



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

39 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

| NAME | CONSTITUENCY | PARTY |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| ALCOCK, Reg | Osborne | Liberal |
| ASHTON, Steve | Thompson | NDP |
| BARRETT, Becky | Wellington | NDP |
| CARR, James | Crescentwood | Liberal |
| CARSTAIRS, Sharon | River Heights | Liberal |
| CERILLI, Marianne | Radisson | NDP |
| CHEEMA, Gulzar | The Maples | Liberal |
| CHOMIAK, Dave | Kildonan | NDP |
| CONNERY, Edward, Hon. | Portage la Prairie | PC |
| CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon. | Ste. Rose | PC |
| DACQUAY, Louise | Seine River | PC |
| DERKACH, Leonard, Hon. | Roblin-Russell | PC |
| DEWAR, Gregory | Selkirk | NDP |
| DOER, Gary | Concordia | NDP |
| DOWNEY, James, Hon. | Arthur-Virden | PC |
| DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon. | Steinbach | PC |
| DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon. | Riel | PC |
| EDWARDS, Paul | St. James | Liberal |
| ENNS, Harry, Hon. | Lakeside | PC |
| ERNST, Jim, Hon. | Charleswood | PC |
| EVANS, Clif | Interlake | NDP |
| EVANS, Leonard S. | Brandon East | NDP |
| FILMON, Gary, Hon. | Tuxedo | PC |
| FINDLAY, Glen, Hon. | Springfield | PC |
| FRIESEN, Jean | Wolseley | NDP |
| GAUDRY, Neil | St. Boniface | Liberal |
| GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon. | Minnedosa | PC |
| HARPER, Elijah | Rupertsland | NDP |
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| LAMOUREUX, Kevin | Inkster | Liberal |
| LATHLIN, Oscar | The Pas | NDP |
| LAURENDEAU, Marcel | St. Norbert | PC |
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| McALPINE, Gerry | Sturgeon Creek | PC |
| McCRAE, James, Hon. | Brandon West | PC |
| McINTOSH, Linda | Assiniboia | PC |
| MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon. | River East | PC |
| NEUFELD, Harold, Hon. | Rosmere | PC |
| ORCHARD, Donald, Hon. | Pembina | PC |
| PENNER, Jack, Hon. | Emerson | PC |
| PLOHMAN, John | Dauphin | NDP |
| PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon. | Lac du Bonnet | PC |
| REID, Daryl | Transcona | NDP |
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| STEFANSON, Eric | Kirkfield Park | PC |
| STORIE, Jerry | Flin Flon | NDP |
| SVEINSON, Ben | La Verendrye | PC |
| VODREY, Rosemary | Fort Garry | PC |
| WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy | St. Johns | NDP |
| WOWCHUK, Rosann | Swan River | NDP |

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, October 19, 1990

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BILL 15—THE RE-ENACTED STATUTES OF MANITOBA (PRIVATE ACTS) ACT, 1990

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 15, The Re-enacted Statutes of Manitoba (Private Acts) Act, 1990; Loi de 1990 sur la réadoption de lois du Manitoba (Lois d'intérêt privé), be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

BILL 16—THE RE-ENACTED STATUTES OF MANITOBA (PUBLIC GENERAL ACTS) ACT, 1990

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 16, The Re-enacted Statutes of Manitoba (Public General Acts) Act, 1990; Loi de 1990 sur la réadoption de lois du Manitoba (Lois générales d'intérêt public), be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct attention of the Honourable Members to the loge to my right where we have with us this morning the Honourable Raymond Palackdharry Singh, who is the M.P. for Naparima in Trinidad.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Free Trade Agreement – Mexico Negotiations

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. We were very shocked to hear the rather Pollyanna-speech of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. Ernst) in terms of the positive effects of free trade on Manitobans. In terms of the Minister's analysis of the facts, we have a different analysis of 10,000 manufacturing jobs lost in Manitoba over the last 12 months. Maybe we are talking to the real workers who are affected by the Free Trade Agreement.

My question to the Minister is: What position has the Government of Manitoba taken on the free trade negotiations with the country of Mexico that the Prime Minister has entered into?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, it is our opinion that there is little in the way of benefit as far as Manitoba is concerned coming from a free trade agreement between Mexico and Canada, unlike the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement where there are significant benefits for Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the question of Mexico-Canada free trade of course has put Canada in some senses in a bit of a defensive mode in that the Canadian Government I believe will be participating in the U.S.-Mexico free trade agreements, or attempting to do so, out of interest in protecting our agreements and our trade volumes with the United States.

* (1005)

Government Initiatives

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I find it rather curious the inconsistency of the Minister's position. I thank him for being opposed to the free trade with Mexico, but if he looks at the analysis of the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, he will find thousands and thousands of jobs lost from Canada to the United States, and now down to Mexico, as we suggested to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) a year ago.

My question to the Premier is: Has he developed a strategy with all his major Government departments to deal with the free trade negotiations of Mexico? We are finding ourselves in the Free Trade Agreement with the United States ad hocking every plant closure. Has he developed a comprehensive strategy? Is he going to consult with business and labour to develop that strategy? Is he going to be better prepared to deal with the ramifications of the Mulroney trade agreement with Mexico than he has been with the U.S. Free Trade Agreement with Canada?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend across the way constantly harps, as do Members of his caucus, and for that matter the Liberal Caucus, on the question of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. Every single time something happens in this country, it is because of the Free Trade Agreement. They are not correct. They are wrong. We have ample evidence of the fact that we have had increased trade. We have a billion dollars more of increased trade under the Free Trade Agreement, and those are facts on the record as part of the statistics that are produced in this country. So let them not cry foul, and let them not cry that the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement is causing them problems, because it is not.

Free Trade Agreement – Mexico Government Initiatives

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, even the Premier of the province has admitted that Manitoba and Canada have been the net losers under the Free Trade Agreement so far with the United States. Even he had to admit that the facts were indisputable.

My final question therefore to the Premier is: Given the naivete and the ad-hockness of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, will the Premier develop a comprehensive strategy to deal with the negotiations with Mexico, to consult with business and labour and ensure that we are not into the situation as we find ourselves today with the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement where we have real policies in place and real strategies in place so that working people do not get shafted as they have with the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, as the Premier admitted?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, first, I have never suggested that there were not

substantial benefits to the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement for Manitoba. What I did say in the discussion that took place in Fargo this July at the Western Governors' Conference was that with all the publicity that we saw concentrated on consolidations and rationalizations that were taking place, very little publicity was there for the new opportunities that were being accessed by manufacturers in Canada, in Manitoba in particular, taking advantage of niche markets in the midwestern United States, for instance.

I am aware that there is a study that has just been completed that will be published very shortly that indicates for instance that there are two provinces in western Canada that have benefitted in the first 18 months of the Free Trade Agreement. One is Alberta, which is selling its resources. The second is Manitoba, which has increased very substantially, by the numbers that the Minister has quoted, its manufactured exports to the United States, very substantial increases.

Mr. Speaker, that is the fact, that is the reality and that is what the evidence of a true objective analysis will show. The Member can put all of his conjecture on the record, but the analysis -(interjection)- Well, I quoted myself in full, not selectively as you did.

An Honourable Member: Oh, you blame the media now.

Mr. Filmon: No, I am blaming you, very straightforwardly. Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that there are and there will be demonstrable benefits from the Free Trade Agreement to Manitoba. You can talk to many manufacturers who are accessing the U.S. market in a way they have not done before, and there are substantial increases in export shipments to the midwestern United States and the United States in general from Manitoba as a result.

* (1010)

Civil Service – Federal Manitoba Job Loss

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, it is nice to see the Premier still being a cheerleader for the Mulroney free trade deal, but that will come back to haunt him.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). The Premier is perhaps our country's best example of an expert in the use of doormat diplomacy. Since this First Minister took office,

Manitoba has lost 4,000 federal jobs. Can the First Minister of this province table for this House any evidence that he has developed a plan or a strategy to deal with the mistreatment of the Province of Manitoba? Can he table any correspondence he has had with the First Minister or other Ministers to make sure that Manitoba is treated fairly in terms of civil service jobs?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that the Member for Flin Flon is asking a question. I recall his actions in this Legislature when he was a Minister when every time he stood up to speak his Premier cut him off at the knees time and time and time again. When he did not have the confidence, not only of the people of Manitoba, he did not even have the confidence of his own Cabinet or his Premier. So he need give me no lessons on diplomacy or actions. His actions spoke much louder when he was in Government.

The fact of the matter is that if that Member who was, as I recall, the Minister of Business Development and Tourism at one point as he moved through the many chairs that he occupied in Cabinet, as they tried to find something with as little responsibility that he could handle, Mr. Speaker, if he will take a look at what the manufacturing jobs were during his term in Government, they went from 66,000 in 1981 down to 56,000 in 1987 under that administration. That is what happened to manufacturing jobs.

We can start talking about the plant closures that took place because of their deliberate policy and deliberate strategy as everywhere throughout this province people closed down and moved away because of the deliberate strategy and policies of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, we need take no lessons, no lessons whatsoever from the NDP who drove up the deficit, who drove up taxes in this province, who brought in every conceivable . . .

Some Honourable Members: Oh, Oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Labour Adjustment Strategy Government Initiatives

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I am not sure that I heard an answer there. I am sure the First Minister does not have one.

Mr. Speaker, my question was, has this First Minister any plan in place to prevent the loss of jobs

in Manitoba, both as a result of decisions made by the federal Government and yes, as a result of the Free Trade Agreement? We have lost 12,000 manufacturing jobs.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the First Minister is, does this Government have any plan to implement a worker-adjustment strategy for this province to protect working people?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Firstly, Mr. Speaker, the Member begins with a false premise. There are more Manitobans working today than were there when we took office in April of 1988, substantially more. During -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: August to August figures were 17,000 more people employed in August than were there in April of 1988 when they were Government. Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that we are working on high tech industries. The people such as Wang have moved in here. Boeing has added 300 jobs in the last year alone. Bristol is at its highest employment in history, so is Standard Aero Engine, so is Flyer Bus. All of those industries are at their highest employment levels in their history in this province. These are people who are taking advantage of opportunities to export into the United States; these are people who are taking opportunities of expansion in the market. STM Systems is committed to add 225 jobs in their expansion and their investment here in this province. -(interjection)- Mr. Speaker, the problem with that Member is that he is always negative doom and gloom, that he believes -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. -(interjection)- Order, please. I would like to remind the Honourable First Minister that answers should be as brief as possible, should deal with the matter raised, and should not provoke debate.

