



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

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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 |
| CARSTAIRS, Sharon | River Heights | Liberal |
| CERILLI, Marianne | Radisson | NDP |
| CHEEMA, Gulzar | The Maples | Liberal |
| CHOMIAK, Dave | Kildonan | NDP |
| CONNERY, Edward | 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, Cliff | 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 |
| HELWER, Edward R. | Gimli | PC |
| HICKES, George | Point Douglas | NDP |
| LAMOUREUX, Kevin | Inkster | Liberal |
| LATHLIN, Oscar | The Pas | NDP |
| LAURENDEAU, Marcel | St. Norbert | PC |
| MALOWAY, Jim | Elmwood | NDP |
| MANNES, Clayton, Hon. | Morris | PC |
| MARTINDALE, Doug | Burrows | NDP |
| McALPINE, Gerry | Sturgeon Creek | PC |
| McCRAE, James, Hon. | Brandon West | PC |
| McINTOSH, Linda, Hon. | Assiniboia | PC |
| MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon. | River East | PC |
| NEUFELD, Harold | Rossmere | PC |
| ORCHARD, Donald, Hon. | Pembina | PC |
| PENNER, Jack | Emerson | PC |
| PLOHMAN, John | Dauphin | NDP |
| PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon. | Lac du Bonnet | PC |
| REID, Daryl | Transcona | NDP |
| REIMER, Jack | Niakwa | PC |
| RENDER, Shirley | St. Vital | PC |
| ROCAN, Denis, Hon. | Gladstone | PC |
| ROSE, Bob | Turtle Mountain | PC |
| SANTOS, Conrad | Broadway | NDP |
| STEFANSON, Eric, Hon. | Kirkfield Park | PC |
| STORIE, Jerry | Flin Flon | NDP |
| SVEINSON, Ben | La Verendrye | PC |
| VODREY, Rosemary, Hon. | Fort Garry | PC |
| WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy | St. Johns | NDP |
| WOWCHUK, Rosann | Swan River | NDP |

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, February 25, 1992

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): I must inform the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker and, therefore, in accordance with the statutes, would call upon the Deputy Speaker to take the Chair.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Emanuel Machado, Iris Stone, Mark Hagg, and others, requesting the government show its strong commitment to dealing with child abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse Campaign.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Cassandra Nicolson, Tammy Reimer, Glen Craven, and others, requesting the government show its strong commitment to dealing with child abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse Campaign.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Rhonda Law, Shelley Drummond, Susan Larson, and others, requesting the government show its strong commitment to dealing with child abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Madam Deputy Speaker (Louise Dacquay): I have reviewed the petition, and it conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth

THAT child abuse is a crime abhorred by all good citizens of our society, but nonetheless it exists in today's world; and

It is the responsibility of the government to recognize and deal with this most vicious of crimes; and

Programs like the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign raise public awareness and necessary funds to deal with the crime; and

The decision to terminate the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign will hamper the efforts of all good citizens to help abused children.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba show a strong commitment to deal with Child Abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign. (Mr. Reid)

* (1335)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to table the 1990-91 Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture and the 1991 report from the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report 1990-91 of the Department of Education and Training.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Deputy Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon forty-six Grade 5 students, from H.S. Paul School, under the direction of Karen Imhoff. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay).

I would also like to draw attention to all members of the House to the loge to my left, where we have with us this afternoon the Honourable Larry Desjardins.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Bill C-20 Extension

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, for the eighth year in a row, we will have a presentation of a federal budget by the Conservative government in Ottawa. These federal budgets usually represent a lot of bad news for Canadians, and the record of the federal Conservative government in terms of economic performance is well known to members of this Chamber, to people in Manitoba and to Canadians. The Free Trade Agreement with the United States with its loss of jobs in Canada, the GST tax that allegedly was going to be revenue neutral continue to be the legacy of Conservative economic policy in our country.

Unfortunately, too, another promise from the federal Conservative government that medicare would be a sacred trust is also another one of those slogans from the federal Conservatives that have proven to be without any merit at all. Every federal budget we see, particularly in the last few years, has seen a radical decline in support from the federal government to our EPF programs and particularly to health and post-secondary education.

We are now in a situation, Madam Deputy Speaker, where the very fabric of medicare, as funded by our federal government, is at risk, and yet last December and through the last six months, when the federal government was extending the freeze on its cash payments to the provinces through C-20, the federal legislation, the government opposite chose not to make any representation to Ottawa through the parliamentary committee to express their concerns and opposition to the two-year extension of freezes on medicare.

I would ask the Premier: Is he aware of any reversal in federal government policy for medicare and will we see the reinstatement of transfers in medicare in the federal budget today, and if that is the reason why his government was silent on C-20 when it was before Parliament?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that lengthy dissertation. I would say that we as a government obviously have expressed our very serious concerns and condemn successive governments, both the former Liberal government

that began the limitations and cuts to EPF and equalization transfers to Manitoba in the '80s and carried on throughout the '80s by the now Conservative administration of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. Every First Ministers' meeting that I have attended, I have raised the issue of the federal reductions in transfer payments or limitations on growth of transfer payments or caps on CAPs and so on, every single opportunity directly to the Prime Minister.

I know that the Leader of the Opposition sent a representative to that parliamentary committee because that is the only forum for opposition members. We have direct forums. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has raised it directly with Mr. Mazankowski, and I have raised it directly with the Prime Minister, with the support of virtually every other province in this country. We have made that message known, Madam Deputy Speaker. We know that, even in my presentation to the Dobbie-Beaudoin parliamentary committee on the Constitution, I indicated that we wanted to see the protection of those programs, EPF, CAP and equalization put in our Constitution as part of the framework of social program protection that we want to see in the Constitution.

* (1340)

Mr. Doer: I have a supplementary question, Madam Deputy Speaker. We have the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) public comments in 1989 at the First Ministers' conference, when he presented a brief to the Prime Minister which stated in fact that he wanted to applaud the promising steps of action from the federal government dealing with EPF in health and post-secondary education. This was after a cut of \$104 million; they wanted to thank the federal government for the promising steps that they have taken with the Conservative government in Manitoba.

I also have the statement of the Premier at the most recent Finance Ministers' meeting, and I see no great condemnation of the federal government for the freeze. We see nothing in Bill C-20. We see the provincial government saying that they have their own ways of dealing with Don Mazankowski. We work in our own ways, Madam Deputy Speaker. We see nothing publicly when the Premier is face to face with the Prime Minister.

What assurances can the Premier have to Manitobans that the federal government is

listening? When we listen, we do not see any of these eyeball-to-eyeball condemnations of the federal Conservative government cutbacks in medicare, which we will see again, unfortunately, extended in the budget this afternoon in Ottawa.

Mr. Filmon: I just want, because the member opposite is wont to misrepresent things, to say that I did not ever support or compliment federal government EPF cuts. He knows that, and he ought not to misrepresent it.

Secondly, he alleges that I attended a Finance Ministers' meeting, and I did not attend any such thing. I do not know where he is coming from on the issue. The issue is very clear. This government is opposed to any and all reductions in transfers from Ottawa on EPF, CAP and equalization, and we have said so, time and time again.

Mr. Doer: A supplementary question, Madam Deputy Speaker. In his statement to the Prime Minister, he says, your government has taken such promising steps and we want to work with you to make them as effective as possible, that is a cutback on health care and post-secondary education, health services and health care finances. That is after a cutback of \$104 million. No wonder the Premier, after budgets are presented, is in such disarray. He applauds the government before the budget is presented and then complains about it after we are cut back.

Madam Deputy Speaker, a very simple question: Why did the Premier not condemn the federal government in extending C-20 for another two years and freezing medicare, one of the finest programs in the world, for another two years? Why did he not condemn the Prime Minister at the First Ministers' meeting—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The question has been put.

Mr. Filmon: Unlike the Leader of the Opposition who only engages in criticism and never in any positive side, when the federal government rebased the calculations for equalization, listened to our arguments and increased the payments on equalization that resulted in some \$75 million additional dollars over two years to this province, obviously we would say that we complimented them on finally listening to us and doing it.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I will compliment the federal government when it does the right thing such as it did in equalization, and I will continue to

condemn them when it does the wrong thing as they have done on EPF, CAP and other equalization changes that they have made in the past.

ERDA Agreements Status Report

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): My question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

Since the previous government was able to negotiate 10 major ERDA agreements for the Port of Churchill, the Core Area Agreements, the transportation agreements with a federal commitment of nearly \$300 million, I want to ask the minister, has the minister negotiated a single ERDA agreement for the North where unemployment remains the highest?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Madam Deputy Speaker, we have been in the process of negotiating some four different western economic partnership agreements with the federal government. We recently signed a tourism agreement with the federal government. We are finalizing a communications agreement. Our previous Minister of Energy and Mines signed a minerals agreement. Certainly each and every one of those agreements benefit not only northern Manitoba, but all of Manitoba, and have benefits throughout our province.

Also, as part of that, was the agreement with HBM&S. Clearly that is very much focused on northern Manitoba, but our tourism, our minerals, our communications all have a focus on Manitoba in totality, which certainly includes northern Manitoba.

* (1345)

ACCESS Programs Federal Funding

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): My second question is for the same minister.

Has this minister obtained any federal funding commitment for the ACCESS programs that were cut, programs which are vital for northern development?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): That is not an area that falls directly under my portfolio. I will certainly discuss it with our Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) in terms of negotiations on the ACCESS program, but as I have indicated, we have already entered agreements on

minerals, entered agreements on tourism and are in the process of finalizing one on communication, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Government Commitment

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): My final question is again directed to the same minister.

Will this government make a commitment to the ACCESS programs? Will they increase funding for this year, or will this government follow the lead of their federal counterparts and continue cutting education and training programs in northern Manitoba?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): I will take that question as notice and discuss it with my colleague the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey), but one other agreement that I failed to mention when I responded to the first two questions was probably the most significant in terms of the monetary contribution, our forestry agreement which our Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) was able to enter. Clearly we have entered agreements on forestry, we have entered tourism, we have entered minerals, and communications are imminent, which all benefit not only northern Manitoba but all of Manitoba.

Provincial Deficit Clarification

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): I realize that the attention today is going to be focused on the federal budget, but I would like to see if we cannot clarify some of the confusion around our own budget.

Some three weeks ago, when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) announced a special warrant for some \$72 million, he had indicated that would not cause the deficit to rise because we were receiving some \$75 million from Ottawa. A couple of weeks ago, he then said, well, no, we were only receiving \$55 million and \$30 million would not be coming in corporate, so we would only receive a net of \$25 million, but the deficit would not rise because of his management. Yesterday, he announced that indeed the deficit will rise.

I am asking him today, could he clarify exactly what is the situation, and why there is such apparent confusion in his department?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): There is no confusion whatsoever in the department. Madam Deputy Speaker, what we

have, and members in the NDP particularly know this because they have been in government, they would know that particularly during the months of late January, all of February and leading into March there is a significant revision of numbers that come forward from, particularly, federal transfer. They would also know that there are requests by departments with respect to not only supplementary funding, but there are also areas that at times lapse within government appropriation.

This is a big operation. This is a \$5-billion operation, and from week to week, those numbers do change. Obviously they have impact on the bottom line. That is what I will be reporting in a consolidated, unaudited fashion to the people of this province next week. At that time, the standing of the province's finances, basis December 31 numbers with an estimate to year-end numbers, March 31, will be made available to all.

Increase

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Can the Minister of Finance then tell us when he became aware that the deficit was going to rise?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not going to suggest with certainty that the deficit is going to rise. I am saying that the certainty that I expressed around the deficit decreasing is no longer there in a "certainty" fashion. That is because of new information, so I am sorry I have to be vague on this, but I would ask the members opposite, listen and wait until next week, at which time, it will be all clear.

* (1350)

Mr. Alcock: The question to the minister then is: Is the new information he is referencing, information he has coming from the federal Finance minister as a result of today's budget that leads him to predict that our deficit is going to increase in this province?

Mr. Manness: No, Madam Deputy Speaker. I would love to have insight to the federal budget. I will be provided with the same at the same time as the member opposite, when it is read by Mr. Mazankowski in Ottawa.

The information that came to light two weeks ago was yet another revision. There are seven or eight of them during the course of a year, and the information that was provided to us as a government two weeks ago was one of those revisions.

Rural Infrastructures Responsibility

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): When the Premier was in Ottawa, he called on the federal government to implement a national highways program. In Ottawa, he recognized the importance of our rural infrastructure.

I ask the Premier, if he says that our rural infrastructures are important, and I believe they are, how can he justify the cutbacks and offloading of roads onto municipalities when he knows that the municipalities cannot afford to upkeep these roads and all of those infrastructures are going to break down?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, we can really now gauge the depths of the confusion in the NDP ranks when the member cannot tell the difference between maintenance of gravel roads and investment in infrastructure of building new highways, new sewer and water construction in capital works. When she does not know the difference, there is obviously a serious problem on the NDP side.

Having said that, I will inform the member for Swan River that this government entered into a trilevel agreement with both the municipal level and the federal level for a \$90-million investment in rural infrastructure, \$90 million. The Partnership Agreement for Municipal Water Infrastructure, the largest of its type, an agreement that the New Democrats could negotiate and never were interested in investing in, Madam Deputy Speaker.

