always like to claim I am 39 -(interjection)- I appreciate that. It is always a matter of concern, so the more that we can do in this area to assess early detections of breast cancer and to identify something that is cost-effective and service effective, is something that means a lot to the women of Manitoba. I want to commend the Minister for the work he has done and also to the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) for bringing forward this resolution even though most of the things have been proceeded with.

One of the recommendations that came out of this committee to look at was that they should—and I think the Minister might have mentioned it, and that is the comprehensive registry to be developed, to provide data for quality control and program evaluation and that the registry be consistent with national information and that it interface with the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation and the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

I think that—this was another area that we found in the Women's Initiative, not just for breast screening,

but that data is the one thing that is needed in areas outside of this particular area. It is the one area that we do not know what programs are going on in this field and in others. Women do not know what programs there are to access, and in some of the communities we found that even the service providers did not recognize that in a small community one group was performing a service and the other did not know about it. So I think that data in any area, but especially in this, will be a very welcome addition to what is happening as far as breast screening is concerned.

I think I mentioned about the mobile van. One of the other recommendations that came forward and I think was a good one, was that the program development should recognize local community involvement and utilize volunteers and equipment donations. That is a good suggestion, because in communities they are very anxious to have this type of service.

I know that just speaking to women across this province, that they are more than willing to give their time in a volunteer way so that they can help out in programs that are especially helpful to women. This is a program I know that would have an overwhelming response when it came to volunteers, I think also, equipment donations as well. Because cancer is a disease that hits at one time or another every family, this is an area that people feel that they should donate. They are donating because they know someone.

I think that is a very good recommendation and one that should not be overlooked, because the utilization of volunteers for this type of a program I think is something—and I know that the Minister will welcome that particular suggestion. Another suggestion that came out was that there be an ongoing liaison and collaboration be established with the Manitoba Department of Health, the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, and the Manitoba Division of the Canadian Cancer Society. I think in many ways most people do not differentiate between some of these organizations, the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation and the Manitoba Division of the Canadian Cancer Society.

I guess when you get to a certain stage where, when you are looking in the obituaries, I think that the donations that go to probably Cancer and Heart Foundation are two of the areas that most people donate to, and I am sure they are very high on their priority list. It really has been good to see the type of recommendation that has come out of the ad hoc committee that will help to establish programs that women themselves are looking to have and feel that they need. I think it is very important that be a fact.

Another thing that was recommended was that a permanent advisory committee to the Breast Cancer Screening Program be established. I am sure that the Minister will be taking a good look at that and feeling that will be a recommendation that should be followed through on.

The national breast cancer study was recently completed in Canada. The recommendation was thus made that Canadian women aged 50 to 69 be offered and encouraged to participate in an early detection program.

Monday, February 12, 1990

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Order. The Honourable Minister's time has expired. The question before the House is the proposed motion by the Honourable Member for Kildonan. The Honourable Minister for Family Services.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I welcome the opportunity to pass a few remarks on this subject. I realize the time is late.

I do want to mention the remarks of my colleagues, particularly from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), in pointing out some of the work that has already been done in connection with this resolution. Of course, we

all realize that the resolution has been on the Order Paper for some time as has many resolutions.

In the interim, the Minister of Health has been actively working in his department and has, before the resolution came to the floor of the House, already resolved many of the issues that the Member raised. It is a subject of course which—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. When this item is before the House again, the Honourable Minister will have 14 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., according to the rules of the House, I am leaving the Chair and shall return at 8 p.m.