* (1015)

Free Trade Agreement – U.S.A. Report Tabling Request

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, we are positive on this side of the

House. We are positive that 12,000 people who lost their jobs are in misery.

My final question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism who stood in this House earlier today and said there were significant benefits to free trade. Mr. Speaker, can this Minister table for this House today any evidence whatsoever that the Free Trade Agreement is improving our prospects in terms of manufacturing, in terms of industry in the Province of Manitoba? Will he table that significant information that he has for us?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, you bet.

Foster Parenting Funding

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): I would like to see that list— (interjection)— Who am I going to ask the question to?

I do have a question for the Minister of Family Services today. Yesterday we heard the Minister stand in the House and speak in support of foster parents and talk about what a wonderful job they do, and I joined him in those comments, as did the Members from the NDP. We stepped out in the hall to meet a foster family, the Stewarts, who are well-known to anybody who works in Family Services, who tell a different story. They tell a story of waiting seven months to get a response on support for a severely handicapped child that they have in their home, that they have been caring for a year. They talked about speaking to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) about this during the election and receiving assurances. They spoke to the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson) and received assurances that this would be resolved. To date nothing has happened.

My question to the Minister is: Has the policy changed and why has it taken seven months to get an answer to this couple?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): I would say to the Member that this is an issue. If it is before the department we will look into it and we will get an answer as soon as possible.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, it has been before the department since April of last year. Since September 1 this couple has been supporting this child in their own home, receiving only income security for a child, young adult now, who requires 24 hour personal care. Now, will the Minister agree

to meet with the family today and assure them that this is going to be looked into and resolved?

Mr. Gillieshammer: Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared to give my personal commitment that the issue that the Member raised will be looked at today.

Mr. Alcock: In fairness to the Minister, Mr. Speaker, he is new in the portfolio. Permanency planning issues have been around for some time, but I would like to ask the Minister how many other children are awaiting permanency planning at this time in his department?

Mr. Gillieshammer: I have indicated, Mr. Speaker, to the Member that we would look into this specific case later today. The Member is looking for a specific number, and I would be happy to provide him with any further information in the near future.

Agricultural Assistance – Federal Manitoba Position

Mr. John Plohan (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. Western Canadian farmers are in a deepening crisis situation. The Minister's own Economics Branch Manitoba Markets Report on October 12 indicated that the per-acre value of production in this 1991 year is the lowest in constant dollars since 1960-61, in the last 40 years, which demonstrates that crisis.

In an attempt, Mr. Speaker, to deflect away the responsibility from the provincial Governments in Manitoba and Saskatchewan and at the national level, the Governments are attempting to place all the blame for this on the GATT, on the international situation, and any faith for a resolution in the GATT talks.

I ask the Minister, can he advise this House what the Manitoba position is on the federal Government's position that all income support for farmers should be reduced by 50 percent immediately and eliminated completely by the year 2000, within 10 years?

* (1020)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Member asked about four or five questions in the process of his preamble.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, there is an economic dilemma in the hands of the farmers of western Canada, and it is due to many things, but primarily it is due to low international grain prices brought about by subsidy wars started by the European

Community and subsequently responded to by the United States. Canada, Argentina, Australia, Brazil and New Zealand are caught in the crossfire.

Certainly there needs to be long-term resolution of that difficulty at the GATT talks. The first priority at the GATT talks for Canada is removal, complete removal, of export subsidies. The most heinous crime there is in terms of creating the low grain prices we have, complete removal of export subsidies. If that is accomplished in that round of negotiations, then I know all farmers in western Canada would like to see all internal supports reduced to some extent so that we have an opportunity to compete equally with other countries, but other countries have to bring their internal supports down to our level before we start reducing internally.

First priority is removal completely of export subsidies; secondly, we will look at internal subsidies so that western Canadian farmers have a level playing field on which to sell grain around the world.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, the Minister did not answer the question on the position taken by the federal Minister that he wants to eliminate 50 percent of all subsidies immediately and 100 percent by the year 2000. I ask the Minister, is it his position and his Government's position that Canada seriously weaken its already weak position at the GATT talks by unilaterally eliminating, before it came to the table, such subsidy programs as the two-price wheat system in Canada, the cash advances, the fuel rebates and the special grains programs, among many others, before they went to the table? Did that seriously weaken our position?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Speaker, the Member has absolutely no understanding of what has happened to agriculture worldwide. We are a very productive area of the world. We produce very good quality grains which the world wants to buy. The European Community, in their desire for food self-sufficiency over the last 20 years, through a free trade arrangement between all their countries in western Europe, have put in a subsidy program to increase production for food self-sufficiency internally.

In the same process, they have created surpluses which they are dumping on the world market with export subsidies that the Treasury of the United States has difficulty competing with. The Treasury of Canada cannot compete with it. We have to go to

the table and talk about reducing subsidies. That is the only way we could survive in the long run. We cannot build the walls around this country and still export 80 or 90 percent of what we grow. How does the Member think we are going to survive in agriculture in this part of the world? I would like to hear him answer that.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order please.

GATT Negotiations Crow Benefit

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Dauphin, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, now the Minister is asking me the questions. He is responsible. He is the Minister. I asked him specifically whether Canada had weakened its position by removing these unilaterally. I asked the Minister as well what his Government's position is on a proposal by the federal Government to offer up the historic Crow benefit at these GATT talks, as well as the supply management systems that have been in place for many years in this country and are an historic part of agriculture in this country?

What is his position by offering—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

* (1025)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): I would never want to send this guy to the negotiating table. He gives away everything before he gets to the issue. Neither of those -(interjection)- Mr. Speaker, they had a chance to ask their question. Maybe they would like to listen to the answers.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Findlay: Neither the Crow Benefit or supply management is offered up by Canada in any way, shape or form, neither of them. Canada has not weakened its position. In fact, it has a very strong position supported by the Cairns Group of nations.

Mr. Speaker, if we do not get complete removal of export subsidies, the future of western Canadian agriculture and the export market is in very bad shape. This Member would like to see that be the case for western Canadian farmers. He will not stand up for western Canadian farmers in the export market. He is only interested in bringing us down to the lowest common denominator.

Throne Speech Aboriginal Issues

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupertsland): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. This past summer has been a remarkable summer for aboriginal people, and certainly an historical event for Canada in dealing with aboriginal issues. Certainly, the Canadian public for the very first time became aware of the benign neglect of Governments in this country and also the tremendous, I guess, failure of Governments to deal with aboriginal issues.

My question is to the First Minister. Why was there not a mention, a single mention, of aboriginal people or their concerns in the throne speech dealing with many issues?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed in the Member. I thought that he would have paid more attention to the throne speech and the fact that there is an acknowledgement, unlike what he was able to accomplish in his many years with the New Democrat Party and the lack of accomplishments for the Native people in this province, that we wanted to continue in a positive working relationship with our aboriginal people. I can name many examples of which he is unable to.

Aboriginal Education Federal Funding

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupertsland): Mr. Speaker, my question is again to the First Minister. Why has this First Minister not recommended to his provincial counterparts that the first step to easing tensions between the aboriginal people and the Quebec Government is that the federal Government institute a land claims process and a public inquiry into the incidents at Oka and a demand that cuts to education, aboriginal media and aboriginal organizations announced in the federal budget earlier this year be cancelled immediately and reinstated to the aboriginal people as a sign of good will by Governments in this country?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the Member knows full well that we have been absolutely consistent in our support for the education programming to our aboriginal people in Manitoba, that despite cuts by the federal Government we have pursued that issue very vigorously, convinced the federal Government to give us an extension on the ACCESS programming,

the BUNTEP, the various other educational programming for aboriginal people in Manitoba, an extension for this year.

We continue to negotiate, and I just had an exchange of correspondence with the federal Government within the last week on that specific issue. We believe that it is the federal Government's responsibility. We believe that the best investment that any level of Government makes is in education. It pays dividends for generations in future, and it is absolutely crucial to our aboriginal people to have those educational opportunities. We will continue to pursue that very vigorously, Mr. Speaker, because we believe it is in the best interests of our aboriginal people in this country.

We have not made any reductions despite \$77 million in cuts to our transfers from Ottawa, despite Ottawa getting out of areas. We have, in fact, picked up some of the federal share to ensure that those programs continue in Manitoba. That has been our commitment to the aboriginal people in Manitoba.

Aboriginal People Hunting Rights

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupertsland): Mr. Speaker, my final question is to the Minister of Natural Resources.

In May of this year, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in the Sparrow case that aboriginal rights were indeed valid. On September 7 of this year, the Manitoba court in a related case agreed that these rights existed.

Why did this Minister and the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) continue with 45 separate charges until the Member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) on October 11 forced him to consider the policy and withdraw these charges?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to more fully respond to that question that was asked initially by the Member for The Pas and now repeated by the Member for Churchill. He is correct. There are 45 cases that have been pending with respect to wildlife charges. Of those 45, 35 are in the process of being stayed.

I have worked closely with my colleague the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) and his Deputy Minister, Mr. Garson. We have determined that of those 45 charges, 35 can in fact and will be dropped or stayed completely. There are some outstanding

charges that do not involve wildlife infractions, but other infractions with respect to the dangerous handling of firearms or in some cases of trespass. Those of course are normal violations of some regulation or law, and they will be proceeded with. We are instructing the resource officers, the enforcement officers, to acknowledge the recent court cases.

I should point out to the Honourable Member though that the court judgment that he refers to, the Sparrow judgment, while clearly citing the priority of aboriginal and treaty rights with respect to such legislation as the migratory game birds and Canada Fisheries Act, does make it also very clear that legislation designed to conserve a species, an endangered or threatened species, are in fact valid kinds of legislation for provincial jurisdiction to pursue.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to many long discussions with different members of the aboriginal community to work out the necessary co-operative agreements, the co-operative agreements that will help resolve—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1030)

Taxicab Industry Meeting Request

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Highways and Transport.

Yesterday representatives from the taxi industry came to the Legislature to meet with our Party and the NDP with respect to their concerns about additional licences to be granted for taxis in the City of Winnipeg and their growing concerns that because of the recession their business will decline and not increase. Can this Minister tell this House why he refused to meet with them?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): If I might indicate to the Member that my record of meeting with the taxicab industry speaks for itself. I have had many occasions to meet with them.