We see right across this country what the New Democrats are doing. They are preserving and increasing the numbers of their civil servants, their bureaucrats, and they are starving capital budgets. This government is investing in long-term capital infrastructure in highway construction, the largest highway construction budgets ever seen in this province under this administration, in the sewer and water infrastructure, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Deputy Speaker, I know what offloading is and so do the municipalities.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member have a question?

Ms. Wowchuk: I would like to ask the Premier if he will now listen to the over 50 municipalities who have sent him petitions and letters asking him to reverse

his decision. Will they take back these roads that they have offloaded onto the municipalities?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, not only did we transfer funding to the municipalities for the—

An Honourable Member: Six million dollars over two years.

Mr. Filmon: —\$6 million of additional funding over two years so that they could take over and do more efficiently, as I believe all taxpayers in this province want. Manitoba taxpayers, like all taxpayers across this country, recognize there is only one taxpayer. Whichever level of government can do things more efficiently and more effectively should be the level of government that does it, so in transferring—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that the New Democrats are hurting when they cannot even ask a proper question in this House and they have to heckle my response, but I wish that the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) would just calm herself down a little bit.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): I believe there was some exchange across the way, as there was from both sides, probably due to the length of the question or the answer to the question from the Premier.

I would like to ask, Madam Deputy Speaker, if perhaps you could ask the Premier to come to order and respond as to our rules, in terms of Beauchesne, to the question that was asked by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), a very serious question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson did not have a point of order, but I do recognize the caution he has served, and I would ask all honourable members in this House to respect the rules.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, we all noticed the Freudian slip about the length of questions from the New Democrats, and we accept that. We expect that from them.

The fact of the matter is that, in addition to transferring \$6 million to the rural municipalities to enable them to do a better job on the rural road maintenance, we have not only brought in the

\$90-million Partnership Agreement on Municipal Water Infrastructure, but we have put in place rural Grow Bonds to develop the rural communities and their investment in themselves. We put in place the REDI program, the Rural Economic Development Initiative with VLT revenues going into rural communities. We have brought in more programs to rural Manitoba than has ever been dreamed of by any previous government in the history of this province.

Ms. Wowchuk: The municipalities were short—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Does the honourable member for Swan River have a question?

Ms. Wowchuk: What assurances can the Premier (Mr. Filmon) give municipalities that they are not going to get any surprises in the very near future as they are preparing for their budgets as they did last year? They had their budgets prepared, and then they got this offloading. Can he assure us that there is not going to be any more offloading or cutbacks in funding to municipalities?

Madam Deputy Speaker: The question has been put.

Mr. Filmon: Unlike NDP Ontario that has offloaded millions and millions of dollars onto the rural municipalities, and I know that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) knows about that because he has argued the case for passing on some of these things to the rural municipalities very eloquently in the past when he was the Urban Affairs minister. He was the point man on this issue as he offloaded millions of dollars. Bob Rae is taking his advice and following along in that wrong path. We do not want to do that.

We will deal in an up-front manner with the rural municipalities. We will continue to consult with them. We will continue to have an open dialogue and will continue to be cognizant of their problems and concerns as well as the problems and concerns that we face in preserving health care, education and vital family services to all the people of this province.

* (1400)

Stony Mountain, Manitoba Environmental Concerns

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): For the Minister of Environment, on January 31 of this year, the M.P. for Portage la Prairie, Felix Holtmann, wrote to the

Minister of Environment indicating his willingness to work with provincial and municipal levels of government to solve the problem that the Stony Mountain residents have with respect to the Bristol Aerospace pollution problem.

In part, that letter stated: I am prepared to direct the actions from the federal government point of view. I ask you to designate a provincial partner, and I know I can count on the R.M. of Rockwood. Collectively, we can solve the problem.

I want to table that letter, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I want to ask the minister, I know that efforts have been made at the provincial level. Has there been a specific response to Mr. Holtmann on this issue? Have we designated a provincial representative to work with him to come up with funding to solve this problem?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Yes, we have contacted Mr. Holtmann, and we are quite prepared to work with him and put him to work.

Federal Funding

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Perhaps the minister could indicate who that representative is.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member have a question?

Mr. Edwards: Yes. Has the minister studied the suggestion that the Southern Development Initiative be looked to, to fund this program which Mr. Holtmann suggests, and can he indicate who the representative is from the provincial government to work with Mr. Holtmann?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Madam Deputy Speaker, my last offhand remark was not meant to reflect on the M.P. for that area. I am quite prepared to accept his work on behalf of dealing with this problem.

In response to the question regarding setting a framework in place to deal with this issue: yes, we have put together an interdepartmental working group; yes, we have met with representatives of Mr. Holtmann's office; yes, we have had direct contact with the R.M. and indicated to them the steps that they should be taking if they wish, indeed, to deal with an alternative water supply; yes, in the interim, we are going to make sure the people of that district have clean potable water that we will be able to remove the concerns they have about the consumption of water no matter whether it meets with the Canadian drinking water standards or not.

Provincial Funding

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Madam Deputy Speaker, finally for the same minister, the Member of Parliament Mr. Holtmann indicated sources of funds, put it on the table and said he was willing to come up with some funds. Can the minister indicate what provincial programs he is going to be looking to, what provincial sources of funding to immediately deal with the problem, the pure water problem in this area, given that tying it to Bristol Aerospace or others in the area, if there are others, may be a lengthy process and people need the clean water now? What provincial sources of funding is he going to be looking at to meet the challenge which has been set down by Mr. Holtmann?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): I am pleased that the member is advocating on behalf of Mr. Holtmann's position. I am not sure if he wants me to respond directly to the suggestions that Mr. Holtmann made about using orphan sites fund or suggestions of that nature.

I can assure you, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the Manitoba Water Services Board, which is the vehicle that we would use to deal with any request for municipal water supply, is very much involved with the process. If the member is suggesting that we are leaving some stone unturned regarding federal funds, I can assure him that I am all ears.

Port of Churchill Rail Line Protection

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Madam Deputy Speaker, last Friday while representing the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), we joined with a group of concerned Manitoba residents meeting with the federal ministers of Transport to discuss the Port of Churchill's future and the future of northern Manitoba. The group proposed a partnership arrangement to rehabilitate the rail line. The federal Minister of Transport accepted the premise of a federal-provincial rail company partnership.

Will the Premier instruct the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) to initiate meetings between Manitoba, the federal government and other partners on this proposal, with a view to arriving at a positive long-term future for Churchill's future?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, the member is well aware from the many statements that the Minister of Highways and

Transportation has made in this House about his commitment to Churchill and about all the efforts that he has undertaken, including having gone to Ottawa and met with the federal Minister of Transport on this issue just some week or 10 days ago.

I will take that suggestion under advisement and discuss the matter with the Minister of Highways and Transportation at my earliest opportunity.

Mr. Reid: Given the past success of ERDA agreements, will the Premier commit his government to play a financial role in the continuation of the bayline and Churchill's future instead of the stalemate we currently find ourselves in?

Mr. Filmon: I am sure that the member knows full well the great challenges that face any government in this country. I know that from having spoken with my colleagues, the other First Ministers, that many of them will be billions of dollars over their budget projections for the estimated deficit.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that the member opposite would probably be the first one on his feet if he felt that we were not spending money on issues such as health care, such as education, such as family services, such as environment, so many of the demands that are upon us a government. It is very, very difficult for us to talk in terms of tens of millions of dollars investment in issues of this nature without looking at the tremendous burden of costs that we face in vital services that the people of Manitoba depend upon.

Grain Shipment Commitment

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Given that the federal Minister of Transport has expressed his support and in view of the fact that Mr. Epp and Mr. Mayer did not attend these meetings, will the Premier instruct his Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) to arrange a meeting between Manitoba, the federal government and the Wheat Board for a long-term commitment of grain exports through Churchill?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Transport has convened and participated in such meetings for several years now and made those demands.

CFB Shilo Continuation

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I have a question for the Minister of Industry. In view of the fact that the federal government has indicated that major cuts will be made in defense spending in today's budget, can the Minister of Industry advise the Legislature whether the Manitoba government has obtained a commitment from the federal government that Shilo will not be closed or reduced in any major way?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): There have been no indications one way or the other to my department, as of today, relative to Shilo. I think the honourable member knows that there has been a series of meetings taking place over the last several months. The position of our government, a position certainly that the opposition parties support relative to Shilo, has been put on the record on many occasions, has been put on the record in terms of delegations going to Ottawa, so our position is very clear to the federal government. We have absolutely no indication of any expected changes in Shilo as a result of today's budget.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I wonder, in view of the minister's answer, if the minister could take some time out now and seek an assurance from the federal government on the continuation of Shilo. I ask that, recognizing there is an all-party committee who are preparing to go to Ottawa to make a presentation to a ministry advisory committee. I appreciate that, but nevertheless, I think it would be prudent—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The question has been put. Order, please.

Mr. Stefanson: We have certainly done that to date, as I have indicated. Our government has done that on several occasions. The all-party task force has travelled to Ottawa. The position of our government is very clear, the position of the community, the work being done by our collective departments, by my department, in terms of compiling information to continue to make the case on behalf of Shilo, the work being done by the community and so on, certainly, to continue to reinforce that, reiterate that, we are more than prepared to do, Madam Deputy Speaker, as we have consistently done to date through

correspondence, through conversations and through utilizing our Ottawa office.

Simplot - Brandon Plant Modernization

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I would like to ask the Minister of Industry, who I know is interested in jobs in the Brandon area and economic development in the Brandon area, has the Manitoba government obtained an agreement with the federal government for joint funding of the modernization of the Simplot chemical plant in Brandon? As the minister knows, the future of that plant is being threatened by Cargill's expansion in Saskatchewan.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

* (1410)

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Madam Deputy Speaker, once again, I think, as the honourable member knows, this is an issue that we are working very closely with Simplot as an organization, with executive of Simplot, with the community, with the mayor and the local town council, in terms of a financial commitment towards the upgrading and development of the Simplot facility.

We continue to work with that organization toward retaining their presence in the community, the jobs that they create. We certainly welcome any additional suggestions from members of the opposition. Our position is perfectly clear on that issue, Madam Deputy Speaker, that we will continue to work with Simplot to retain their presence here in our province.

Consumer Warning Odometer Tampering

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Deputy Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Yesterday, I asked the Minister of Consumer Affairs if she would issue a consumer warning to alert the public to the fact that used cars with tampered odometers have been offered for sale in Winnipeg. I would like to know if she has now issued that warning.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Deputy Speaker, I discussed this issue with my staff yesterday, and through the months that I have been minister, there

have been many, many instances where my department has been involved in police investigations, doing work to see what is going on out there that might be of trouble to consumers. From that, I have learned that, until the police have issued a press release indicating their activities on any given issue, I will not jeopardize any work that may be being done by making comment prematurely.

I can say that, if the member is aware of any particular instances with specific details that he thinks may be of danger to consumers, he should immediately contact the RCMP with those allegations so that they can be investigated.

Mr. Maloway: Madam Deputy Speaker, given that one car dealer is being charged with six offences under the Weights and Measures Act for rolling back odometers, will she act so that persons who have bought low-mileage used cars can have them checked for odometer tampering?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Deputy Speaker, the RCMP have released the name of no individual at this point. When and if they do, then I will be pleased to make further comment on any statement that they may issue to the public.

Business Practices Act Restitution

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Deputy Speaker, has the minister examined the use of The Business Practices Act to see whether restitution can be obtained for anyone who has been a victim of odometer rollbacks?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): The member knows the Weights and Measures Act comes under a federal statute, the Criminal Code applies. However, I am sure that The Business Practices Act, if a specific complaint was lodged, if a consumer has been victimized in any way which the act covers, then they can attempt mediation or some of the other measures in the act to attempt restitution for those who may have been victimized.

Decentralization Brandon, Manitoba

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Deputy Speaker, my question is for the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Once again, I should warn that you just cannot trust a Tory. This government does not

understand—[interjection] The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) says it might be unparliamentary. Maybe you just cannot trust this government, and I will retract the "Tory."

This government does not understand the concept of decentralization. There have been four Lottery positions that have been terminated in the city of Brandon, and we have seen four new positions created, two in Brandon and two to be transferred over to the city of Winnipeg. That is a form of decentralization, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think that most Manitobans would give up hope on this particular government.

My question specifically to the Premier is: Can the Premier tell this House why two jobs are being taken from Brandon and being centralized to the city of Winnipeg?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, without accepting any of the preamble of the question that the member for Inkster has put forward, and recognizing that he would not in any way have investigated whether or not things might be done more efficiently by a government or a government agency as a result of any decisions made in government, I am sure that efficiency, cost effectiveness and saving money for taxpayers and Crown corporations would never be one of the issues that he would review.

I can tell him this, that as part of our government decentralization initiative, we have decentralized over 100 jobs to the city of Brandon and another 30 or 50 more jobs into that southwestern Manitoba area. We are very definitely committed to decentralization. I will take the specifics of his question under advisement, and I will bring back the response.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Deputy Speaker, we have now seen a government in a change in policy. There is a new criteria. Is he now going to look at every decentralized job, and if it is not efficient, it is coming back to the city of Winnipeg? Is that what the Premier is saying, that the new criteria is one of efficiency?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, if the member for Inkster will go back to every single speech that I have made on decentralization, dating back to my original speech in November of 1989 at the annual meeting of the UMM in Brandon, we said one of the criteria would be that the work of the department in the decentralized position would have

to be at least as efficient and effective, as it was in the decentralized operation, as it was in others.