I do not want to make this a lengthy answer, in terms of the history of it, but I have to indicate that we have a Taxicab Board and a chairman that basically is making decisions regarding the taxicab industry. At the time when I was meeting with the people from the industry I gave them the assurance

that they would have ample time and opportunity to make their case known to the Taxicab Board before decisions were made.

We have gone through the whole cycle of this thing, and the decision has been made by the Taxicab Board in terms of issuing 30 extra licences at this stage of the game for a deluxe type of cab. It is done on a basis that if there is no requirement for it, that it would be taken off. There is a process in place and it has been working well.

Unicity Tax Luxury Cab Proposal

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Can the Minister tell this House why he is unwilling to accept the offer of Unicity to take 30 of their cars and upgrade them to luxury cars without putting any additional cabs on the road, thereby providing a trial period for the luxury cabs while at the same time not putting the income of the present drivers in jeopardy?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I do not make those decisions. That is why we have a Taxicab Board in place. The taxi—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, I have indicated, and I will repeat again that when I met with the industry I indicated to them that I want to make sure that they have a fair hearing in front of the Taxicab Board, but that I, as Minister, do not make those decisions. The Taxicab Board makes those decisions and will continue to do so.

Mr. Gaudry: Mr. Speaker, this is my final question. This dispute over luxury cars is disrupting the business and causing ill will. This experiment will satisfy both sides, at least in the short term—it is coming. It is necessary in a recessionary period to protect the jobs and incomes of all Manitobans. Why will this Minister not do his part?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, I do not know how involved my critic is in terms of the taxicab industry, but if he would avail himself of the report that is available out there, which addresses any shortfall in income because of the additional deluxe cabs coming on stream, take his time and go through that report—and I will extend the invitation that he can come and get it from my office—I will show him exactly what is available. Once he has read that

maybe he will have a better understanding of what is happening in that industry.

Schools – Public Deterioration

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), and in his absence to the Acting Minister of Education.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will remind the Honourable Member that we do not make reference to either the presence or the absence of any Member of the Chamber.

Mr. Chomiak: I apologize for that.

My question is to the Minister of Education. I was very happy to hear this morning that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) indicated that the best investment any Government can make is in education. That is the first time he has been off his script all week.

The Minister is probably aware that in July of this year a ceiling at Greenway School No. 2 collapsed. Fortunately, no one was injured. I wonder if the Minister can give assurances to this House that no child, teacher or employee in any public school in Manitoba can be put at risk as a result of deteriorating facilities at our public school system?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Acting Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, as the Acting Minister, I will take the specifics of the question as notice, but let me say, certainly the Government in its commitment of millions of dollars to capital improvement, indeed to school improvements, to building of new schools as a given, as a basic given, certainly will not allow the standing of schools that are deteriorated.

Rebuilding Program

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Kildonan, with his supplementary question.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Yes, did the Minister say he would take that question as notice, the question?

Will the Minister undertake to accelerate the school replacement program in the City of Winnipeg?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Acting Minister of Education): Well, Mr. Speaker, those are all budgetary decisions. The Minister of Education (Mr.

Derkach), in consideration of the total Estimates of course is given a certain amount in consideration of the rebuilding and the building of new schools and the department to the Public Schools Finance Boards puts priorities on all those decisions. That is the process, that is the process that has been in place basically for decades in this province.

Deterioration

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Kildonan, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Yes, my final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In light of the First Minister's (Mr. Filmon) comments this morning, will this Government undertake to investigate the condition of all schools in the City of Winnipeg to ensure that no child is put in danger as a result of deteriorating conditions?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Acting Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, again I reiterate my first answer, because this question indeed is similar to the first question. The Government of course will always be mindful of the conditions of the public school system and will always be on guard to safeguard the interest and the safety of the students within the public school system.

Rural Dignity of Canada Court Challenge – Canada Post

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mr. Santos: More and more Canadians are suffering each day due to the postal cuts, culminating in the amalgamation and privatization and eventual closure of some community postal services, closures which are a breach of the mandate of the Charter of Rights, which requires customary equal benefits to all Canadians.

My question is directed to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey). Will you tell this House if the Government is prepared to support the court challenge now being mounted by Rural Dignity of Canada against the federal Minister who is responsible for Canada Post, the Honourable Andre Harvie and the Canada Post Corporation?

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to respond to the Member, who has had previous experience in

the House and would have thought that the experience that he had would have been able to reflect better in the question, first of all jurisdictionally and the other one as to whether or not we would get involved—(interjection)—this is the first time the Member had support from the New Democratic Party—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Downey: Let me assure the Member that we will do anything within our capabilities to support the seniors of this province.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Broadway, with his supplementary question.

Mr. Santos: My first supplemental, Mr. Speaker. Is this Minister prepared to join the six other provincial Legislatures and support the Rural Dignity in their fight for continuation of rural post offices and the saving of jobs in rural areas?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I am quite prepared to take a very careful review of what other Legislatures are doing on behalf of Rural Dignity to see if in fact there is an ability for the Province of Manitoba to join them. I will give that commitment to the Member but again say that we have done everything and will continue to do everything to make our seniors lives in this province just a little bit better.

* (1040)

Canada Post Services Minister's Position

Mr. Carlos Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, my second supplementary to the same Minister: Will this Government state its position whether or not it opposes or favours the tax in post offices, postal outlets and the privatization of postal services to the detriment, hurting seniors and rural people losing jobs instead of creating jobs?

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, we do not support the cuts to services.

Northern Tax Allowance Finance Minister's Position

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Since 1987 northern communities, particularly Thompson, Wabowden have been fighting to first attain and then maintain the northern tax allowance. Last year

a task force brought down a report, which recommended many other northern Manitoba communities—in fact 90 percent of the people of northern Manitoba be cut from the northern tax allowance.

Despite the fact that we have an extensive lobbying effort based out of northern Manitoba that is now national, the Minister of Finance has refused to meet with Northerners to discuss this very important issue.

I would like to ask the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), what action he will take to put pressure on the Minister of Finance to ensure that he does meet with northerners and changes the ridiculous situation in which we find Thompson, Wabowden and possibly other northern communities not receiving the northern tax allowance?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Member, in his ways of trying to conflict and confuse, has not said that his reference is not to the provincial Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), because on this side of the House consistently Ministers have met with that group, sometimes even in the presence of the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). We have willingly made ourselves available to consult and discuss, and tell them what we have been doing.

I have been on public fora in Thompson and elsewhere in which I have said that we support their position wholeheartedly. That issue was taken to the Council of the Ministers of Northern Affairs by our Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey). He urged that we have a common position amongst all of the provincial Ministers of Northern Affairs to fight this issue. They caused a study and a review to be done to ensure that they have the facts at their disposal to lay before the federal Minister of Finance. That was done as of September of this year after the election—as we said, when we met with that group representing the northern tax allowance committee, when we met with them, I believe it was July of this year.

Mr. Speaker, we have consistently supported their position. We have consistently urged Ottawa to reverse their decision on that issue, and we have consistently said that that is an unfair provision in the tax changes that were made by the federal Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker.

Northern Tax Allowance Finance Minister's Position

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I do sometimes perhaps confuse the Tory Ministers of Finance, but I was not referring to our Minister of Finance in this particular case. I do have a question for the Minister of Finance of Manitoba (Mr. Manness).

Since this northern tax allowance provides a break on both the provincial and federal taxes, and since the provincial tax loss has also occurred in Thompson, Wabowden because of the cut of the federal northern tax allowance, will the Minister in his upcoming budget institute a provincial northern tax allowance that will ensure that communities such as Thompson and Wabowden, and other northern communities will be assured at least of the provincial portion of the northern tax allowance they were receiving only a couple of years ago?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I know the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) knows fully well that provincial Ministers of Finance, particularly in those provinces which cost or share the collection activity with Ottawa, indeed do not have the luxury of making these unilateral additions to their tax forms. Now that may come as some surprise to the Member for Thompson (Ashton), but I can assure him that is not acceptable in many cases to the federal Department of Finance. We as a Government do, because Ottawa collects the taxes for us. We do not have that freedom to unilaterally impose that change on the tax form.

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

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, during Question Period, I agreed to table certain information relating to Canada-U.S. free trade statistics, and I would like to do that just at the present.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the adjourned debate, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), for an address to His Honour

the Lieutenant-Governor, in answer to his speech at the opening of the Session, the Honourable Minister of Family Services has 20 minutes remaining.

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to conclude my remarks this morning on the Speech from the Throne.

I was just indicating yesterday at the end of the day that in the area of child care we have made a very strong commitment to flexible, accessible and quality child care. We have placed a new emphasis on family day care and workplace day care. In addition, we have established a working group on day care to examine funding in the child care system in an effort to ensure further improvements to our child care system.

We have also set our priorities in other areas ensuring that the tax dollars spent are spent and directed to priority areas. We are building partnerships, Mr. Speaker, with agencies and others who deliver services and with our communities to find workable solutions.

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

Just in concluding, on the throne speech and some of the comments that were made yesterday, I would indicate that the throne speech provides a strong mandate to build a strong economy and new and better jobs for our young people here in Manitoba. One of the things that we talked about during the election campaign, which met with the favour of many Manitobans, is keeping taxes down.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gillieshammer: Our Government has renewed its commitment to freeze personal income tax and will strive to do more in other areas of taxation.

I was somewhat surprised yesterday when the Member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) spoke out against fiscal responsibility. I am surprised that a Member would indicate that fiscal responsibility is a term that he is nervous about and that he fears. I think that the citizens of Manitoba, the taxpayers of Manitoba, have spoken very clearly on that, that they expect Government to be accountable. They expect Government to work within its budget, and they expect Government to keep taxes down. I would ask him to think what the options are to fiscal responsibility, and I dare say it is the type of Government that existed in Manitoba prior to the election of 1988.

So in conclusion, Madam Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to stand and speak on this throne speech and look forward to further debate on it. Thank you.

* (1050)

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Madam Deputy Speaker, through you, I wish to extend my congratulations to the Speaker for his reappointment as the Speaker of this Legislative Assembly; also, to extend to you congratulations on your appointment as Deputy Speaker and as Deputy Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House; and to all Members of the Legislative Assembly who have been re-elected to public office and those who for the first time have been elected to this august body.

Secondly, I would like to give my thanks to all the voters of Broadway in the trust that they have reposed in me in selecting me as their representative to this Assembly.