I know that Liberals and NDP have no interest in efficiency in government. They want to just waste money, throw taxpayers' money down the toilet. We will not accept that response at any time.

* (1420)

Madam Deputy Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, will you call debate on second readings, the order of the bills as shown on the Order Paper.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 6—The Denturists Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), second reading of Bill 6 (The Denturists Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les denturologistes), standing in the name of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis).

Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 9—The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 9 (The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act; Loi sur le Conseil de l'innovation économique et de la technologie), standing in the name of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans).

My apologies. There was an error on my Order Paper. The bill is standing in the name of the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Leave.

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Madam Deputy Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to Bill 9, which is The Economic Innovation and

Technology Council Act. I also have to express my disappointment because my friend Tricky Dick will not be able to hear some of the things that I have to say in terms of economic activity in Manitoba, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey).

Let me start off by talking a little bit about the Northern Economic Development Commission that was announced by the Minister of Northern Affairs after promising to do so for about a year, a year and a half, as an election promise. That Economic Development Commission is still in the stages of gearing to become operational. It has already met with some groups in northern Manitoba. I know, because I ran into the Minister of Northern Affairs and one of the head commissioners, I guess, of the Economic Development Commission in The Pas during the Trappers' Festival.

I do know that from the meetings they have had so far that they have met with some criticism from not only the aboriginal leadership in the North but from nonaboriginal leaders as well. The reason for having met that criticism, of course, is for the lack of representation on a commission from central northern Manitoba centres like The Pas.

The commission is just getting started, and I know from reading the newspapers in northern Manitoba they are advertising for some positions. I believe that the commission may have filled some positions. So it is just getting started, and it will take, as far as we were led to believe when the announcement was made, at least 18 months for the commission to do the work and have a report produced at the end.

Madam Deputy Speaker, my concern and the concern of many people from northern Manitoba is that in 18 months many more businesses will have gone under, and in 18 months many more people will have been laid off and gone into bankruptcy.

Many people in the North, as a matter of fact, are asking the question whether the timing of this commission is coincidental; whether in fact the commission, even though it was promised for about a year and a half, and then a year and a half later an announcement is made. It has taken all of this time to operationalize the commission, and it will take another 18 months for it to produce a report, so by that time we get into another provincial election and more promises will be made prior to the next provincial election. I am not the only one who is asking those kinds of questions, but I know that a lot of people in northern Manitoba, although they would

like to believe that this is a genuine commitment on the part of the government, people from the North have seen many studies being conducted. People from the North have come to realize that government's reaction to any problem or crisis is to create a task force or a commission and study the problem. They also realize that a lot of these recommendations that are usually contained in these commissions and studies are never really acted upon. So that is one concern I have. It is not only a concern of mine, but it is a concern of many northern Manitobans.

I guess the other concern I have, in terms of the Northern Economic Development Commission, is that the commission, allegedly, is to review and assess employment, economic development, business development, and opportunities in the North. One of the things that struck me as I was travelling around the North, and I am sure the member from St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), I do not know if he has travelled to Cross Lake, Norway House, Moose Lake, Grand Rapids, Easterville, Cormorant, like I have. I am sure I am not a professional economist, but I, like many northern people, have a lot of common sense in terms of looking at how the North should be developed. For example, how can the government even think of establishing or developing a northern economic strategy when, in fact, just this afternoon we were talking about roads, about how the government is offloading the cost of road building and maintenance to the municipalities.

People say that is a real bad situation. I invite the member from St. Boniface to travel with me one day to Cross Lake and travel for five hours on a road that is hardly maintained. There is no infrastructure in northern Manitoba. My point, before I go on to other parts of my presentation here this afternoon, is that it does not make sense to me that we should be thinking of developing economic development strategies when the infrastructure is not there.

For example, you cannot start up a business in a community where there is not even a road. Sometimes the only way you can get in is by water or air. When you go to other places the cost of transportation is so high. Therefore, my suggestion would be to, before this government develops a strategy for economic development for the North, that it should look at the road systems, the conditions of the roads, the infrastructure which is there because that is what is needed prior to any

economic business development activity becoming viable.

* (1430)

The other point I wanted to make before I get into Bill 9, Madam Deputy Speaker, is during the debate on Monday night, when we were debating the economic situation, emergency debate on the economic situation in Manitoba, I made the remarks during Monday night that as I travel around the North—I do not want to repeat everything that I have said on Monday evening last, but I still want to, for the sake of emphasis and because it is so critically important for those of us who come from northern Manitoba—I find it an extremely sad situation when you are confronted, or when you are in dialogue with people who have allowed themselves to, or in some cases been forced into the situation they are in.

To me, that is sad because after having been employed for a long period of time, they get laid off. They go on unemployment insurance. The unemployment insurance scheme eventually runs out, and then it is on to welfare which is even more degrading for individuals. To me, that is sad because when that situation—

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Arises.

Mr. Lathlin: Arises. Thank you very much, the member for St. Boniface. I could speak Cree I guess, and he would not be able to follow me. With my limited knowledge of the English language, I am trying my best here, and I appreciate the member for St. Boniface assisting me in my presentation here.

The point I wanted to make is in a lot of cases, people are actually blaming themselves for the situation that they have been forced into by this government, like when they cut programs, services, training programs, employment opportunity programs, to the point where a lot of people are giving up because they think that they are at the end of the road and they can no longer cope.

As I was saying on Monday night, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not want to belabour the point, but I do, however, want to mention that when a situation like that arises in a community, the family unit begins to break up. We get into a lot of situations where even drugs and alcohol are abused and the crime rate rises. That happens in a family, and, of course, that spreads into the community and after a while, we have a community which is depressed and does not know where to go anymore.

I thought I would repeat some of those remarks which I made on Monday night because I happen to think, like others in northern Manitoba, that the North has been neglected not only by this government but by other governments as well. I want to make that very clear.

A lot of people in southern Manitoba, I think, have the perception that the province consists of southern Manitoba, Madam Deputy Speaker, but what I want to emphasize here this afternoon is, indeed, the province also includes the northern part of the province, communities like The Pas, Flin Flon, Thompson, Cross Lake, Norway House and Moose Lake. There are actually real people, real human beings, living in those communities as well who rightfully deserve some recognition, some attention and so on.

This government has repeatedly told this Chamber through the various ministers that they do really care for the North, that they are working very hard to improve the living conditions in the rural areas including northern Manitoba. I just wanted to give you an example of why we, from the North, have difficulty in taking the government's statements about caring for the North, why we have difficulty in believing that they really have that commitment and that sensitivity to the North.

For example, in Keewatin Community College, in '91-92, there was absolutely no increase. People are being laid off. In the Native education programs the funding has been reduced by approximately 10 percent. This government, who allegedly is committed and sensitive to the needs of northern Manitobans, completely eliminated the Northern Youth Corps program which was a very, we think, useful program.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as if that were not enough, this government, again who allegedly has a strong commitment to the needs of northern Manitoba and the development of it and its people, in the aboriginal development programs, cut \$50,000. In Northern Affairs there was a \$2.5 million reduction which amounted to about 10 positions. The ACCESS and the New Careers programs were reduced by some \$1.6 million.

The Native Media Network, the grant was completely withdrawn. The Northern Association of Community Councils, the grants to those councils were reduced and yet during the Estimates process in the last session, the Minister of Northern Affairs

(Mr. Downey) repeatedly told me that his department was working towards the development of self-government in those communities, but he proceeded to cut, as I said before, some \$2.5 million in his department.

The urban aboriginal strategy that this government—I do not know how many years now—has been talking about developing an urban aboriginal strategy. I remember when I was still chief, probably around 1988, that the Minister of Northern Affairs visited the M.K.O. executive council in Thompson and he talked about developing an urban aboriginal strategy in conjunction with aboriginal people. I also know that this government has already paid out something like \$400,000 towards the development of that strategy.

What we do not have, Madam Deputy Speaker, is even a draft report or any documentation as to what has actually been done with that \$400,000 that has been expended by this government. We have no idea when the aboriginal strategy will be completed. We do not even know who is working on it. There is just no information coming out from that department even though we have repeatedly asked questions about it.

The northern fisheries freight subsidy—again by this government, who allegedly has a strong commitment and is very sensitive to the needs of northern Manitobans, cut the freight subsidy by some 30 percent. Again this government who allegedly has got a strong commitment and a sensitivity to the needs of northern Manitobans, proceeded to impose a \$50 user fee on northern patient transportation. So with that kind of information and those statistics—hard information—it is no wonder that people from the North have great difficulty in believing this government when it says that it has a great commitment for the North.

* (1440)

Now I wanted to talk some more about Bill 9. As we know, the government first introduced a notion of a new council in the 1991 budget. The Estimates for 1991 showed us that an appropriation of some half a million dollars for a Manitoba Innovations Council was made. Then on November 8, 1991, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) announced the formation of a new Economic Innovation and Technology Council. This was announced along with the creation of the Economic Development Secretariat

and the new Economic Development Board of cabinet.

This, in effect, is really a reshuffling of existing cabinet committees and research organizations. The Innovation and Technology Council is replacing the Manitoba Research Council. It is also worth noting that the Manitoba Research Council budget was reduced by approximately \$700,000 in '91-92. The net effect of that, of course, has been to see an actual reduction in the budgetary commitment to research and development. Again, that is why members on this side have some difficulty in endorsing the notion of having this council.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this government also announced that it would take \$10 million for the council's activity from revenue realized from Manitoba Data Services. Again, it is worth noting that Manitoba Data Services provided the province with some \$3 million in revenue a year. On top of that, of course, the government no longer provides the Manitoba Research Council with approximately \$2.7 million annually through the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, so as I said before, the net effect of all this is a reduction in the support for research and development.

The council, as we have come to be aware, is composed of some 29 members currently. We do not have any problems with the credentials of those individuals, but given the size and scope of the council it would seem to be difficult to conceive of an efficient operation in terms of choosing, for example, winners and losers in our economy. Like the formation of the Economic Development Board of cabinet, this is again reshuffling and a futile attempt to be doing something.

Other concerns that we have on this council, of course, Madam Deputy Speaker, it sort of reminds me, for example, of the formation of the Northern Economic Development Commission, because we now realize why that Economic Development Commission was established. Again, it was strictly a public relations activity on the part of this government, trying to fool people from northern Manitoba that they are actually going to do something in terms of establishing and developing a strategy that would, of course, lead into business development and jobs. As I said before, we do not believe that for one minute because again here we see that the—another example I suppose I could give is the idea of sustainable development.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this whole exercise is really public relations for the government.

Other concerns that we have would include—before I mention the other concerns, even the Chamber of Commerce, as we found out this week, have similar concerns with respect to sustainable development. The Chamber of Commerce, like us, believe it is a public relations exercise.

The other concerns that we have with this council, of course, is that the current staff who are working for the Manitoba Research Council, the act also gives the new Economic Innovation and Technology Council authority to hire a chief executive officer and staff as they deem necessary. Another question that we have with regard to the staff is what is going to happen to existing staff in the research council? Are their positions going to be protected or assured, or are they going to be let go and be replaced by Tory appointments?

I want to conclude my presentation, Madam Deputy Speaker, by saying that this bill may create a council which has some value in the long term. However, I think it needs some firm financial commitment on a year-by-year basis instead of just a one-time financial commitment. A one-time \$10-million commitment is not adequate as we see it. It will represent an actual reduction in the province's existing commitment to research and development over a few years.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it will be interesting to watch whether, in fact, the Northern Economic Development Commission will produce what the minister told us not all that long ago. It will be interesting to see how many businesses will go under during the 18 months while its commission is doing its work and then producing a report. It will be interesting to see how many more people are going to be laid off and be forced on to unemployment insurance and welfare. It will be interesting to watch how those communities which are located in the North, how the social make-up of those communities will be affected in terms of crime rate, family violence, alcohol, drug abuse and so on. It will also be interesting to see how many people are actually going to be leaving the North to go and look for employment and business opportunities elsewhere.

It will also be very interesting to watch whether, in fact, this council will indeed produce results as it

alleges that it would, and also the staff who would end up working for this council, whether, in fact, they would not eat up more of the actual budget than is provided to outside research and development groups for the benefit of the province.

(1450)

Madam Deputy Speaker, I appreciate the time that I was able to use to rise and speak to Bill 9, and I must say, before I sit down, for the purposes of emphasis, that this government will have to realize that there are, in fact, people, other people, other human beings, living in northern Manitoba. This government will have to realize one day that it will have to do something for the people of northern Manitoba.

I thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Yes, I was wondering if I might be given leave to speak on this bill and have it remain standing—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Yes, you can speak.

Mr. Ashton: I just want to make sure that we follow proper protocol.

I want to begin my comments by echoing what the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) just said, because in many ways, this bill is part of the supposed new economic structure announced by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) November 8, 1991. It is supposed to be a key part of the economic strategy, so-called economic strategy of this government.

I want to echo, in the beginning, the comments for the member of The Pas, in pointing out that somewhere along the line this government seems to have forgotten where the border of Manitoba ends. In fact, I think he pointed quite appropriately that some seem to feel that it ends at a far lower parallel than it does, the 60th parallel.