Broadway is a new riding which is bounded on the north by Cumberland Avenue going west up to Notre Dame Avenue; bounded on the west by Home Street up to the corner of Ellice Avenue; going downtown to the side of the University of Winnipeg to Colony Street up to the Osborne Bridge; bounded on the south also by the Assiniboine River up to the Red River going back to Portage Avenue, a little bit cutting the corner on Donald Street back to Cumberland Avenue.

The area of the constituency is like a letter "L", one of which is residential, consisting of single dwellings and residents there of a multicultural nature; and the entire downtown area of the commercial district of the city and the highrise apartments, including uniquely the Legislative ground as part of the constituency of Broadway.

Finally, I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to my campaign manager, who came here from Ottawa to be official agent, who is also the president of the local Party constituency in Broadway; to the two campaign organizers, one of whom doubled as the office manager; to the election day organizer; to several cosigners of my letters of credit with the local credit union; to all canvassers, telephoners and all owners of election sign locations; and all other numberless workers, many of whom do not even know their candidate, who wholeheartedly and willingly gave their time, their talents, their skills, even their money, which culminated in a rather

surprising unexpected result, a victory in Broadway. I will call it miraculous.

I would like to touch, Madam Deputy Speaker, on the topics of politics as ethical morality and the basic underlying pillars of that view, including the pillars of truth, justice, freedom of choice, which constitute the basic ingredients of our democratic system, why we are here; how we must serve the people who elected us to positions of authority, including the most important segment of which are the senior citizens of this province and this country; the workers who build up our economy, some of whom are wallowing in poverty; and our understanding of the nature of how the resources of society can be efficiently distributed under a more equitable tax system without polluting or disrupting environmental concerns.

Politics may be defined as the peaceful competition between or among competing people for the authority to govern for a limited period of time, granted on the ethical morality of what is fair, what is upright and just, for the general good and welfare of all the people.

If firmly rooted on the foundation of fairness, righteousness and justice, politics remains the noblest of all professions because politics determines the destiny of individuals, groups, peoples and nations. If we deviate from the ethical norms of fairness, justice and equality, or even violate consciously and deliberately those basic principles, then politics degenerates into a lower imitation form which Christians may call pseudo politics, characterized by this scramble for personal power, self-aggrandizement, greed characterized by scandals, corruption, which brings about the cynical attitude of the people toward politicians and all public officials.

Nothing which is morally wrong can be politically correct no matter what the legal form is. In the long run, any Government that deviates from these norms of ethical morality will not continue in power. One of the pillars of the politics of ethical morality, as distinguished from the politics of political expediency is this question of adhering to what is true. Truth is the acid test of any Government trying to govern for a limited period of time.

It was the Greek philosopher Plato who stated that the rulers of a nation may sometimes be given the privilege to tell a lie if the purpose is for the good of all the people but, Madam Deputy Speaker, any

deviation from the truth, even if the purpose or motive is good, is still a deviation from the truth. Telling a lie in any form is deception, including the withholding of information which is already in one's own possession.

In the marketplace of competing ideas, truth is the only solid and safe ground upon which a framework of public policies can be built because truth will promote the credibility of any Government. The credibility of any Government will evolve public confidence on those people who are in charge of Government and if we obtain the confidence of the public, then they will just be more than willing to support and sustain those who are in charge of Government for the time being.

In public or private life, truth is the only ground that we must always seek. It is written: Seek the truth and it shall make you free. If you have freedom, Madam Deputy Speaker, it is sometimes difficult to understand why your actions are so much constrained. It is paradoxical. While we are born free, the Greek philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau said in his book *Du Contrat Social*, man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains.

If we look at ourselves, we feel that we are free. We think that we are free, but we are held in chains by our own habits. We are held in chains by our own biases, by our own prejudices. We are held in chains by the rules of the organizations and groups that we belong to. We are held in chains by institutional practices and procedures. Look at ourselves in this Legislative Assembly. This is supposed to be a forum for free public debate just like the old Greek marketplace, the Agora, but you cannot just stand in this Assembly. You have to follow the rules and traditions of this House.

* (1100)

How important is freedom and liberty to individuals? To some people it is like life itself. Indeed, some of our citizens have given up their lives in order to preserve our own liberty and our own freedom. Liberty is important, Madam Deputy Speaker. It was Robert G. Ingersoll who said, what light is to the eyes, what air is to the lungs, what love is to the heart, liberty is to the soul of man. Liberty, indeed, includes the freedom to choose. I believe that the freedom to choose is imprinted in our nature at the time of creation by the Almighty One, who gave us life and the right to make a choice. The right

to make a choice is a basic right of every human being.

In the Old Testament, speaking through Moses, the Lord said, I set before you this day, life and good, death and evil. I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, choose life that you and your descendants may live loving the Lord, your God, obeying his voice and cleaving to him, for that means life to you and length of days that you may dwell in the land. The right to make a choice is an essential part of our system of Government, of our society, which we call a democracy.

Democracy did not come this way right away. For many, many centuries and ages the ancient doctrine was the divine right of King to rule a people. This was based on the Latin maxim, *vox regni, vox Dei*. The voice of the King is the voice of God. It is only after three great revolutions that shocked this planet Earth that that formula had been changed. The first is the American Revolution of 1775, followed by the French Revolution of 1789, and finally the third great revolution was the Bolshevik Russian Revolution of 1917. The English Revolution was a very quiet, peaceful, glorious revolution. It changed the monarchy from absolute to a constitutional monarchy. It is just as important as any of the great revolutions, but it is because of these revolutions that the formula was changed. It is now *vox pupoli, vox dei*; the voice of the people. The voice of the people is the voice of God.

In Abraham Lincoln's term, democracy is a system of Government, of the people, for the people and by the people. We, as duly elected MLAs, achieve our status and position in this House of Assembly of the people, because the people have elected us here. It is the collective voice of the people in a general election reflecting the divine decision that we are now in this Assembly. Therefore, it is our primary duty, as Members of this Legislative Assembly to be the living mirror of the wishes and concerns of our own constituent members, reflecting their preferences, their desires, their choices, because we are just representative of the people. The people have spoken collectively and the voice of the people is the voice of God. We have to serve them faithfully. We have to serve them responsibly. We have to serve them to the best of our ability.

Indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would say that serving others is perhaps the very purpose of our

existence. There are some people who are wondering why we have our life at all. Do we live because we want to enjoy ourselves? Are we given life simply because we want to see the world around us? What is the purpose of living? I think that the greatest purpose for our existence is to be of service to our Creator and also to serve our fellow man.

We often measure the stature and greatness of a person by the amount of possessions and wealth that he has accumulated. We sometimes measure a person's stature in terms of the position that he has occupied or the honours that he has received, but I think, if there is any good measure of the greatness of the person, it will be the number of human beings that he or she has helped in his or her life.

Just ask Mother Teresa. I think that she is the greatest, as she has served the most number of people in her life.

Service indeed to others is the fulfillment of the golden rule that we should love our neighbours as we love ourselves, and if we can love ourselves and serve our needs, the more so we must and ought to serve the needs of others in society, particularly the ones who are afflicted, who are least able to help themselves, because it is so written. If we only seek our own self and our own interest, or the interests of our family, then we are becoming self-centered, we do not have much to live for because of the eternal rule, the eternal truth that he who finds life shall lose it, but he who lost his life shall find it. If we lost our lives serving other people, then truly I say we will find the true life indeed.

One of those groups of citizens who needs our service the most I would dare say would be our senior citizens. They are the citizens of this country who have been spending the best years of their lives building up our economy, working in our industry, in factories, in the railways, everywhere, spending the best years of their lives working to build up this country, develop its resources.

Now that they are in their old age we often neglect their needs. To me this is unpardonable. It is the task and function of every Government to look after its senior citizens. At least we owe them the prosperity that we now enjoy. We cannot tolerate them to suffer in their health care, in their accommodations, in their loneliness in their old age, rejected by their own children, rejected by society, neglected by their own Government.

Let me be the voice for senior citizens. I would say that senior citizens need adequate health facilities. I have seen with my own eyes in some of the senior citizen homes how the nurses are so overburdened with work they have no time for the sick people in their wheelchairs, and I have seen and stared at human misery face to face and my heart bleeds with compassion.

* (1110)

They need affordable housing, decent housing, one at least that will provide them some kind of privacy. Indeed we should encourage our senior citizens to stay in their own residential homes. They should be accorded all of the services the Government can provide. I would suggest that before they start losing their homes due to the burden of real estate taxation that the Government should gradually lift the burden of taxation from senior citizens so they can keep and maintain their residential homes to the end of their days.

Moreover I would suggest that the home care service should be expanded so that the senior citizen who no longer can shovel the snow will be able to stay in their own home, even during wintertime and not be swamped by an avalanche of snow. During summer we should tie down our social assistance program such that no one should be allowed or permitted to get a cheque unless he renders some kind of a voluntary service to senior citizens. Then no one can have free lunches, as referred to by the officials of the federal Government. Everybody has to work for something. When their work will be voluntary it will be for the benefit of the community, for the benefit of our citizens who are least able to help themselves.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would also suggest that while it may be true that some senior citizens have saved more than enough for their needs for the rest of their lives I have met some of them who lack sufficient or adequate income. These are mostly widows who have been living alone after the death of their husband who left no private pension plan, and because during their lifetime they have devoted faithfully their life and their time to their children, they were full-time homemakers. They have never been in the workplace, so they are not qualified for the Canada Pension Plan to which they have not made any contributions. The only source they can qualify through is Old Age Assistance coming from the federal Government and supplemented by a very meager amount, which is almost an insult to them,

coming from the provincial Government. Inadequate source of income cannot give any sense of security to our senior citizens. Indeed, it is unpardonable that they should be allowed to wallow in poverty.

I also suggest that we should provide them with some pleasant recreational opportunities, not Bingos all the time but some other recreational activities that will give them the exercise that they need. They are entitled also to the security of persons and property. There are some senior citizens, and right now I want to put on record, I have received a petition signed against the Manitoba Housing Authority of the residents in 400 Kennedy Street asking for more security protection for their property and for their person. That is an example, and some of the residents in that complex are senior citizens who mostly need the sense of security in their person and in their property.

Another segment of our population who we have ignored are the workers of this country, the humble workers and labourers in our industry in private and public enterprises, in factories, in manufacturing plants. They have devoted the best years of their lives building up this economy, producing goods and services, and yet, when they suffered accidents, we are tightening up our workmens' compensation policies. We are ignoring these people who have devoted the best years of their lives, risked their health to produce goods and services for society. They suffer in silence, and now we are placing the burden on these people who are helpless to prove that they are entitled to compensation. That is unpardonable. That is unconscionable.