I sometimes wonder if this Conservative government does not have itself frozen in 1912; 1912 was the year we achieved the current boundaries, Madam Deputy Speaker, of this province. It seems, if one looks at the emphasis of the activity of this government, they are living in 1911 in the old boundaries.

They never seem to have much in the way of economic developments in terms of northern Manitoba. In fact, we have seen this government in particular do little more than bring in the so-called Northern Economic Development Commission, which will spend a considerable amount of time

studying the problem. I wish them well. I am not critical of their efforts. I will give them the chance, I will participate. I am sure all northerners will.

What the North needs is action, it is not further studies. What it needs is not another organization. It needs a specific program. The government could have begun quite simply by not cutting back on some of the programs and initiatives that were in place in the North before.

We had debate earlier today in Question Period about one of the key areas. There is no Northern Development Agreement anymore. That was the cornerstone of economic social development and educational development in northern Manitoba. It has been wiped out because of the negligence and the incompetence of this government, let us make it very clear, the negligence and incompetence of this government.

Indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), I am sure, may wish to look at that as well in terms of who is responsible for the incompetence that led to the situation today where this so-called new economic structure that has been developed by the government does not include a northern development agreement. There is indeed a southern development initiative, which I referred to earlier, which provides sewer and water to southern communities, but nothing for northern Manitoba—absolutely nothing.

We could continue in terms of the other areas they have cut in terms—[interjection] The member for Portage, he seems to be quite vocal now. I wonder why he has not spoken out against cuts to the Northern Youth Corps, for example, the cuts that have taken place in terms of the ACCESS program, the fact that in the North basically we have been left out of this so-called economic strategy of the government.

Madam Deputy Speaker, let us deal with that economic strategy. I read with some interest the Hansard for February 24, 1992, and the introductory comments of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) on this bill. He began—this is what I found was amazing—by saying: "... since the election of this government in 1988, we have been working to make Manitoba strong."

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are 57,000 unemployed in this province, 57,000 unemployed, the highest number of unemployed in this province

since statistics have been kept, the highest number of unemployed in decades, higher, far higher than when this government came to office, and this First Minister (Mr. Filmon) has the gall to stand in this Chamber and say that they have been working to make Manitoba strong.

Madam Deputy Speaker, Manitobans know far better than the Premier, obviously, who if he was to take the time to get outside of this building and talk to some of the real people who are being affected in this province, not just by the international recession, but by the specific actions, the specific cutbacks that have taken place in terms of this government, I think that the First Minister would not be able to stand here with a straight face and make comments like that.

He talked, and this is a quote: "They want an economy that provides the economic opportunities they desire for themselves and their families. Manitobans want an economy that supports the vital health, education and family services we rely upon." Exactly, Madam Deputy Speaker, but where is the action of this government in providing that? Where is the hope? This government has led us to the worst depths of recession that we have seen in this province since the 1930s.

Madam Deputy Speaker, he continued, and this is, I think, a very interesting comment as well: "The national recession, coupled with the legacy of high taxes and huge deficits left by past NDP governments . . ." I read that with some interest, because the First Minister is aware of this, this government inherited a surplus when it came into power. It currently has a deficit that is rising on a daily basis. I found it rather ironic that this government, this Premier could, with a straight face, talk of that, with a straight face, in this Chamber, could suggest that this is the case.

Indeed, he said that other provinces have been hit hard by the recession. Indeed they have, Madam Deputy Speaker, but the true test for this province and this Premier is in terms of how we have been doing relatively. We have been doing far worse than other provinces not just because of international pressures but because of the specific actions of this government—the specific actions.

He talked further in his comments, and I think it is important to reference to them all, the difficult decisions necessary to lay a solid foundation for growth. What difficult decisions? I believe what this government has been doing has been

introducing its agenda, the agenda that it has always stood for in terms of ratcheting down the size of government. This is its agenda, Madam Deputy Speaker. I do not believe that it is a fair comment to suggest these decisions have been difficult. They may have been difficult politically, I will agree to that.

It has not been difficult for this Finance minister (Mr. Manness) and other ministers to sit around the tables at which decisions are made and carve up government, to ratchet down the size of government, to eliminate public services because that is their philosophy. That is their ideology. That has always been the ideology put forward by the Conservative Party, certainly since the election of Sterling Lyon as Leader in the mid-1970s, certainly as reflected by the federal government. The bottom line is, these decisions are not tough decisions other than tough political decisions.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there may be some Conservative members who argue that they personally find it difficult to go through this exercise. I would suggest they are in the wrong government, because if they did not know, they should be aware now that this Finance minister (Mr. Manness) and this Premier (Mr. Filmon) and this government have in actual fact been using the recession, I believe, as an excuse in many cases to ratchet down the size of government and many badly needed public services. We wait anxiously for the results of the next provincial budget to see if indeed this process continues as indeed it appears will be the case.

* (1500)

Madam Deputy Speaker, let us deal with that for a second in terms of the Conservative philosophy. The Premier in opposition—and I find it ironic, to say the least, when I hear the same Premier in this Chamber talk about the opposition being negative—I remember the comments from the Premier when he was Leader of the Opposition. I know there are other members in this Chamber who were here at the time, and perhaps some of the newer members are not aware of this.

I remember one time I went through the throne speech to determine the degree to which the current Premier, the then Leader of the Opposition, was being negative. You know, I calculated, out of about 110 paragraphs in his speech there are about five positive paragraphs, four of which refer to officers of the Assembly, and I think one brief comment on

some program the Premier agreed with. So the Premier was the ultimate in negative when he was Leader of the Opposition. He attacked the New Democratic Party government no matter what they did. He attacked the Jobs Fund. He attacked Limestone. He attacked other economic initiatives taken by the government. He attacked every single initiative made by the New Democratic Party government, every single initiative in that speech, bar one.

Madam Deputy Speaker, what was his alternative? I remember when they used to attack the New Democratic Party government. We used to say, what would you do? Their response invariably was, call an election. I know the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) will remember that. Whenever we asked the Conservative opposition for their position, the first response was, call an election. Well, once in a while they did go somewhat beyond that. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) would sometimes suggest that what we really needed was for government to step aside and to let the private sector do the job and to let it do the job without any interference, any major involvement in terms of the public sector.

If one just stood aside, everything else would take care of itself. This was the approach of the Premier on economic strategy. Since 1988 this government has had the reins of power. I find it ironic when they talk about the previous government, supposedly referring to previous NDP governments; they are even the previous government themselves. This is their second term. They have been in power for four years. We have had a chance to see how successful their economic strategy has been.

Well, has it worked? Has the province been doing what the Premier suggested in making Manitoba strong? Madam Deputy Speaker—

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Ashton: Yes, says one of the Conservative members. I believe it was the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) who stated that, because I am just wondering which planet—

An Honourable Member: Ernst.

Mr. Ashton: Oh, it was the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), I know, the would-be Minister of Agriculture once Headingley separates, the future rural MLA. Quite frankly, Madame Deputy Speaker, I know the—[interjection]

Well, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) will probably agree that the minister might know a lot more about it than the current Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay). We do know one thing, there might be quite a bit of paving of roads if the minister is in charge of agricultural or rural issues.

We know the member well in that sense, but have they been making Manitoba strong?—the words of the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Are there any other members who can honestly state that? Only the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) appears willing to put that on the record. I commend him for having the forthrightness to come forward and say that. [interjection] Well, let us assess that, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Last month, full-time jobs decreased by 14,000. They have decreased by 17,000 over the last year. There are 57,000 unemployed in Manitoba. That is up 11,000 over last January, up 13,000 over the previous month. The highest number of unemployed Manitobans, as I said, in more than 25 years. The labour force has decreased to 527,000 down from the '90-'91 annual average of 540,000. Is that making Manitoba strong?

The increase in the unemployment rate to 10.8 percent was a jump of 30 percent in one month, far higher than any other province. At this time last year Winnipeg ranked 6 out of 11 cities surveyed. This year the ranking is 9 out of 11. The unemployment rate jumped from 8.8 percent last January to 10.7 percent this January, an increase of 22 percent. The total active social assistance cases in the city of Winnipeg has now reached 14,536, double the number when the Conservatives came to office in May 1988. Is that making Manitoba strong?

There were 2,970 bankruptcies in Manitoba in 1991, the previous record was 1990 when it reached 2,307. Manitoba was the only province to experience an increase in the number of bankruptcies over the Christmas season. Manufacturing shipments ranked 10 out of 10; dead last for most of the last year, in fact for 10 out of the last 11 months. Of all Canadian provinces Manitoba has been hit hardest by the decline in manufacturing shipments.

The Royal Bank has predicted flat investment for 1992 and a 4.4 percent decline in retail sales volume. Manitoba lost 11.65 individuals per thousand in 1991, ranking the province as the third

largest loser of population. By contrast, Saskatchewan had quite a different economic circumstance compared to Manitoba and other western provinces.

In November 1991, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) boasted, we are faring better in this recession than most other provinces, and Manitoba was going to outshine the rest of the nation. Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think the minister has his economic charts turned the wrong way around. If he looks at what has been happening, the trend has been down, down, down, and the Premier should understand that Manitoba is not only not stronger than when they took office, it is in far weaker condition.

What we are dealing with here is an economic strategy which has clearly failed, but further than that, an economic strategy which is now going to rely on the statistical fact that when the recovery does come, Manitoba will have dropped so far relative to other provinces that I am sure the Premier will be leaping to his feet and saying, well, look, we have had such and such a statistic of growth in the recovery period which is going to be higher than anyone ever anticipated—[interjection] Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, if they continue at the same rate they are going, indeed that will not be difficult, because the further you fall, the more the numbers in the recovery period will look good on paper, but will do nothing in terms of bringing us anywhere close to where we have been traditionally in this province with a very balanced economic situation.

I would suggest to you that is part of the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) strategy, is to wait for the numbers to turn around, not necessarily to do anything economic of any substance, but something got in the way, in November, of that particular strategy. I would suggest what it is, is the fact that the Conservatives were running polls which show that somehow their message was not communicating to people out there. People were not just happy with this do-nothing approach, the stand-aside of government; they wanted some action.

I am sure someone in the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) staff, or perhaps one of the MLAs said, you know we have to look like we are doing something. Even if we are not going to do anything of major substance, we have got to look like we are doing something.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

What did the Premier come up with? Well, the new economic structure, Mr. Acting Speaker, it involved a number of components, one of which is the Economic Innovation and Technology Council we are dealing with in this particular bill. It involved the Economic Development Board, which the government announced as being the key focal point in the government's economic development efforts.

By the way, this Economic Development Board, I just want to read the composition of it—includes the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson), the then Minister of Rural Development, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and the Minister of Education and Training, as well as the Premier—Oh, I see, pardon me, the Premier and Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) were to leave their seats on the Treasury Board, and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) became the chair of Treasury Board. As well, the Culture minister (Mrs. Mitchelson) also joined the Treasury Board as a new member, so a little bit of a shuffling of the chairs here. The Premier (Mr. Filmon), who is responsible for the cuts that have taken place, directly responsible as chairperson of the Treasury Board, now all of a sudden has stepped aside from that so that he does not have to account directly for the cuts which have been made and can pass it off.

Indeed, it is interesting to look at the composition of the Economic Development Board, part of the new economic structure. I notice the then Minister of Education and Training on it. I am wondering if he was responsible for Tory job creation, Mr. Acting Speaker, because we saw his own unique style of job creation, so unique, that when he was shuffled to a new portfolio, the Civil Service Commission has basically said that he is under watch under his new portfolio in terms of hiring in that department. We have some interesting views in terms of the structure of this board.

* (1510)

This brain trust of the Conservative government is going to be dealing with economic policy indeed. We will have to see the results of this interesting collection in terms of the government.

The other component was the Economic Development Secretariat. They suggested it would provide a forum, and I think it is important to note, for consultation and dialogue between business, industry, labour, government and the research

committee. That is one of the key roles of this particular economic structure.

There are some good appointments that have been made to this particular board and I, unlike the Premier (Mr. Filmon), have always said that where there are positive features, we will recognize them. We believe there are some good appointments that have been made pending the passage of this bill. Of course, the council is composed of 29 members at the current time. I believe it is important that we should recognize the role of the predecessor, the Manitoba Research Council, as well as the role of the new body in that sense.

I find it rather interesting that this government is talking about a forum for consultation and dialogue between business, industry, labour and government. This government is the government that every session it has been in power, has brought in some new attack on labour legislation, some new attack on the labour movement, Mr. Acting Speaker. We will watch with interest to see what the latest version of that will be with the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), because I know they are looking at changes to The Labour Relations Act.

We have seen by their actions where they stand. We saw, during the debate on the throne speech, some of the most vicious personal attacks on individuals in the labour movement, as well as attacks on the labour movement in general. I am talking about individual trade union leaders in this province—[interjection]

You see Mr. Acting Speaker, one only has to mention anything about the labour movement, and the Tory benches start howling. How can they talk? How can they talk? How can they talk about consultation and dialogue? In their case it is a dialogue of the deaf.

They have no intention of any kind of co-operation or consultation with the labour movement. Every single session they have attacked the labour movement. How do they have the gall, how do they have the gall to go and put in a press release or make statements in this House suggesting they are somehow co-operating with the labour movement. It was not just in the press release, I should mention—[interjection]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, order. I am going to ask the members in the House to refrain, or at least keep the tone down somewhat. Thank you.