Abraham Lincoln, who belonged to the same ideological group as you are because Lincoln was a Republican, said: Labour is prior to and independent of capital. It is labour, by its application to the natural resources of the earth, that produce the capital. Therefore, labour is more important than capital. Who can argue with such logic? Labour, therefore, is superior to capital and deserves the highest consideration in the allocation of the priorities of Government.

The worst thing is that most of the seniors, most of these workers are in a state of poverty. We pride ourselves as perhaps one of the most prosperous countries in the world, yet look around us. There is poverty in the midst of plenty. Listen to these testimonials.

When I was young, I was poorer than I am now,

because I always complained that I had no shoes until I saw someone who had no feet.

We MLAs often complain about the high taxes for our residential homes. We often complain about the high cost of gasoline for our cars. We often complain about the price of steaks and other exotic foods. Open our eyes. Look around us. There are people who are without homes. There are people without cars—maybe they have bicycles. There are people who cannot even afford the basic necessities of life.

It is the duty of every Government to help and defend the poor. It is the duty of every Government to do justice to the afflicted. It is the duty of every Government to deliver the poor and the helpless from the clutches of evil men who are ever willing and ready to exploit them. You have heard about abuses of senior citizens. There is that senior citizen, in order to keep her driver's licence, had to spend \$4,100 at the hands of some unscrupulous, evil exploiters.

Poverty is a breeding ground for crimes in society. Poverty is the breeding ground of drug abuses. Poverty is the breeding ground for many of the social miseries that we have now encountered. That is why I should commend the throne speech for its long-range policy of sustainable economic development, but I condemn the throne speech for neglecting the plights of the poor, for neglecting the social programs for widows and children, of child abuses, of people who are in poverty and therefore prone to be involved in all the miseries of society.

Economic development is good provided that we do not pollute our environment. Sometimes this power that leads entrepreneurs and enterprisers to economic development is this unmitigating drive for private profits motivated by the basic human instinct of covetousness, covetousness being one of the original sins of mankind.

But beware, take heed, beware of all covetousness for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions. For the love of money is the root of all evils. It is through these cravings that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs. But those who decide to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction.

Sometimes though there are risks in undertaking an enterprise. Usually in the first two years of your business you have to risk bankruptcy because you

never can be assured of any success. Chance, uncertainty are always at work in our daily lives. So I say, I saw again under the sun, the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favour to the man of skill, but time and chance happens to us all. Therefore it behooves us to understand how resources in society can be allocated and distributed most efficiently to every segment of our people in society. This calls for some knowledge of economics.

* (1120)

Economics is the study of how people, in making a living, acquire food, shelter, clothing and other material necessities, and how they choose to allocate the scarce resources available to them that have alternative uses in terms of opportunity costs in order to produce the various commodities, good and services, all of which economists will usually measure by what they call the GNP, the gross national product consisting of C for consumption, I for investment, G for government spending and the net export, that is to say, export minus import. The same total goods and services, in final form, can be measured on the other side, on the expenditure side, as the gross national expenditure consisting of all salaries, wages and rents, interests, profits, indirect taxes and depreciation of assets.

The more modern measure that they use now is what they call GDP, the gross domestic product. This is the value of the currently produced final goods and services produced by Canadians and non-residents within Canada. It should be the goal of every economic policy of Government to increase real gross domestic product and alternatively to decrease the rate of inflation by providing job opportunities.

They also should be able to stabilize the price level and they should be able to balance import against export, maintaining a steady parity rate of exchange but, most of all, there should be an equitable distribution of the outputs across the various groups in the community, in the society, through a system of taxation that is fair, just and equitable.

What are the decidable features of a taxation system that will be a fair taxation system? First of all, it must be based on the taxpayer's ability to pay. The higher your income the higher should be your share of the tax burden.

Secondly, it must be a progressive tax system. One hundred dollars of taxes paid by a person in the high income bracket is not at all painful to him, but the same \$100 paid by a person in the lower tax bracket will be very painful indeed. That is why progressivity in taxation is a desirable policy.

Thirdly, the tax system should redistribute the benefits, should redistribute income from the high income classes to the lower income classes on the basis of the principle of social justice.

What do we mean by social justice? Rawls has stated that it is the policy of giving the greatest benefit to the least advantaged in society. Why is that? Why should we give the greatest benefit in the redistribution of income to the least advantaged in society—because we are all human beings, and it is our moral duty to serve the least advantaged in our society by according them the opportunity to have the most of the resources to be distributed?

As is stated by a progressive individual, Franklin Delano Roosevelt: The test of human progress is not whether we add to the abundance of those who already have much but whether we provide for those who have little.

Moreover it is an eternal rule of fairness and justice that he who shares in the benefits should also share in the burdens.

The multinational corporations are sharing the benefits of society. They have been exploiting our forests, our minerals, our oil, our resources. They are raking up millions and millions of profit, but do they pay taxes? Do they share the burden of taxation? Look at the statistics. The first 100 biggest national corporations did not even pay one red cent of taxes. He who shares in the benefit should share in the burden.

One of the prices of economic development is the waste product in the productive process. Polluting our environment is indeed the price we pay because of prosperity, development and civilization itself. We paid for our industrial and economic development in terms of the amount of waste products that pollute our air, our rivers, our waters—that pollutes this global planet, Earth.

The multinational corporations have been raking profits and at the same time not assuming responsibility for the pollution that they have caused in our society.

In a sense the general taxpaying public is subsidizing the biggest corporations, because once

the Government starts cleaning up all the pollution they spend the taxpayers' money but the profits that comes from economic development is exclusively possessed by the biggest corporations -(interjection)- that is unfair, that is unjust.

Madam Deputy Speaker, let me conclude—how many minutes do I have? Let me conclude that our province of Manitoba, our country Canada, the global community that we belong to, the planet Earth, we, all human beings are like a chain, we are only as strong as its weakest link.

If we neglect the afflicted, the helpless, the poor in our society, then we are only destroying our community, our province, our country. Like a chain, every individual is important. No matter how humbly, how lowly in the social station in life, he is just as worthy and just as dignified as any other human being, should count equally just like any other in the task of building this province, in the task of building our economy for a greater province and for a greater people for Manitoba, for every human being is like drops of water that together constitute our mighty lakes, and like individual fertile grains of soil that make the prairie lands.

It is the Government's commitment to ethics of morality. It is the Government's commitment away from the politics of expediency. It is the Government's commitment to fairness, justice and equity. It is ethical morality that comes from within human conscience that makes Government responsive and responsible. It is ethical morality that makes Government credible. It is ethics and morality that give them longevity in power.

* (1130)

In our collective struggle for social and economic equality, it is the duty of every civilized Government to try to provide better health care for everyone. It is the duty of every sensible Government to provide adequate income and security for all its citizens. It is the duty of every Government to stamp out poverty which is the cause of social diseases and social crimes and social miseries of humanity. It is the duty of every Government to combat racism, discrimination, distinctions of artificial kinds that cause misery, untold hardship and suffering to some groups of citizens. It is the duty of every Government to open up new social and economic opportunities to every citizen. We must have faith in the Almighty and confidence in ourself. I thank you.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural

Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am privileged and delighted to once again partake in the time-honoured tradition of this Chamber, to take advantage of the Rules of this Chamber that provide us on these few occasions, the throne speech, the budget speech, wider latitude that normally does not apply, or that the Speaker would like us to apply when we deal with other measures before the House when in fact our Rules call for specific attention and remarks to the matter of business before us.

My congratulations of course to you and to the Speaker and to all new Members. It is a remarkable change that has happened in this Chamber, that has happened in this province, that has happened in this country, that has happened in the world, since last this Chamber met. I may want to comment about that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I am prompted to reiterate a little happening in my own constituency of Lakeside during the last election. Some of my colleagues, indeed some of my friends from different parts of the province took the time to call my headquarters on election night, because there were, believe it or not, some expressions of concern for this old Member when Mr. Michael McCourt from the CBC 24 Hours at the anchor desk intoned in his somber tones that in Lakeside the COR Party was leading. That grew to mild irritation, not on my part, because my relationship with the media has always been one of understanding and compassionate concern for the nature of their job.

I have learned long ago not to in any way attempt to get even with the media, because they always have the last word. There was some mild irritation that was beginning to be expressed by supporters of mine as they watched the poll-by-poll listing of the election in Lakeside when 35 minutes, 40 minutes into election coverage, the CBC election board still was showing the COR Party in the lead in Lakeside. As events would have it, the COR Party did not take a single poll in the constituency of Lakeside in the last election. Indeed, their overall numbers fell by a full 50 percent, but I leave it to whomever wishes to speculate whether or not somebody wished to introduce some element of surprise in the hope that something might change in the constituency of Lakeside.

Things do change in the constituency of Lakeside, that grand constituency that I have the privilege of representing. Why? The only trouble is, they change

a little more slowly. Members will appreciate that when I indicate to them that in the last 71 years, there have only been two MLAs representing the constituency of Lakeside, and it has been my privilege to be one of them. So change comes around a little more slowly to this constituency—(interjection)—In 71 years there have been two MLAs representing the constituency of Lakeside, and it has been my privilege to be one of them, to be counted among one of them.

I would like to acknowledge and express my appreciation of having again the privilege of being the Minister responsible for Natural Resources in the province. It is a great department, one of the older departments of Government, that in fact is commemorating its 60th year of its creation this year.

The department was created at the time of the natural resource transfers that transferred the responsibilities for natural resources from the federal Government to the provinces in the year 1930. At about that same time that year the provincial Government created the Department of Natural Resources, which has remained by and large the same over these 60 years, with of course all kinds of new challenges that have come to it in the intervening years. It is a fascinating department to be responsible for. It is a department that in my assessment has really come into its own in the last few years as more and more Manitobans, as more and more Canadians begin to understand and appreciate the importance of our natural resources. Virtually every public opinion poll taken in the country places concern for environment, concern for our natural environment, the wildlife, the habitat, our rivers, quality of water; my agricultural friends, quality of the land and how they use the land.

All of these matters that involve the environment that we live and work in, my department has such a fundamental mandate to preside over and it is both an onerous challenge and at the same time a privilege to be the Minister responsible and speaking and answering for those specific responsibilities the department has to this Chamber.