Mr. Ashton: Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker. I note the discussion over scabs in the response, and I certainly agree with the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) that perhaps we should not be having a situation where it is legal to have scabs in this province. Once again, is it not indicative of this government that their knee-jerk reaction is—you mention the labour movement and they start howling, and they start howling and they start howling, and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) in particular. Indeed. [interjection]

They prove my point. This is the government that wants to sit down and have consultation and dialogue? This is the government that is going to treat the labour movement fairly? You even mention their comments on the labour movement and they immediately start relaunching their attacks, not just on individuals—which they are good at—but in terms of the entire labour movement itself. Indeed, I will say that that proves the fact that this government is totally incapable of consulting and involving in any dialogue with the labour movement.

Point of Order

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Acting Speaker, I wonder if my honourable friend, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), might permit a question at this point in time?

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Would the honourable member for Thompson entertain a question?

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, knowing the minister's answers in Question Period, the length of which they go, I would have some difficulty in meting up my time period in debate because his question would probably last longer than the time I have remaining.

* * *

Mr. Ashton: Indeed, this government, if it wants to live up to its suggestions of having consultation and dialogue, has to recognize the first thing it has to stop doing is targeting the labour movement, session after session, year in year out, month in month out, for the kind of vicious attacks we have seen, both personal and both in terms of legislation on the labour movement. It has to recognize—and I really want to say to this government—before they prove how Neanderthal they are by once again

howling every time mention is made of the labour movement.

I look to them because there was talk about international competitiveness. International competitiveness. They talked about international competitiveness. Well, will they look at our competitors internationally? Will they look at their most successful competitors? They will find that in Germany, in Sweden, and indeed even in Japan, there is a far different approach in terms of labour relations than we have in North America.

In North America we have the second highest strike rate in the world. We have had that for the last several decades. Only Italy has had a higher strike rate. We have a higher strike rate, for example, than Great Britain, which normally was seen as having a fairly high strike rate. We have in many cases, in many years, had double, triple and quadruple the number of lost days to strikes per capita than we have had, we have seen, in terms of other countries.

I ask you why. Is it because there is a higher percentage of unionized workers and that somehow unions and unionized workers are responsible? No, Mr. Acting Speaker, our rate of organization is certainly far higher than the United States, but on the other hand it is far lower than many of the other countries that have a far lower strike rate than we do. What is the reason, what is the fundamental reason for the high rate of strikes?

It is because we have an adversarial system. We have a system that understands—if one looks at the basic precepts, which the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) would do well to look at, in terms of labour relations. We are one of the few countries in the world which still refuses to recognize the right of workers to organize without putting up major barriers in their place. We are one of the few countries where employers still to this day hire consultants who provide their expertise on how to keep plants union-free.

That would not only be unheard of in other countries. If one looks at the experience in Japan, in Germany, in Sweden, if there is no union, it is often the management that makes the first steps and invites the employees to elect their representatives to form the union so that they can sit down, not only at a bargaining table, but they can sit down at work councils, they can sit down on boards, as they do in West Germany. They can sit

down as equal partners in terms of the functioning of the economy right up to the national level.

Until, in this country, we move away from the situation where unionized workers have to fight for the very recognition, the certification, they are seeking without governments such as this government stepping in to assist the employers from remaining union-free, until we reach that point, how can anyone expect consultation and co-operation between labour, business, government and, in this case, the research community? The bottom line, Mr. Acting Speaker, is that simply saying we want consultation and dialogue is not going to achieve it so long as we have a government such as this that will use labour issues, to use it for political purposes, to make campaign IOUs repayable to the Chamber of Commerce—the many commitments they made to the Chamber of Commerce in the last election and the previous election.

* (1520)

The bottom line is that, so long as we have a government that will not do this, we will not have the type of progress we are seeking. We will not be internationally competitive to the degree that we should be. I want to suggest we need to go one step further as well. We have suggested this, that there should be a general meeting on the economy of labour, business and management. Perhaps, given the seriousness of the situation we face, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) will stop standing here and saying that the only way we can deal with this is in this House. Obviously, Mr. Acting Speaker, there are many people who have good ideas to contribute who would like to be able to do it in an equal partnership sort of way. I do not know why the government is so sensitive when it even itself puts in its comments on this particular technology council that it wants to see some sort of consultation and co-operation.

The bottom line is that if they are not willing to consult on overall economic policy, to have an economic summit, to sit down fairly with business and labour, these words ring hollow. That is what concerns me about this particular bill. This Economic Innovation and Technology Council is essentially a repackaged version of the Research Council. Let it not be forgotten that this government cut back in terms of the Research Council, in terms of funding that would have been available now to this technology council, its repackaging, the money that has been achieved from the sale of MDS. MDS, by the way, was contributing to government

coffers significantly. It was a profitable operation, so essentially they have taken the results of the sale, but they have been losing as a government the money they had received previously.

What we see here is repackaging. Perhaps the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) has something to do with this. This is recycling, but in this case it is not anything new. It is not anything that is going to do anything particularly dramatic in terms of the economic situation.

Whatever merits it has in and as of itself in terms of dealing with research and development—indeed, Canada as a whole needs to look very seriously at our poor record, our lousy record, on research and development—whatever contributions can be made from those very distinguished individuals, for the Premier to suggest that this is somehow central to the new economic structure, I believe he shows how out of touch with reality in this particular case with the seriousness of what is happening by making comments such as that. One only has to read through his speech, the continuous mentions in the speech of the First Minister—an extensive speech in terms of the council and the various different items—to see how I believe he is missing the point. He is missing the point.

Indeed, it is not a question of the qualifications of the 29 council members. It is not a question of the qualifications of the people who have been put into this particular organization. There are some very fine individuals. I do wish them luck, but I wonder how strong the commitment is really going to be. If suggestions come out of this in terms of research and development, in terms of economic innovation, that do in fact result from some consensus on behalf of the people involved there, Mr. Acting Speaker, is this government really going to listen?

The member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) talked earlier about the Northern Economic Development Commission which indeed will be doing a study of northern Manitoba over the next period of time and will then consult on this study. He raised the question. What are we going to be doing once the study is done and the consultation is done? Is it going to lead to the government announcing another study of the study?

I know the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) who I notice is involved in these economic issues, seems to have developed something of a cottage industry in this province. He has developed the industry of

studying health. There are studies and there are studies of studies, and indeed one needs a complete and absolute flow chart to keep track of the various studies. No health care acts are planned for the 1990s, Mr. Acting Speaker, which they promised in 1980.

Is that what we are going to see on the economy as well, talk of economic action that somehow will fade from people's memory and then we will have more studies and we will have more councils that are basically reorganizations of previous councils and a committee of cabinet? I mean, is this the economic strategy, a committee of cabinet, a reorganized research council and the Northern Economic Development Commission?

If that is what the government is looking to with no changes in its attitude, with no changes in its policies, we are not going to achieve the economic potential of this province. We are not going to achieve the economic potential until this government understands that it cannot sit down at a table with labour and business and expect labour, in particular, given this government's actions in the Chamber in the last four years, to really trust this government with anything it says in terms of co-operation. How can it then turn around and expect consultation and co-operation, Mr. Acting Speaker? Indeed, they might well learn from their own words and follow their own words. [interjection]

Once again, whenever any mention is made of the labour movement, there are individuals on that side who rather than listen, try and drown out whatever is being said, try not to hear the message. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), I notice in particular, as being the most vocal on this point. I hope he would be the one to listen, because if anybody in that caucus should be fighting the government in terms of its attitude towards the labour movement and wanting the government to listen to the labour movement, it should be the Minister of Labour. He should not be a cheerleader for the kind of antilabour policies we saw from previous Labour ministers, the kind of antilabour policies he brought in the last session, and the kind of antilabour policies we are seeing brought in this session.

Where can this government go in terms of the next number of years, Mr. Acting Speaker? What policies should it be following? I think those are legitimate questions and, indeed, unlike the Premier (Mr. Filmon), who never once gave any suggestions

in terms of what we should be doing, I know members on this side of the House have not hesitated to do so. I think the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) indicated some good starts, to reinstate some of the programs that were cut but often did not involve a major drain on the Treasury but were significant programs. The Northern Development Agreement has to be renegotiated. That is a must. It is one of the fundamental failures of this government that there is no Northern Development Agreement. That has to be renegotiated and can provide economic development funding, in particular for northern Manitoba.

The Port of Churchill—we need a federal-provincial agreement on Churchill. We had one before. We had a federal-provincial agreement before and the Conservatives at that time criticized the provincial. We need a commitment to the Port of Churchill, not the one year, peace in our times, Neville Chamberlain type of statements we have heard from this government. They know they have no long-term commitment. We need a commitment to the Port of Churchill. It is fundamental. It is important in terms of overall economic policy.

We do need job creation initiatives. It does not have to bankrupt the Treasury, and it does not have to be just built in the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) riding either. No, Mr. Acting Speaker, there is a role indeed for the type of public works that was talked about earlier. I am glad to see that the Conservatives have come around on that, because they were critical of that certainly when we were in government.

There is also the need for the kind of community projects that have been used in the past. There is no reason why many of the individuals I have talked to have been forced onto welfare by the economic collapse in this province. They would like to be able to work at community projects. There is no mechanism for that. In fact, this government has cut back in terms of Community Places Program. It has cut back in terms of the kind of programs we saw with the Manitoba Jobs Fund before. It is a complete waste of our human resources when we have so many people on welfare, when so many people are on unemployment insurance, and when they want to be able to contribute to society and there is no mechanism for them to do so. I mean is this government following the words of a previous Conservative cabinet minister who said that welfare is cheaper than job creation? Perhaps that is what

they believe. What a waste for society, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I would suggest there are many, many other areas with very little drain in terms of the public Treasury, significantly increase the number of people who are involved in our economy. There are other areas—the minimum wage. This government has allowed the minimum wage to fall further and further behind in terms of this province. By continuing to raise the minimum wage to reflect increases in the cost of living, we could be providing greater purchasing power for many poor Manitobans and many on modest incomes. That would provide a boost to our economy.

* (1530)

Do they want more suggestions? Yes, they can have more suggestions, because the New Democratic Party has always had at its basic heart the concern for the economic situation of many people in this province and across the country. We have always had program alternatives and policies, Mr. Acting Speaker, going back to the Great Depression when the CCF was founded. We have always stood for that. We always will be willing and ready to provide that kind of leadership, but this is the government that is in power. They should either listen, they should either enact some of those policies, or they should live up to the ultimate in step-aside policies. They should step aside as government because what we are seeing from them, as is evidenced by the so-called new economic structure, is that there is no economic structure at all.

The Manitoba economy does not have a strong foundation. That foundation is cracking. The floors are caving in, the walls are caving in, and it is hurting individual Manitobans, the 57,000 who are unemployed. Let the Premier (Mr. Filmon) give us some leadership, not the kind of hollow rhetoric brought in on this particular bill, and let him not, in many ways, detract from what might be the very worthwhile contributions of the 29 people appointed to this board by suggesting that they are somehow going to solve the problems created by this government in the province of Manitoba.

House Business

Hon. Darren Praznik (Acting Government House Leader): Mr. Acting Speaker, the government House leader (Mr. Manness) has asked me to make the following two announcements.

The Standing Committee on Economic Development is called for 10 a.m. on Thursday, February 27, to consider the annual reports of the Channel Area Loggers Corporation, Moose Lake Loggers and A. E. McKenzie Seeds.

As well, the House leader has asked that I give notice that the Standing Committee on Economic Development of this House, will also be called for Tuesday, March 3, at 10 a.m. to consider the annual report for 1989-90 of Venture Manitoba Tourism.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Acting Speaker, in preparation for speaking on The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act, I read the Premier's speech on second reading, and I read the speech of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) speaking in emergency debate.

The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) asked, was I impressed? Well, no, I was not impressed, and I intend to critique what they said and to add some positive suggestions of my own.

I notice that the Premier said that this council will play an important role in the government's plan to build a strong Manitoba economy. Certainly there is a great need for the government to do something to create a strong economy. As we all know, there are 57,000 Manitobans who are unemployed. A great many of them are in my constituency of Burrows.

Generally, when one looks at unemployment statistics, certainly in the 1981 census data and the 1986 census data, there is a very clear pattern, and that is that people who live in the inner city of Winnipeg in constituencies such as Burrows, the unemployment rate is twice as high as the rate for the city of Winnipeg.

When you look at the unemployment rate for aboriginal people in the inner city, the rate is generally at least three times as high as other people. That is also true when you look at youth in the inner city. The unemployment rate is much higher than the rate for the rest of the city. So there is a great need to do something to get the economy going again in Manitoba. Part of that need is very great in my constituency.

The first problem I have with the Premier's remarks on this bill is that part of the focus is on policy development and establishing new

organizational structure. In fact, when you look at it and you examine it and you see that there is quite a bit of restructuring going on, it seems that is almost entirely the focus, because the research council is being folded up and a new organization created, and money is being shifted around from this budget to that budget. It seems that the focus is indeed restructuring, restructuring from an old council to a new council without very many changes in substance.

In fact it is rather interesting that the minister uses a lot of clichés in describing this, and he talks about, the board will liaise with the Round Table on Environment and the board will interface with Treasury Board—two overworked words that I do not think should ever have crept into the English language, but there they are. The Premier is using them to describe this new council, rather appropriate I think that he uses those words for this organization which seems to be more window dressing than anything else.

The Premier repeatedly talked about the need for innovation when he was addressing this bill. Certainly, we on this side would agree that there is a need for innovation; there is a need for governments to innovate; there is a need for business to innovate; there is a need for labour to innovate. We on this side are totally in favour of innovation.

Perhaps some of my colleagues were watching The Journal the other night and saw cross-country interviews with different people in different parts of Canada talking about the economy in their area and how they are responding to the economic crisis in their area. I thought that one of the more interesting responses was, I believe, in the community of Nelson, British Columbia where they have, I think it is, 200 Japanese people studying English. What they are doing is they are fulfilling a need for people from another country and stimulating the economy of their community and their province and our country at the same time.

It seems to me that the problem we have in Manitoba is that the government really wants to stress high technology. It is appropriate that we do try to innovate and develop technology. However, I think we are ignoring some of the strengths, in fact some of the strengths that the Premier spoke of in his speech when he talked about people in Manitoba and what an important resource people are.

I was thinking, why can we not innovate in the area of people and look at the resources that we have and some of the natural advantages that we have? Why do we not attract people from other provinces in Canada or even other countries and innovate in this area? I cast my mind around and I said, well, what could we be doing, what possibilities are there in Winnipeg?

I think one obvious possibility would be to implement some of the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report and to train native people in Winnipeg or in Thompson or in other centres in Manitoba. We know Manitoba is not the only province that is moving in the direction of training more native people for jobs which will come about by aboriginal self-government, because the inherent right to self-government, particularly if it is entrenched in the Constitution, is something that will affect all provinces and the territories and the federal government. So the demand will be there to train more leaders in the aboriginal community.

That takes some very specific forms. There will be a need and there is a need for more aboriginal lawyers. I was reading, I believe, in the AJI report that there are something like 200 aboriginal lawyers in Canada, when if you looked at the population of aboriginal people in Canada and the proportion of lawyers, there should be 2,000 aboriginal lawyers in Canada.

We are already training some of those people through an affirmative action program at the Law Faculty at the University of Manitoba. There is no reason why the university could not specialize in training more aboriginal leaders who are going to become lawyers for the province of Manitoba and other provinces. The same example can be applied to every other area. There will be a greater need for court staff, for police officers, for correctional staff, all kinds of people, probation officers.

* (1540)

There is no reason why we should not specialize in training those people, training aboriginal leaders, not just for Manitoba, but for all of Canada. We know that when people come to study at university or other training institutions here that they are going to be spending money here. They are going to be spending money on transportation. They are going to be spending money on lodging. They are going to be spending money on food. If the instructors are

hired, it creates more jobs in Manitoba. Many of those people will continue to live in Manitoba.

On a small scale, that is already happening at the Law Faculty and also at places like the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Centre, the United Church seminary at Beausejour, because students are coming from out of province to Manitoba to study at the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Centre. I know that some members here have toured the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Centre. In fact, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh) has been a volunteer and helped with their construction there, so I know there are government members who support this initiative of the United Church.

It has been so successful that they have had to split into two sections. They started with one class of about 20 students. Now I think they are up to about 38 students. They have had to offer two courses instead of one, so here is a suggestion of where we as Manitobans can be innovative in keeping with the thrust of this bill, where we can create employment, where we can train people who then may go back to other provinces.

I would like to challenge the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) and the government to not just implement the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, but to specialize in training aboriginal people, as I have suggested—lawyers, judges, probation officers, correctional staff, court workers, et cetera. To do this I think would be to emphasize the resources that we already have in terms of people and the training centres that we already have in the province of Manitoba.

The Premier said that the Economic Innovation and Technology Council has been created through a restructuring. Well, I think the problem that my colleagues and I have been pointing out is that this bill is mainly about restructuring. That seems to be the general thrust of this new legislation. In fact, there is really nothing that is very new about it. It is a restructuring of an existing organization into a new one.

I was pleased to see that the Premier spoke of co-operation and dialogue. He named different organizations as stakeholders and said that there needed to be consultation amongst all of them, and he named government, business, labour, the research community and the general public. Of course, I was pleased to see that he named labour as one of the groups that should be consulted with,

because we believe, in fact, our party and our Leader have been calling for a public consultation between government, business, labour and the public for a number of years now, but the government has chosen to ignore this, ignore the way that we suggested doing it as a means of stimulating economic development in the province of Manitoba. It is good to see that it is in his speech. It is good to see that he addressed it, and we hope that—perhaps this is too optimistic—there would be a new era of co-operation between the government and labour. Maybe they will take ideas of labour seriously in this new council since the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is suggesting that they at least be consulted.

I hope that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) is listening as well, so that what we have in this new era of consultation is progressive labour legislation rather than regressive labour legislation as he and his government want to do and have already done, except that I do not think he is finished with his plan or the government's plan. I think there is more regressive labour legislation in the works.

An Honourable Member: What about the Crocus Fund?

Mr. Martindale: The member mentions the Crocus Fund. That was the next item on my speech. He is anticipating. We have to have some balance here. We have to say what the government is not doing. In fact, the Crocus Fund is an example of something the government is not doing. They made a speech. They made an announcement. They gave themselves lots of credit in the throne speech for the Crocus Fund, and they promised to give it \$2 million and set it up.

Well—[interjection] the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) says he is putting the details together. We are very happy to hear that and we would really like to hear the details as soon as possible. The minister says it does not happen overnight. We agree that sometimes it takes time to set these things up, but we would like to hear a progress report. We would like to hear that the government has put the \$2 million into the fund so that labour unions and workers—[interjection] The Minister of Labour says you do not put the money into the fund until you have established the details. We are still waiting and we are looking forward to that announcement.

We are looking forward to hearing from the Minister of Labour that they have established the

details, they have worked out their plans and they are putting the \$2 million into the fund. We look forward to hearing some success stories from the Crocus Fund as employees buy out companies that are for sale. I am sure that the Minister of Labour and the government will take great credit for that. We are reminded that labour is involved, so labour should get some credit as well. We would even give the government credit for co-operating with labour for a change instead of doing things that adversely affect labour, like repealing final offer selection.

We would be happy to see—[interjection] The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) suggests I should stay away from final offer selection. I would love to talk about final offer selection. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is trying to bait me again but I will not rise to that. I am not a sucker and I know that the minister is a master at baiting people. We will not say what that makes him.

I would be only too happy to hear success stories about the Crocus Fund when it happens. We are still waiting for some action if and when the Crocus Fund is ever funded and given funding. We are still waiting an announcement to that effect.

The next part of the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) remarks give me great concern and so I would like to quote it. He said the council will immediately begin to look at all phases of development and commercialization including government institutions and the allocation of government resources.

I am wondering if the Premier is not talking about privatizing government departments or privatizing parts of government departments. I think we have already seen a trend in this direction and we know that philosophically the government is in favour of privatizing, downsizing and offloading. In fact, in Question Period today we heard an example of this when my colleague, my seat mate, the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) was talking about the offloading of responsibility for roads in this province to the municipalities.

We heard how unhappy the municipalities are with this policy, and I am sure that the government members from rural Manitoba are hearing about this. I am sure that they have been on the receiving end of these petitions and phone calls and letters, because the municipalities and their elected representatives do not want to raise taxes in order to pay for this, and I am sure that they are very

unhappy. It must make for some interesting conversations because probably a lot of those municipal councillors are Conservatives, and they were talking to their elected representatives who are from the same party. So we probably will not hear too much about this fight in public, but you cannot keep it quiet forever.

That is why people from rural Manitoba are phoning and writing to our critic for Rural Development who is raising this in the Legislature. I am sure that this will not be the last time that the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) raises it in the Legislature, and it will not be the last time that the municipalities criticize their colleagues in this Legislature for offloading responsibility for roads to municipalities.

My concern is that—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I would ask that the two gentlemen debating an issue, please either take places in the loge or outside of the Chamber to continue the debate or else suspend the debate. Thank you, very much.

Mr. Martindale: I am very concerned when I hear the Premier (Mr. Filmon) say that they are going to review all government activities, because it suggests to me that they are on the road to privatizing and downsizing and offloading which we have seen and I have given an example of. Another example is the Manitoba Housing Authority whereby the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) by Order-in-Council fires 600 volunteer board members, gets rid of 98 housing authorities, regionalizes delivery of housing in Manitoba. The next step could very easily be to privatize the management of those regions, and after that it is a very easy—[interjection]

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): That is a good idea.

Mr. Martindale: The Minister of Housing says it is a good idea. I think that should be on the record because that is exactly what we are afraid of. [interjection] I said that is what I am afraid of, and the Minister of Housing agreed with me, because that is the next logical step that people who believe in that would go to, and that would be a sad day for rural Manitoba in particular, and Winnipeg as well.

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

So we were concerned when we heard the Premier (Mr. Filmon) say that the council will

immediately begin to look at all phases of development—

Point of Order

Mr. Ernst: Madam Deputy Speaker, I heard the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) allege certain statements to me, and I would ask the member for Burrows if he is recommending that we privatize the housing authorities in Manitoba. It seems to me that a suggestion was coming from the member for Burrows to privatize these things, and I want to know if he firmly supports that.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable Minister of Urban Affairs does not have a point of order. The honourable member for Burrows to continue debate.

* * *

Mr. Martindale: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Of course, the Minister of Housing is trying to twist my remarks. It was he who said he agreed with privatizing housing in Manitoba. He knows that I, as the Housing critic, and my party are totally opposed to privatizing housing in Manitoba, but he has admitted that is the route he would like to go. He thinks that is a good idea. I think that is absolutely abominable. I am getting phone calls and letters from Housing staff in Manitoba who are now getting their layoff notices. They are very worried about whether they will be rehired under the new structure. The minister has said there will be 50 staff who will lose their jobs under the reorganization. That is in the original information about the reorganization of Manitoba Housing, and I think it is a foot in the door; it is leading down a path; it is opening the door to further deterioration of public housing in Manitoba. We are totally opposed to that, and it is disturbing to read the Premier talking about looking at commercialization of government institutions, and I think housing is one area that might be a target for that.

* (1550)

Mr. Ernst: What do you have against people owning their own homes?

Mr. Martindale: Madam Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Housing asks what I have with people owning their own house. I have absolutely nothing against people owning their house. I own my own house, debt-free, paid off the mortgage. One of the good things about Manitoba is that there is a higher

percentage of people in Manitoba than in any other province in Canada who can afford to buy their own house. A year ago it was about 43 percent; now it is about 49 percent because mortgage rates are so low and housing is so affordable in Manitoba.

Of course, one of the reasons it is so affordable is because so many people are leaving Manitoba. We have a huge vacancy rate—in Winnipeg, for example, six percent. That is why housing prices are so low. It is bad that people are leaving Manitoba. It is a disaster that the Manitoba economy is so bad that people are leaving Manitoba, but it is good that housing is affordable here and that people can afford to buy their own house in Manitoba. I encourage people to buy their own house. Buying your own house is a good investment. In fact, it is the best tax shelter in Canada, which the minister is well aware of.

The problem is that we have thousands and thousands of Manitobans who cannot afford to buy their own house. We must subsidize those people so that they can live in decent, affordable housing in Manitoba. That is why, especially under the Schreyer government, we had large numbers of housing units built. In Manitoba—and you can hear this in the Minister of Housing's speeches from time to time—we have something like 20,000 units of public housing, probably the highest per capita rate of public housing of any province in Canada.

That is a good thing because there are so many people who cannot afford to buy their own housing, and so they are renters and they only have a choice, many of them, between terrible, run-down, cockroach-infested housing and public housing, and for many of them public housing is a better alternative. It is the alternative that they want. We feel that as a society we have a social obligation to provide decent, affordable housing for people, and this government should be doing that, not dismantling public housing in Manitoba. [interjection] Pardon?

An Honourable Member: Name one.

Mr. Martindale: Name one what?

An Honourable Member: Name one public housing unit that has been dismantled.

Mr. Martindale: What the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) is doing is a piecemeal dismantling of public housing. First of all, you fire the board of directors; you get rid of tenants who are board members; and then you regionalize the delivery. You take staff out

of communities—in fact, take staff out of places like Thompson and put them in The Pas; take staff out of all kinds of small centres and put them in regional centres. Your costs are actually going to go up. It is going to be worse than it was before. By saving money by laying off staff, you are not going to have as good delivery of service, of management, of maintenance and repairs to people in social housing. It is just the first step in dismantling public housing. [interjection]

As the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme) says, it is a good thing that I am not an accountant, but just wait. The horror stories are starting, and they are going to continue to come in whereby we are going to have lots of examples of how the new housing authority is going to cost more money than the old method did. For example, if staff were in The Pas and there is no staff in Thompson, the arrears rate is going to go up, and sooner or later the manager from The Pas is going to fly to Thompson to collect the rents, and the costs are going to go up.

My colleague from Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), I know, is very disappointed that even though Swan River has a large number of housing units, they are losing staff to Roblin. Why are they losing staff to Roblin? It is probably part of the re-election campaign for the member for Roblin (Mr. Derkach). That is the only reason you can justify it, because the number of units in Swan River is much greater than Roblin. The minister is shaking his head. I would like to know if he has a plan or a rationale for making that decision. It would be very interesting. I would be very interested in hearing what it is.