I look forward as the Session progresses, particularly during the Estimate period, that opportunity which all Members have to examine the department more fully and specifically those areas that are of specific interest to Honourable Members, and will do my very best to provide information and

to respond to specific questions at that particular time.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the department often has—and I say this advisedly knowing that I am surrounded by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), whose demands are constant and virtually insatiable in terms of trying to meet the pressing needs that their respective departments are responsible for.

It sometimes makes it more difficult for a department like mine to find the necessary funds to do the kind of things that my department is responsible for, and I encourage Honourable Members opposite not to lose the opportunity to support the department from time to time in seeking the necessary resources to carry out the specific obligation they think my department ought to be doing and doing a better job of.

I note that the new Member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) wasted no time in putting on the record her specific requirements for a particular project, a water-control project involving the building of a dam in the Duck Mountain area of her constituency, one that I am quite familiar with, one that requires some dollars unfortunately. I encourage her as a Member of the Opposition. It is certainly her job to help convince my colleagues and my Premier to provide this department with the necessary support and resources to see that worthwhile projects like that get addressed and hopefully, in due course, are proceeded with.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

* (1140)

Mr. Speaker, the department has and the Government has fortunately some very good news for all Manitobans. We have been able to reach out with the help of other agencies, Government and non-Government, to embark on what I will, at a later date during the course of the Estimates particularly, talk about—a very exciting way of addressing and turning back the clock on the ravaging of our habitat, particularly in the areas of the province where wildlife and the potential for wildlife abounds in its most promising way and that is in the southwest part of Manitoba.

We have managed to enter into agreements with the federal Government, the Canadian Wildlife Service, with the American Government, with organizations such as Ducks Unlimited Canada that

will call for the expenditure of substantial millions of dollars, some \$134 millions over the next 15 years to assure that Manitoba will be a greener and cleaner place, not just for the wildlife but for all of us.

Manitoba can and Manitoba ought to be the garden of the Prairies. Geographically we are located in such a way that we can be that garden. Even in the depth of the drought years and the depression years of the '30s we were not hit quite as hard as our sister provinces to the West.

It behooves us that we take this time to drought proof our province even if it means occasional confrontations with our environmentalist friends. We live in an age where anything we do has to be environmentally sound, but that surely does not mean that where it is sound to build a small earthen dam or water-restricting device that will recharge an aquifer such as are required on the Carberry-Assiniboine aquifer to ensure that that great water resource is there not just for the current users, but for all users coming in the future, that we slow down the rapid runoff of our rivers and streams in different places so that we can make life easier for our wildlife and for our farmers at the same time. These are the kind of programs that my department is involved with. These are the kind of programs that the North American Waterfowl Management Plan is involved with.

The good news is that we have been able to reach an understanding with other organizations to help us in doing this without having to go every time to the Manitoba taxpayers' pockets to get the necessary funds.

I look forward—as the program gets more known to Honourable Members, I would like to think that it would receive the kind of support from all segments of the House. Surely in the pursuit of trying to better husband our land, better care for our water, better care for our wildlife, there ought not to be too much room for partisan bickering as to the necessity for doing that and the desirability of doing it.

We may argue again, as is very much the practice of any parliamentary or Legislative House, as to the means and as to the speed or the lack of speed in addressing some of these issues, but surely the goals cannot be questioned.

I said at the outset that there have been—really to use a phrase that a former Premier of this House brought into common usage, I refer to the

Honourable Ed Schreyer, his favourite phrase was mind boggling.

It is truly mind boggling what has happened since last we met. Just look at the makeup of this House. I say to my Liberal friends, would that they should be so lucky that how the House is now comprised, you see that ought to have been the results of the 1988 election.

Had that been the case, your Party would be well positioned, you would have made remarkable recovery from one to seven, and you would be on the right side of the momentum. We would of course have been allowed to govern a little more forcibly as a majority Government since '88. The NDP would have been chastened with maybe 18 Members or 19 Members or even the 20 Members that they now have, but at least the direction that my friends of the socialist movement would have been in keeping with what is happening in the globe, slowly sinking into the trash bins of history where they belong.

Surely we are not going to do what the Red Rose Tea ad says: pity, only in Canada, only in Canada. Will that debunk ideology of socialism survive and surely not only in Manitoba? I have some concern about the change of status in the Opposition Parties. I would have been happier, and I do not hide it, had we seen a little more steady growth for our friends of the Liberal Party, because sooner or later they would no doubt form Government.

We have seen massive change in this country Canada. We have seen tremendous change in this country Canada. Some of this of course happened dramatically in this Chamber in the closing days of the last Session as we approached June 23.

We do not know what the future holds for this great country. I know that some of us—I am sure that many average Canadians wondered what was happening to this great country of ours. When we were watching television this summer, did some of us think that perhaps we had the channels flipped or something like that and we were watching news from the Middle East, from Lebanon and Beirut? Was this the Canada that we love, our armed forces at loggerheads with citizens of this country for months at end? What was happening to this beautiful country of ours?

I do not presume to have the answers for that, but I know one thing, that somehow or other all of us that are involved in the business of politics share some kind of responsibility.

Somewhere along the line in the manner and way in which we have conducted public business in this country we seem to have let our people down, and I am not here to spread the blame or allege who is at fault, I am just using the opportunity, the latitude of the throne speech to make a general comment that I think should dwell on all of us as we conduct the everyday business of the House.

Mr. Speaker, my comments about the NDP really are serious because the old adage is unfortunately true, if you say something often enough, if you distort the truth often enough then it becomes easier all of a sudden for it to become believable. I congratulate the Leader of the New Democrats. He ran a very smart campaign. He hunkered right back into the old socialist mold. He pitched it exactly where he wanted to pitch it for a very blinkered view of this province, but he knew that if he did that it would produce a certain result. It would produce a result, not for the good of this province, not that it offered any solutions to the problems this province and this country faces, but it would produce those extra eight, nine or 10 seats that makes him Leader of the Opposition today.

* (1150)

We will see how he and his colleague, the newly elected Premier of Ontario, will come to grips with some of those serious problems that I want to talk about in a little while, but there is some risk when we hear this constant rhetoric from the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) about the Conservatives, how we serve only the corporate masters, how we are only interested in big business.

Mr. Speaker, I have put it on the record before, it should always be put on the record before, and it always bears repeating particularly when we have a number of new Conservative Members sitting in this Chamber: most of the progressive things that have been done in this province have been done by a Conservative Government. It was not the New Democrats who introduced Medicare to this province, it was a Conservative Government that introduced it. It was not a New Democratic Government that introduced hospitalization in this province, it was a Conservative Government that did.

In agriculture—and I was pleased there was that person and she is going to have a lot of respect from us when we challenge the Members of the Opposition to stand up. Where are your farmers?

She did stand up, did she not ladies and gentlemen? She did stand up, the Member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk). They have one farmer there, and while farming and agriculture is in serious problems again, virtually every progressive move that was taken in this province in the last 50 years has been done by a Progressive Conservative Government. The Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation was established by a Conservative Government; the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation was established by a Conservative Government. The whole network of ag reps and education throughout the province was established by Conservative Governments. There has hardly been an innovation since that time.

Mr. Speaker, it was my privilege to sit in Cabinet when the then Minister of the Department now called Family Services, the Honourable Jack Carroll, the Member for The Pas, led the country in developing what today still is the broad Social Assistance Act that has provided the safety net for those less fortunate than others in our society. We continue today to be among the leaders in the country in terms of the service we provide.

Mr. Speaker, at the last Session we passed an Endangered Species Act that is meant to preserve species that are in danger of becoming extinct. I am one of those extinct creatures in the field of education. I was a permit teacher. Before a Conservative Government came along, in this province we still had 500-600 one-room schools. We used to send high school graduates with Grade XI and four or five weeks of training—they called it normal school, I never understood why they called that normal school, teachers' college. A high school student with Grade XI and six weeks of training was sent out to provide education for rural children, and it was a Conservative administration that consolidated the school districts in this province, that brought up to equity the kind of schools that we have in the province today.

Mr. Speaker, I sat around a Cabinet Table that created the University of Winnipeg, that created the University of Brandon. I sat around a Cabinet Table, and it was a Conservative Cabinet Table, that created every vocational training school in this province—Red River, Brandon, Keewatin in the North.

So, Mr. Speaker, it needs to be reminded, particularly to our own Members, that we, as Conservatives, take no back seat, no back seat at

all, in terms of providing the kind of services that the people of Manitoba have a right to believe. -(interjection)- My colleague reminds me about surely what has become regrettably the most important issue before us, and you are going to hear it a lot. You have heard it mentioned during this speech from my colleague the Minister of Trade and Technology (Mr. Ernst); you heard it from my colleague the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik); you are going to hear much more of what is, to use that favourite phrase again from a former Premier, totally mind boggling. I mean, it is not to believe.

I want to tell you this story that again has been said before. Mr. Speaker, this province has had some 19 Premiers, 19. I believe our present Premier is our 19th Premier. The other 18 Premiers since the province's inception in 1870 took the people of Manitoba through two world wars, a depression that lasted a decade, established the very things that I just mentioned, our universities, our schools, our hospitals, built things like the Winnipeg Floodway that now safeguards this metropolitan area of Winnipeg, built the Shellmouth dam that has now provided security from flooding in the community of Brandon and, by the way, created one of the most remarkable playground areas, natural resource areas, the Lake of the Prairies, where thousands of people enjoy themselves. They did all of that in those hundred and some years and had to borrow some \$3 billion.

Then along came the New Democrats under the former Premier Howard Pawley, and they borrowed more money, that one administration that the present Leader of the New Democrats is part of and the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) is part of, the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Evans) is part of—the Member for Flin Flon lectured us about Grant Devine's debt in Saskatchewan. That one Premier, that one administration, borrowed more money than all other 18 Premiers put together. They borrowed not as much. They borrowed \$6 billion to \$7 billion in six short years.

Mr. Speaker, if I were a New Democrat, at least I would want to walk around this province and say with some pride: okay, we borrowed a lot of money, but look at what we accomplished -(interjection)- yes, we did that, sure we did.

When we brought in programs, when we built new schools, new hospitals and created new universities, we put in the taxes to pay for it. What have they got to show for this?

I take some pride, and I want new Members to take some pride when they walk on to the campus at the University of Manitoba; when they walk on to the campus of the University of Winnipeg; when they look at the different regional services that we offer through our various social programs. In the main, they were put in place by a Conservative administration without putting this province deeply into debt.