An Honourable Member: Provide better housing.

Mr. Martindale: It certainly is not going to provide better housing.

An Honourable Member: Well, the way you left your stock when you left here in '86—

Mr. Martindale: The former Minister of Housing—

An Honourable Member: Take a look at your stock in Churchill. Take a look at it. See what you left here.

Mr. Martindale: The former Minister of Housing is pointing out a problem which I am willing to acknowledge. That is, that much of this housing is getting older and it is in need of renovation and improvement. You people have been in office for four years, five budgets, this is your opportunity to improve the quality of public housing, whether it is

in Churchill or whether it is in Winnipeg. This is your opportunity. You have the chance now to do something about it. What have you done? You have started to dismantle public housing instead of improving it.

An Honourable Member: Ten million dollars just to fix up Marlene Street that you guys dumped.

Mr. Martindale: My colleague asks, where is Marlene Street. I presume that is in his constituency. That is why he is concerned.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as I wind down here, I would like to refer to something else that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) said. He said that each of us as elected representatives of the Manitoba people have the duty, the responsibility and the honour to listen and to lead. Certainly, I have been listening to people in Burrows. I have been listening to people on the doorstep, listening to people who phone me, listening to people who come to my office. Last Saturday I met in my constituency office with an unemployed person, a person who had worked all his life, a man in his 40s. This is what he said to me, and I thought this was very poignant. He said: People say to me, have a nice day. How can I have a nice day? I am unemployed. The papers are full of plant closures and cutbacks.

A very telling point. How can I have a nice day? I am unemployed. He is very typical of the 57,000 Manitobans who are unemployed. People on the doorstep are telling me that they want government intervention. I think that is why the government has responded to the request from the City of Winnipeg to do road construction, because people are phoning their city councillors and phoning, probably the member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst), the Minister of Urban Affairs, and they are saying, we want the government to create jobs. They have responded to those requests, and they are trying to do that. The problem is that they are doing it on such a small scale that nobody is going to notice.

The people that I talk to believe in government intervention. They believe the government has an important role to play in job creation.

Mr. Ernst: Borrow money, Doug, you have to pay it back.

Mr. Martindale: The Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) says, if you borrow money you have to pay it back. I understand what the minister is saying.

If you look at studies—and I appreciate that the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer)

gave me a very interesting study about a job training program for welfare recipients. What they did was they looked at the cost of these people when they were on welfare. They looked at the cost of training these people. They looked at the costs after they had graduated from the training program and how much they were earning and how much they were receiving in social assistance. What they found was that it was cheaper to train these people for employment than to pay them social assistance.

I would suggest that if the government would look at that in a massive way they would discover that could be true for thousands of Manitobans. I think this is an opportune time to do it, when so many people are unemployed and the government is in a recession, that we train more and more people so that when the economy recovers there are trained people ready to take those jobs.

I am lucky in that I live in my constituency, and I am able to go for coffee every morning and talk to people. The people I talk to are business people. The coffee gang I sit with at the north Y all own their own businesses. Three of them own their own insurance companies. What do they say to me? Well, the owner of one of these insurance companies who lives in River Heights and has a business in the north end says, the answer, Doug, is education. He says, pour money into education. I am not going to suggest that the government do that, because I know how they will use this against us in future speeches. I am quoting a business person in the north end who says, pour money into education.

I would like to introduce the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) to him. Last year the minister attended the Ukrainian Sportsmen's Dinner. This particular business person, who is Ukrainian, was there. I would love to get these two gentlemen together, because I think it might be instructive.

* (1600)

I know that when I suggest these things the government is going to ignore it coming from me, and they are going to talk about issues that have nothing to do with this debate, as the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is doing. If it came from a business person, the Minister of Urban Affairs might actually listen, and it would be good for him to listen.

There we have two examples of how we can be innovative. One is to spend more money on training, and we actually have the evidence that it is

cheaper to train people than to keep them on welfare. Over and over again people on doorsteps say to me, we do not want to be paying for these people on welfare. I happen to disagree with that, because I believe it is a right and that society has accepted this as an obligation that people who are unemployed, that we meet their basic human needs. This is actually entrenched in federal legislation, the Canada Assistance Plan, which says that Canadians' basic needs for food, shelter and clothing shall be met.

The public do not understand this very well. They do not understand that when they are talking about provincial welfare they are talking about 50-cent provincial dollars. When they are talking about city welfare they are talking 20 percent city dollars. They do not realize that there are three levels of government paying for social assistance in Winnipeg. What they are saying to me is we would rather see these people working. I agree. I say, well, I think they should be working too. Many of them want to work. Many of them would be willing to work. There have been many good government programs that put them to work.

I met a gentleman who is part of the elm tree pruning program who was on social assistance before he was hired on that program. He was very happy to work. He lived in public housing. He had six children. He needed the income. I would suggest that probably he was working for \$6 or \$8 an hour, and he was probably making less money working in this elm tree pruning program than he was on social assistance because of his family size. He chose to take part in that program and go out to work.

People are saying to me on the doorstep, we want to put these people to work. I say, I agree. They should be working. This government does not believe in putting out money so that they can work. In fact, this government cut back on the elm tree program, their grant to the City of Winnipeg. They cut back on a program that took welfare recipients and put them to work. I think that is a terrible thing to do when there are people out there who want to work.

* (1610)

There are taxpayers who certainly want to see those people working, and I am sure that the government members meet these people all the time as well. They are not willing to do anything

about it, because they have this ideological fixation that says that the least government is the best government, so they want to downsize government. They want to offload government. They want to privatize government, because that is their ideological goal, instead of doing things that are interventionist that the public would support.

If this government would put massive numbers of people on social assistance to work, they would be very popular. Right now, they are not doing anything that is popular. In fact, the other thing that people are telling me on the doorstep is, get rid of them. Throw the Tories out, and they are linking the Premier's name to the Prime Minister's name. The Premier of Manitoba is almost as unpopular as the Prime Minister of Canada, and that is incredible. We have the most unpopular Prime Minister in Canadian history. That is what they are saying to me. Get rid of this government. Throw them out.

It is time to bring in an NDP government. That is what they are saying in Burrows. It is not just my own family. My own family is thousands of miles away. I am talking about the constituents in Burrows. They are saying, get rid of the Tories, we want an NDP government. [interjection] The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) says, then there would be no jobs. On the contrary, we know that an NDP government believes in job creation and would get people working again.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the other speech that I referred to in preparing myself today was the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) in his debate on the emergency resolution. We were pleased that the government supported a call for an emergency resolution, pleasantly surprised that they supported that. I think it is at least a tacit recognition that they know that there is a crisis even if they do not do anything about it.

I was concerned about some of the things that the Minister of I, T and T said in his speech. In fact, several times he said that they want to create a level playing field for Manitobans. Now, we have heard about creating a level playing field before. We heard this in 1988 from the Prime Minister. We know that what he is referring to is free trade. We know that when the Prime Minister was promoting his idea in the 1988 federal election that he said, if we have a level playing field then Canadian businesses can compete in the United States. We will have access to this huge American market.

Well, three years later, what has happened? Well, we have moved toward a more level playing field. Canadian businesses have more access to American markets. What is happening? The businesses are closing down. Some of them are moving to the southern United States. Some of them are moving to Mexico. What we have is a disaster. We are moving toward that under the GATT negotiations. We are probably going to get rid of marketing boards, which have provided stability for many farm families in the agricultural sector.

When we get rid of that and we have nothing but free competition, we are going to get dumping of American agricultural products into Canada and for a while consumers are going to get cheaper prices, but in the long run we are going to lose thousands of Manitoba farm families, and we are going to be worse off in the long run. The minister repeated himself. He said, these are just some of the strengths and some of the things that Manitobans can build on if governments create the proper kind of playing field and the proper climate. In fact, we keep hearing over and over again about the proper climate. We keep hearing about confidence. The government seems to think that if you just create confidence you will somehow create jobs and everything will be rosy again. I would suggest it is not nearly that simple.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) mentions the Crocus Fund, which I have already talked about. I am pleased to see that he mentioned it. We are still waiting for some action. The Minister of I, T, and T talks about attitude, again. He talks about the level playing field and confidence. In fact, that seems to be a theme of both the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, that they think that a level playing field is a wonderful thing, that once the playing field is level you create all these jobs. So far what we are seeing is thousands and thousands of jobs lost, not just because of the recession, but because a lot of those jobs are going to the United States. They keep suggesting that if there was not so much government intervention, government subsidies and government support, that the level playing field would be an advantage.

In fact, things are changing in the United States. The private—

Mr. Orchard: Reverend Blackjack, we have heard all this before. Tell us something different.

Mr. Martindale: Well, I will tell you about private corporations in the United States and medicare. I was listening to the president of Chrysler or one of the other corporations who said that they support a government-funded medical system, and the reason is that it is costing the auto industry \$6 an hour—[interjection] The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) says tell me something new and then he does not listen. The president of this car company, I think it was Chrysler in the United States, said it is costing them \$6 an hour per employee for medical care insurance. That is why large corporations in the United States are supporting a government-funded medicare system in the United States.

I guess there are two ways of creating a level playing field. One is to bring everything down to the American level, and the other is to bring the American level up to the Canadian. It is rather instructive to see what is happening in the United States where people are looking to Canada and saying that the medicare system we have here is better than in the United States, and it is even better to have government funding. While this government is moving to the right on social policy issues like medicare, in the United States they are looking to Canada.

Mr. Orchard: Did you learn the Bible better than you learned this?

Mr. Martindale: I am just quoting what the president of an American corporation says, but the Minister of Health does not want to listen to that. He does not want to listen to the fact that American companies are recommending to their government a government-funded medicare system. Perhaps he should just move to the States and pay his own medicare premiums.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in conclusion, to sum up my remarks on the Economic Innovation and Technology Council is a reshuffling of existing cabinet committees and research organizations. That is the problem we have with this whole bill is that it is mainly about reshuffling of existing organizations. Another critique that we have which is much more serious is that the Manitoba Research Council budget was cut by approximately \$700,000 in the year 1991-92. The net effect of this has been to see an actual reduction in the budgetary commitment to research and development.

While the Tories talk a good line, you really have to look at the budget lines to see what is actually happening. The Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), the former minister is shaking his head, but I am just quoting the budget, \$700,000 less for the research council. [interjection] I look forward to the Minister of Urban Affairs speaking in debate on second reading of this bill, and I will read with interest what he has to say.

This bill may create a council which has some value in the long term; however, it needs some firm financial commitment on a year-by-year basis. The one-time \$10-million commitment is not adequate. It will represent an actual reduction in the province's existing commitment to research and development over a few years. We will be watching to see what happens. We are not at all hopeful, but we could hope that something good might come out of this reshuffling and reorganization.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): I move, seconded by the honourable member for—

Madam Deputy Speaker: No. Order, please. As previously agreed, this bill will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans).

Bill 10—The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Downey), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 10 (The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Hydro-Manitoba), standing in the name of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

Stand? Is it the will of the House to have the bill remain standing? Agreed.

Bill 11—The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 11, (The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur les apiculteurs), standing in the name of honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman).

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): It is certainly a pleasure for me to stand today to raise a few points on this bill, certainly to discuss related issues to the

bill. Certainly, the orderly marketing system is something that we should all be discussing in this House as our supply and management system and orderly marketing system are jeopardized by the actions of Conservative governments, both nationally and provincially.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I first want to indicate that it is possible that Bill 11, The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act, is desirable—it is possible. We are still looking at a number of finer points on that issue.

My understanding is that the bill was introduced initially, The Bee-Keepers Act, in 1987, by the minister at that time, the Honourable Bill Uruski, and is now, some five years later, being repealed by this government. I want to discuss this a bit with the former minister, and so we will not be passing this bill on to committee today.

I will be speaking on, as I indicated, the issues relating to orderly marketing, marketing boards, as well as the specifics of The Bee-Keepers Act which is being repealed. The whole issue is very closely related. I think it is one that deserves a great deal of debate in this House.

The minister has assured this House that there would be no loss in service to any of those who are impacted by the Honey Marketing Board that will be in fact undertaking the services on behalf of the Beekeepers Association. He said that there was consultation, that there was a committee set up amongst various groups and that the beekeepers themselves asked for this repeal. That sounds very good, and if this is all borne out through some discussions that we have, certainly if there are no hitches with that, we will have no difficulty in supporting this bill.

It is interesting to see that this minister is in fact expanding the role of marketing boards, in this particular case the Honey Marketing Board, marginally, I must admit, but there is an expansion there of the role and function of the marketing board as a result of repeal of this act, because I want to say the minister's credibility on marketing boards is certainly wearing thin at this point in time. He was challenged, insofar as his support for marketing boards, last Saturday, last Friday in the discussions that took place with the rallies.

I think that as a result of his refusal to sign the document that was submitted to the Agriculture ministers, many of the producers and organizations are taking a good, long, hard look at this minister's

alleged support for the orderly marketing system and supply management system in this country. I want to spend a little bit of time, as I indicated earlier, Madam Deputy Speaker, talking about that role as is referenced in Bill 11 dealing with marketing boards.