I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, what the Pawley administration, of which we have Members here, left for us. When I tell you that the first thing the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has to do every day is write out a cheque for over a million dollars to pay the interest charges on that borrowed money, over a million dollars a day including Christmas, New Years and every holiday, that is the legacy that we have been left with.

The insidious part of this is that when Governments borrow money, when the international money lenders of the world in Tokyo, Zurich or London borrow a Government money they never want it paid back. This is even better than a student loan, because occasionally they have to pay them back. Nobody is asking for this money to be paid back. All they want is the interest.

When you read about international finance in the world, when countries like Argentina or Brazil from time to time start suggesting that they are not going to pay their interest then they create a furor in the international monetary community.

The international money -(interjection)-

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon, on a point of order.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker -(inaudible)- somewhere in that tirade an explanation how the good Government Tory Conservatives federally have increased our deficit from \$150 billion to—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

* * *

Mr. Enns: I am always delighted to be helped out by Members opposite. I will explain exactly how. In the year 1969, one year into the Liberal-Trudeau

administration, Canada was virtually debt free. Canada was debt free.

Then in the year of '73 when the Liberals, Mr. Trudeau, had a minority Government and Mr. David Lewis, from the New Democrats, governed them, they then ran this country of ours, this beautiful country of ours, into such debt, to the \$35 billion to \$40 billion debt that we now have so that now Canada, unfortunately like Manitoba, has to carry this milestone of a massive billion, billion dollar debt on which interest has to be paid.

* (1200)

The Department of Finance in this Government, or in any Government, used to be a small, small, small, small, small little department. It used to be covered among others like the Legislative Council—the Premier's office. Today it has become the fourth ranking department in terms of expenditure in Government Services, right next to Family Services; right next to Education; right next to Health and that is unconscionable. -(interjection)- Yes, I would suggest to the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) to find me another question to answer. I will be more than happy to try to respond to that. Let him not lecture us. Surely, Mr. Speaker—

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order please. The Honourable Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), on a point of order.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): The Honourable Member, my friend from Lakeside, is extolling all the virtues of the Roblin-Weir administration of which he was a part. I wonder if he could explain why the Weir administration refused initially to get into the national Medicare Program for Manitoba and thereby lost millions of dollars for the people of Manitoba by not getting into the national Medicare Program when he should have been at the beginning.

* * *

Mr. Enns: I remember full well that at the time the federal Government made available a move and I give credit to the Liberal Party, the Liberal Party of Lester Pearson that introduced national Medicare to this country. There were different negotiations going on with different provinces. Different provinces took different approaches to how they would enter into it. Some preferred the premium route, obviously a

province, and as later turned out a province like Saskatchewan, preferred the general taxation route.

Nothing was for free. We were arguing as to whether or not, and negotiating how the provinces would enter into a national scheme. The fact of the matter is, the proof of the pudding finally is, we did enter into the scheme. We entered it, and I am prepared to acknowledge, with a premium structure.

The New Democrats when they were elected in '69 or shortly thereafter, removed the premium structure. They transferred the cost of Medicare from a premium structure into general revenue. The debate is still out as to whether or not that in effect is in the long-term beneficial because there are those who would believe that with a premium structure at least it was a little more conscious in the minds of the users that Medicare was not free; it was our most expensive Government program.

Let me say in the few moments that I have, if we cannot do something unique, if we cannot do something that I believe so many of our citizens who watch us would like us to do, because you know, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba this past summer did something unique.

Manitoba did capture the attention of people right across this country when on a most serious issue, constitutional issue, we saw this Legislature working together. We saw the three political Parties working together. We saw the three Leaders working together. They came at it from different perspectives.

The New Democratic Party had the beginning position of having signed the Meech Lake Accord.

The Liberal Party had a position that was clearly stated from the beginning of the Liberal Leader's position on that matter. She was against it.

Our position was one of some concern; some were concerned where we had -(interjection)- okay, but let us—I am trying to accurately describe the situation as it is. The truth of the matter is millions of Canadians watched with some amazement, who have after all been used to this partisan bickering; they are used to the Opposition just normally banging away at the Premier (Mr. Filmon); they are used to every political Party just carving out its own turf. They saw for the first time on a very important issue a unity of purpose. They saw co-operation, and they saw it work.

I invite Honourable Members, I honestly invite Honourable Members, the Honourable Member for

Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), in her maiden speech—pardon me Hansard staff, scratch that, that is not permissible—inaugural speech. In her inaugural speech it talked about the need, the traditional role: because she is an Opposition Member, they had to oppose. That is a myth. You do not have to oppose just because you are an Opposition Member. I appreciate that is tradition and I appreciate that is practice, and I appreciate that becomes political reality when you come closer to an election time and you want to stake out your grounds for your Party.

Mr. Speaker, the election just past has settled things for a while. Can we not agree? I like to think we could agree when I hear what Honourable Members opposite have to say about new taxation like the GST: that our citizens do not want any more taxes, that we cannot afford any more taxes. Can we not agree on that? Then why can we not do what I am sure our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is going to ask us to do when he introduces the budget next Wednesday? Why can we not do a better job—he is going to tell us, look, in this little Province of Manitoba we collect \$4.5 billion in taxes from our million people. I have heard him say this before and really is not what it is all about, so how do we share the disbursing of those \$4.5 billion?

I may be in trouble with my front bench or with my Premier (Mr. Filmon) by suggesting this; I have not run this by him. It would not surprise me if we could agree to that, that we could sit together and work out a fairly common united front in terms of the most vital issue facing us, our fiscal situation. If Honourable Members opposite who stand up and say, this program is underfunded, that program is underfunded, if they would stand up and say: yes, this program is underfunded; let us take some away from that program and put it here.

If you think that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is not doing quite enough in a certain area, you tell us where you are going to take it away from—Family Services, from Education, from Highways, from my department? The operative word is, could we not agree that we ought to learn better? Could we not learn how we can share the \$4.5 billion that we collect in such a way, but agree that we cannot impose new taxes on our people, that we need four or five years, quite frankly, for the economy to pick up so that burden of debt charges is more manageable?

I offer that to the Honourable Members opposite

as a way that, quite frankly, would carry a great deal more weight every time anyone of them stood up and asked a question—if they would identify an alternate source of where the money was to come from.

Mr. Speaker, if they want to identify that it ought to come from higher taxes, so be it, but at least let them identify that. Let them identify it. -(interjection)- Well, the Honourable Member speaks from his seat about Oak Hammock. I will be happy to debate Oak Hammock about him -(interjection)- No, no. I think that the Honourable Member will become convinced, when he sees the greater explanation, that that is indeed a way of reducing expenditures in my department and transferring them, quite frankly, to a non-Government organization and yet provide the kind of results both for wildlife education, for the enjoyment of wildlife and for the ongoing operations of that well-known wildlife management area in our province.

Mr. Speaker -(interjection)- as often is the case, one gets somewhat diverted by Honourable Members' interjections, but I, in conclusion, simply offer it to Honourable Members again. I note that the new Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is in his desk, or at his chair, and I ask Honourable Members very seriously, because I have heard the Minister of Finance say this, I know he believes it: we need not throw up our hands and say that doom and gloom is about us—the fact that we are going into a more difficult period of our times. Yes, there likely will be a shrinking of available new resources to the province, but \$4.5 billion is a lot of money to do a lot of good things for the citizens of this province.

The question is, how best we share this revenue in trying to meet the demands. Honourable Members can do themselves, can do this House, can do the whole process of politics a great deal of good if their suggestions, their questions, their drive for attention, in this area and that area, acknowledged that it was a question of sharing what is there. It is a question of pointing out, well, perhaps you could take from this area of Government Services to one that they feel has a higher priority, and you will be surprised to what extent this Government and these Ministers would listen, given those kinds of questions.

* (1210)

So, Mr. Speaker, I leave that with the Honourable Members. It is a challenge. It would be unique if we

tried that. I suggest it would be one that would be closely followed by all Legislatures across this country, indeed by Canada, because we are all in the same boat. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to rise after the most recent election having been re-elected. I must start by thanking the constituents of St. James for re-electing me to this seat in the Legislature. It is indeed a pleasure, and I am humbled by their support.

Mr. Speaker, let me start also by congratulating yourself and the Deputy Speaker who have been appointed to positions. I think that from what we have seen of the Deputy Speaker we will have success in this House with fairness and neutrality, a lesson that you have taught us in your course. I congratulate you on your reappointment.

I want to also congratulate—because I think that in the first opportunity I have, after the election, in this House it should be acknowledged—the success of the governing Party in getting their majority in this House. I wish the best to the Cabinet and the Premier (Mr. Filmon), and I mean that sincerely.

I also want to congratulate the official Opposition who have of course increased their stature in this House and in particular all of the new Members who have come in on both the governing and the official Opposition Party.

Mr. Speaker, that does not mean that we will not have the partisan contest which we have had in prior years in my experience in this House. They will indeed remain, if not increase, in the coming years of this Government, but I think we all have to acknowledge that (a) we are Honourable Members, and (b) we have a common purpose which is to serve our province and the people who we serve within this province.

We all seek to do our best. I think that it is important after elections to acknowledge all candidates and all successful candidates who participated yet again in the democratic system. It is a system which we are all very thankful for I am sure and it is a system which we hope produces the best Government available to us. I think as Winston Churchill said: a democracy sure is not perfect, but what is? It is the best thing we have. We saw that again in this election as Manitobans went to the polls and chose who they thought would best represent them.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to my constituency, the constituency of St. James, in this city, it is perhaps a misnomer to call it St. James. In fact less than half of the constituents live on the west side of St. James Street which is commonly known as St. James. There is a big sign up that says welcome to St. James-Assiniboia and that is the place that normally people think St. James starts.

My constituency goes all the way downtown to Toronto Street. For that reason, it is in many respects a different community on either side of the Polo Park-St. James Street barrier. However, that increases the challenge both for myself and also for the candidates who ran against me in this upcoming election. -(interjection)- The Minister asks how much I won by? I am coming to that. I wanted to start by laying the groundwork in my constituency.

The two sides of St. James Street have quite different interests, quite different concerns and as a result, as I have said, it is a challenge and it continues to be a challenge to pull that together as a community which has one representative in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that I believe the campaign that was run by all three of the major Parties in my constituency was perhaps unique in this province, or very rare in this province, and that was that all three Parties had very energetic campaigns. They all did relatively well in the constituency. It was not a two-Party race as is the normal course in this province. It was a three-Party race and to that extent I think the voters of St. James had a real three-way choice in this campaign in that all three candidates were very visible, very hard working, appeared to be sufficiently financed to get their message across and we had a feisty energetic campaign.

We also had a clean campaign and that is the second one that I have been involved in that was like that. For that I want to publicly thank my opponents from both of the other Parties and, indeed, the two other candidates who ran, one for the Progressive Party and one for the COR Party who also participated in, I think, a very well-fought campaign which gave the voters of St. James a real choice.

The results bore that out. It was a real three-way race and I was fortunate enough and, as I have said, I am humbled to have been elected. I was fortunate enough to have been successful but, indeed, the

other two major Parties were not far behind. I am very cognizant of their support in my community. It was there in 1988. No doubt it will be there in the next election. I will continue to do my best to represent their views in this House, and I am very thankful for the opportunity they have given me to continue my service.

Mr. Speaker, I have been given the challenge and the duty again, by my Leader, of being the Justice critic. To that I have added in this present Session the duties of critic for the Department of the Environment, Native Affairs, as well as Natural Resources and, of course, the Liquor Control Commission.

Mr. Speaker, that will indeed be a challenge and I think, as our Members have gone from 21 to seven, we have all picked up additional duties. We have some advantage, at least at the outset in this present Government, in that we have served for two and a half years so we have some experience and hopefully that will help us in our new duties.

I do think that it is regrettable, from my point of view, that we have less time in Question Period. I always enjoyed Question Period. I think it is a critical part of the process and I enjoyed being as active as I could. Of course, our ability to question has been decreased because of our decreased numbers. To me that is particularly unfortunate. However, we will do our best in the time that we have, and no doubt we will have to look for other opportunities, other than Question Period, to get our message across.

Mr. Speaker, let me start with the Department of Justice, which of course I have been the critic for. Let me say that in this Speech from the Throne there was some positive comment, very little of it. I was frankly more concerned about what was left out. Interestingly, specifically it was referenced, I believe a special court is going to be established for victims of domestic violence. That is indeed a move which I am willing to support. What I am concerned about is that there will be sufficient funding and sufficient preparation and effort put into it to make sure that we effect some improvement in dealing with domestic violence cases.

Mr. Speaker, at page 8 of this Speech from the Throne, we were told about victims. There was a brief mention about victims, and I must say it caught me by surprise. I would not have thought that in this Speech from the Throne the Government would have mentioned victims services, in that in the last

Session they had such a problem getting to the Victims Assistance Fund and getting money from it into the hands of the community groups. We saw some six- to eight-month gag order put on the Victims Assistance Fund. That fund was non-effective for those months. The money kept accruing because it comes in through a tariff on fines, but the money was not paid out. The whole thrust of that fund has been to give start-up funding to victims groups and to continue it potentially to a second year. What happened was that the funds were given the first year the community organizations got going. When it came to the second year, in effect their work from the prior year was undercut, because they were not allowed to continue.

* (1220)

I think that, while I acknowledge that we have the Victims Assistance committee back in action, that was a very, very regrettable eight-month hiatus, which I personally and our Party did not see any real reason for. I think it did damage not only to the groups out there doing their work in the community, but to this Government's credibility on the issue. Now, they have mentioned it again, so we will see if it comes to pass in the next Session, if there is some action that will buttress the very fine words which are always a part of the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker.

There was also a mention about youth drug abuse. I believe also at page 8 of the Speech from the Throne, there was a mention that the Government is going to initiate a strategy to deal with youth drug abuse. Mr. Speaker, this has been an issue of particular interest to this Party in the Legislature in the last two and a half years that the Leader of our Party, the Member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), has raised on numerous occasions, her outrage at the lack of effort that is being put into youth drug programs in the schools and on the streets.

Mr. Speaker, we have harped and harped and harped on that, and I believe with very good reason. The fact is that we have an enormous problem, a continually growing problem on our streets with drugs and the effect that they have in particular on young people who become addicted and of course very quickly thereafter turn to the practices in our society which bring them into contact with law enforcement.

They turn to criminal activities very quickly once drugs are introduced to their lives. It is a great tragedy. You simply have to look at some of our streets right here in this city to see the effects of that and the teenage prostitution problem, the exploitation which is taking place by others who pray on them, both in terms of those who reap rewards from their prostitution or those who, like the gentleman who was just sentenced to ten years—he will have parole potentially in 40 months—repeatedly sexually assaulted and abused and videotaped 16 Native teenage girls in this province.

We indeed have a problem and we have a sickness in our society when that occurs. The perpetrator of those crimes is one thing. I am glad that he has been brought to justice, although I have grave concerns about the plea bargain which was struck and how 69 charges went to 16 convictions. It is very hard for me to imagine how that could have happened, but in any event, we also have the victims on our streets which are prey to those individuals. We have to get them off the streets.

A group like POWER, given national recognition by the federal Conservative committee studying teenage prostitution, was given national acclaim for their program, working right here on our streets in this city, and this Government refused to fund that program. They are the only people who are on the streets and were able to communicate. They are trained in having these people come in to their establishment. They will not come, Mr. Speaker, to our big office buildings in which we have community services offices and all kinds of social workers and counsellors; they do not come, that is not where they go. The POWER group was on the street and staffed by people who they would talk to and that is the first step, and we cut off the funding. This Government cut off the funding. Their own federal counterparts, not known for their social conscience in Ottawa, had the forthrightness to praise our POWER operation in this province, and this Government cut off funding. Indeed, a tragedy in my view.

Mr. Speaker, the issue of crime prevention is one that I have attempted to stress over the years, and I think it is appropriate at this time as we head into the third Crime Prevention Month that this Minister will have had the opportunity to attend, as the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that we review progress or lack thereof on crime prevention

because there has been no effort or initiative in the area of crime prevention.

I think it is germane at this point to look back to the July 21, 1988, Speech from the Throne. It is the first one I saw in this House, and I was impressed by the statement of page 13, "During this first term, measures will be taken to establish an integrated Ministry of Justice. Programs of crime prevention and justice for victims of crime will be given priority treatment."

What does that mean, crime prevention will be given priority treatment? Now that was given just three or four months before the first Crime Prevention Month that this Minister was present at. I was there. I think some of my colleagues from the other two Parties were there. I remember the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) standing up in November of 1988 saying again: This is our priority. We are going to do something. This is an exciting area, crime prevention.

I remember the Minister of Justice saying at that breakfast: a crime prevented is a victim saved. I agree wholeheartedly and everyone there did. What did he do about it? Absolutely nothing. That happened in 1989. We are now at 1990. Where is the initiative? At least this time this Government did not have the gall to put into their Speech from the Throne something about crime prevention. They do not intend to do anything. They are not even pretending anymore. At least it is not there. It was there in 1988 and raised our expectations. We spent two years hearing about it and nothing happened.

November 7, 1988, followed up that Speech from the Throne of July 1988. I asked the Minister of Justice: what is on your agenda? It is Crime Prevention Month, what are you going to do about crime prevention? This question revolved around the taking away of 24-hour service to the people of The Pas and their police station. That was this Minister's commitment to crime prevention. The community with the highest violent rate crime in this province had 24-hour police service taken away, Mr. Speaker, and in that context I asked the Minister on November 7, 1988, what exactly he was going to be doing in the year of crime prevention? His response was that he appreciated my comments and that again he was going to make the issue of crime prevention a top priority. He was glad that I had come around to agreeing with the Progressive Conservative Party.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I certainly agreed with those words in July of 1988. We are still waiting for one iota of evidence to buttress that, and at least I am cheered by the fact that the Government is not making commitments any more. They have no intention of doing anything, with respect to crime prevention, and at least they are being honest about that. That is a great tragedy, however, for the people of this province because truly a crime prevented is a victim saved. It is not something we can point to, perhaps, and say: we are getting tough, we are getting tough, is this not wonderful? Let us ride the political football. It is not something like that, but rather it is something that has an effect on individuals who would be the victims of crime.

Mr. Speaker, in my constituency I heard that at the door, and I think many of us did perhaps around this province, but I know at least in the urban setting crime is a problem. Any of us who have seniors living in our constituencies, in particular in their own homes, trying to live in their own homes in often urban density. They are telling us, again and again, I do not feel safe walking around the block, I have to live in my little home here like it is an island fortress. They are being forced into the seniors' homes prematurely, I believe, oftentimes out of fear, and that is a great tragedy. Those people must be given some hope that we are going to deal effectively with crime. Enforcement is a big part of it, but it is only a part. I would say, at this point, knowing and having seen what is going on in the rest of the world in this area, that we have a lot to learn and a lot to gain in the area of crime prevention.

When I went down to Montreal in December of last year, an invitation to which this Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) was extended, to attend a free international conference for legislators on crime prevention, he turned it down. Thankfully they called me and I took them up on it. What we heard and what we learned was that we should act in this area now because if we think we have a problem the fact is that around this globe, and particularly in the major urban centres in the United States, they have a far worse problem, and their message to us was: Do it now because our problem is out of control.

Mr. Speaker, the drinking and driving legislation which came through for the Minister of Justice (Mr.

McCrae) back in 1989 was a very interesting procedure. I am not sure if in the history of this House a Minister has come with a second piece of legislation, within three months of the first one, amending the first one which was longer than it. It would be very interesting to know if any Minister has ever been that incompetent before that they brought in a piece of legislation and had it passed, purported to tell the Members of this House that it was a competent piece of legislation, had it passed. It said, look, the public wants something on drinking and driving, I have to do it, and then three months later introduces another Bill which is longer than the first one and all it does is amend it. Unbelievable incompetence, which we saw in this House, the answer in September of 1989, was: I needed to bring in that first piece of legislation just to test the wind, I wanted to see what everybody thought about it and then I would go back and get it right. That is what the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) said in committee.

In any event, the amendments we put forward, most of them were rejected, most of them were rejected by this Government. One of them was supported by the NDP and I thank them for that because Mr. Justice Hershfield has just told us that amendment was very important to his upholding of the driver's licence suspension provisions in the Act. Most of them were rejected and I believe—I do not say it is the only reason—but I believe the amendments we put forward on the impoundment provisions would have had an effect on the survival of that, and we now have years of uncertainty in which suspended drivers can have their cars impounded. Why? Because that legislation is not insulated from a Charter challenge. It is not impossible, it just was not done. You cannot make police judges in this society. I do not care who you are, you cannot make police judges in our society.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member will have 20 minutes remaining.

The hour being 12:30 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Monday next.

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Friday, October 19, 1990

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