We are, in Canada, a unique nation with regard to supply management, one of the few who truly has a supply-managed system for various commodities. In Manitoba it makes up, traditionally, about 11 percent of our production, of our income from production in agriculture, which is a significant percentage. When we consider the some 1,500 producers who are involved in this area of agriculture production, that is a significant portion of our production, and it is something that we all have to be very, I think, vigilant insofar as retaining one of the few bright lights, the viable areas of agriculture as existed in recent years, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The Tories at the federal level and this minister here in Manitoba has said that he wants to maintain a balanced approach, marketing boards and the grain producers' interests being balanced. We say that this minister is now twisting that balanced approach. I want to consider it in terms of the international trade issues at GATT. The balanced approach that was put forward said that the grain producers' interests have been sacrificed by the Export Enhancement Programs, must be balanced with the supply-managed commodities in Canada insofar as the maintenance and strengthening of Article 11.

That was the initial position that Canada took to the GATT talks, that in fact we would not sacrifice our supply-managed system in this country in order to get a deal for grain producers. It seems now that balanced position, that balance between the grain producers and other supply-managed commodities under our marketing boards has been lost by this minister and in fact by the federal minister. In fact, they are now moving towards saying, well, we are not sure we can get any strengthening of Article 11, as evidenced by the Dunkel proposal that was put forward for all the nations that are participating in the GATT talks to consider.

It may be that our orderly marketing system has to go in order to get an agreement. McKnight was saying those kinds of things, and the signals were being sent out. The bureaucrats were putting out the figures that would show what tariffication would mean insofar as the levels of the percentage of

tariffs and so on, but following that there has been a widespread uprising and concern by the supply-managed commodities under the marketing boards.

Of course, we are talking about those commodities such as milk, eggs and poultry production and not specifically, in this case, of honey. However, the marketing board principles are very important, and I know the minister appreciates that when one speaks to these bills you have to cover the broader topics in order to zero in on the specifics.

I think that is a very important concept that we have to remember when we are discussing these bills. As I said earlier, McKnight has been shifting away from the balanced concept. He is starting to pit grain farmers against the supply-managed farmers. This minister continues that by refusing to sign this document that was made available to him at the ministers' meeting, I believe, on February 5, in which 8 out of 10 Agriculture ministers signed.

He did not sign a document that would say no to sacrificing our marketing boards. In other words, no to abandoning the balanced approach. That was what that document said. It said, we all of the undersigned say no to abandoning the balanced approach. The minister says by not signing he is maintaining the balanced approach. I am saying he is twisting the original concept of the balanced approach.

* (1620)

The balanced approach right from the beginning was that one would not be sacrificed for the other, but now the minister is saying: Well, if we have to, we do not like that idea; but, if we have to go to tariffication, maybe there is another way to protect our supply-managed system. The document that the minister was asked to sign says, no, there is not another way. It is only through Article 11 that supply management can be protected.

They asked for the ministers to support that position, but this minister refused. In other words, he is leaving that door open. He is prepared to fracture the Canadian position, to leave open cracks to wriggle around and to weaken our Canadian position. I say the minister is doing a disservice to Canada, to our supply-managed producers, and to all of our communities that depend on those producers, understanding the tremendous crisis that has been in place, that has been faced by our

grain and oil seeds producers in the last number of years.

The supply-managed producers are the ones who have been carrying the rural economy over this time, have been getting a fair return, and I would say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that we cannot sacrifice a system that is working well. Of course, we would be sacrificing. I want to look at some of the information that has come forward. The egg marketing board has put forward information that says by the end of the six-year period a reduction in farm numbers from over 1,600 to some 800 producers, is what their estimation is, and in the longer term down to about 12 percent of producers would be left. That is what the egg industry has put out.

They say that the future viability of the Canadian egg industry, 450 million at the producer level, is in severe jeopardy if the current GATT proposals are accepted by the Canadian government. The minister tosses his hand, like this is incredible, this is not information he is concerned about it. This is in fact very, very concerning to myself and I think to all Canadians to see that this kind of an industry would be lost. The minister said it will not happen.

Well, the import replacement of Canadian eggs could rise to 50 percent of total Canadian domestic demand causing a corresponding decline in domestic production. In the long term, 20 percent to 25 percent of the grading stations would disappear. Feed grain consumption would fall by almost 200,000 tons, also reducing milling activity. There would be a loss of industry economic activity of between \$200 million and \$300 million, a reduction of 2,500 to 3,500 jobs in related industries.

It does not take into account the possibility of a new wave of vertical integration by multinational feed companies that has been kept at bay because of our supply-management system and our orderly marketing system in this country over the last two decades. It has been shown as well in the Australian experience that the price declined to the producers was not passed on to the consumers. In fact, the consumers did not benefit from the lower prices over the longer term, not even in the shorter term, in Australia when deregulation took place.

So we say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the information that the marketing boards are putting forward would demonstrate that they are being jeopardized, and will be jeopardized if the GATT agreement goes forward as it is at the present time.

The turkey producers have also put out information which would show that the production in western Canada would drop by 80 percent over a five-year period that the GATT agreement covers, that in fact the producers population would drop by 95 percent. We would only have 5 percent of our producers left in the province and in western Canada.

The farm labour employed would drop by 85 percent and the minister likes to talk about all of the processing opportunities that would perhaps take place as a result of a new GATT agreement. They are saying that in the poultry area that the value-added would drop by 90 percent and the employment in the value-added sector, in the manufacturing processing sector, would drop by 90 percent.

So what we have, Madam Deputy Speaker, is a tremendous drop projected by the supply managed groups which is something that alarms all of us. I talked a little bit earlier about the concerns that we have that McKnight and the federal ministers are deviating from the position that they had initially taken in a balanced approach with regard to orderly marketing under GATT. In the Honey Marketing Board we are not talking about a board that is directly impacted by this. Certainly, when we are talking about the other marketing boards, which this minister is now potentially sacrificing by taking a waffling stand, then I think we have to stand up and voice our concerns. That is what the producers were doing some 40,000 strong at Ottawa the other day. They are concerned that Ambassador Shannon and, as well, a chief trade negotiator in agriculture for Canada, a senior Agriculture Canada trade adviser, Mr. Peter Sutherland, are both saying that perhaps there is another way to protect supply management in Canada, and that it may not have to be done through Article 11.

They took a great deal of umbrage with that kind of a statement, with that kind of a position being mouthed by these two very influential and prominent people with regard to international negotiations. So on January 15 they wrote to Michael Wilson and Bill McKnight expressing their deep concern with these remarks that were made and the fact that this was fracturing the Canadian position.

In a similar way, this minister has fractured and contributed to that fracture by refusing to take a united stand which would say an orderly marketing system will not be jeopardized, and it is of absolute

highest importance—highest importance, not priority—that Article 11 be strengthened.

These people, Ambassador Shannon and Mr. Peter Sutherland, were fracturing that united Canadian position and making it very difficult for us to have any credibility, that in fact their bottom line would be under no circumstances could we sign a GATT agreement that would sacrifice our supply management system and would not include a provision to ensure that our marketing boards could continue to operate and would not be jeopardized.

On January 21 the Canadian Federation of Agriculture wrote to Brian Mulroney and made a statement to him that in fact they would not be able to tolerate any position which would sacrifice Article 11.

They said: As representatives of the milk and cream producers from across Canada, we publicly reject any claim by the federal government that tariffication in any form can be considered a viable alternative to a clarified Article 11(2)(c)(1) for the maintenance of effective supply management programs in Canada. Tariffication cannot and will not ensure the continued stability which has characterized the Canadian dairy industry over the past 21 years under supply management.

As well, they said that such future discussions must be directed towards gaining support for the clarification of Article 11 as a matter of highest importance for a successful completion of the current GATT negotiations.

Those words are precisely the words, and I say to the minister and for his Premier (Mr. Filmon) who referenced these in Hansard the other day, in the statement that was a declaration to the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney from the Dairy Farmers of Canada on January 21, precisely the words which are included in the declaration, in the agreement, that they asked the ministers to sign, that the strengthening of Article 11 would be the highest importance for a successful completion of the current GATT negotiations, which this minister refused to agree with and sign. So I think we can only interpret that he is saying under certain circumstances Article 11 can be sacrificed and, with it, our marketing boards. The minister has not been able to clarify that.

* (1630)

The minister will have an opportunity, I am sure, to clarify that. He will want to clarify it, because he

has not—he says 14 versions already. All of it is baffle-gab—balanced approach. I already pointed out to the minister that what he is doing is twisting that original balanced position. He is in fact sacrificing—[interjection] No, he is in fact sacrificing one group of producers for what he says is the best interest of the other producers. It pits one producer against another, and it is only speculative.

The minister has no guarantee that there will be a Utopia for grain and oil seeds producers in Canada as a result of any GATT agreement. It is only speculative benefits that he is talking about. As a matter of fact, he is vastly overplaying the impact of that kind of a deal; as a matter of fact, it is really only a psychological advantage. Even Charlie Mayer has admitted that. There is no direct cause and effect as a result of a signing of an agreement—[interjection]

The minister is saying we would advocate walking away from the table. I say, it is up to Canada to generate the alliance that is necessary at the table to ensure they are not isolated and not placed in the position, as the Minister of Agriculture federally, McKnight, has said, of being an outlaw in international trade. No, that does not have to come. That is the result of incompetence and ineptness by the federal government in its negotiations, rather than developing an alliance.

I think it is incumbent upon the federal government. I hope now that the Prime Minister has said that he has sent this delegation, and he is taking this upon himself to in fact ensure that this is protected, that indeed what will happen now is what would have happened before in that we should have ensured this was not going to come to a point where we would be faced of being isolated in the international community with very little support and alliance. We should have had that alliance in place as a backup position so that we would not be left standing alone.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I wanted to say—[interjection] Well, the minister has said, and now he says they are not standing alone. A little earlier he said, there were only two or three others, maybe five total, against a hundred. I have heard other statements outside of this House where the minister has said we are virtually isolated.

Many of the negotiators have said it. I think the minister has taken the position that Canada is very much alone on this. That was the position that has

been taken. I disagree with that. I think we have to stand strongly on it.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when we are talking about the issue of Bill 11 and the Honey Marketing Board, I think we have to be very careful that the principles and concepts of that marketing board are protected in all instances. That is why we do want to take some time to study the repeal of this act, because it does impact on the marketing board. I want to say to you that when we discuss this kind of issue, we must consider the broad impact on Canadian agriculture. There is, in fact, the potential at this time in our history to, as I said earlier, lose much that has been gained insofar as the cost of production pricing for a large sector of our agriculture industry in our province and in our country.

I want to tell the minister, as I can use this opportunity to do so, that in fact on not only January 15 that producers raised concerns, on January 21 producers raised concern, but on January 23 they also raised concerns with Michael Wilson and Bill McKnight. Then, following that, they put out statements on January 28 and provided information that would seem to indicate that the minimum access provisions of the GATT negotiations would increase from 3 percent to 5 percent, which in fact would result, insofar as the egg production is concerned, some 2 million boxes of shell eggs imported by 1999 into Canada from 965,000 in 1993. There would be in fact a cut in layer numbers of at least 7.1 percent required in Canada in order to offset that increased supply from outside of the country. That would reduce the individual farm competitiveness and viability, thereby resulting in a tremendous drop in numbers.

The minister said, well, why are we going to lose all those producers? He seems to disagree with that. I say, by the mere fact that he is saying that we may not lose those kinds of numbers and that in fact Canadian producers will not be at a disadvantage with regard to the American large corporate producers, that in fact he is wishy-washy on this position.

He does not believe that the orderly market system is the best system. He seems to think there is some other system, because he is questioning the very basis for this, and the fact is, yes, that we have higher costs of production in Canada because in fact we are maintaining smaller units that produce a very high quality product and ensure that the family farm

receives the cost of production back. We do not manufacture, as I said, in an assembly-line fashion.

Industry in the United States can produce more. One of those large corporate manufacturers of chickens, if we want to call them manufacturers of chickens, growers of chickens, certainly—they are no longer farmers. They are mass producing these chickens in such numbers that they can produce more than all of Canada's producers in one year. All of Canada's producers cannot match the production of one of those large American operations.

So naturally on that kind of scale, with that kind of resource behind them, they can come in and undercut—if the import quotas are lifted, they can come into Canada, undercut our markets, upset the supply management system, sell cheaper for a shorter term and put their competition out of business. Then we are all at the mercy of those large corporate producers in the United States who will be able to, in fact, control the Canadian market. That is of deep concern because as consumers we should be concerned about health regulations being met, that the quality of the product is of the utmost importance and priority. That is something that we cannot say with any guarantee would be the case if in fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, we were to lose our orderly marketing system.

Now following the January barrage of memos that went to the Prime Minister and to the negotiators, the various orderly marketing commodities went to the ministers on February 6 in Ottawa and the minister put out a statement on February 7, and they put forward their declaration to the Prime Minister of Canada and asked the ministers to sign that declaration.

This declaration did not, I submit to this House, Madam Deputy Speaker, upset the balance that was the basis for widespread support by all sectors of agriculture in Canada. It in fact supported that balanced approach. They said, hold it now, step back. It looks like we are getting to the point now where we are going to sacrifice one portion, a major portion, and that is our supply managed commodities, and we are going to throw out the whole idea of strengthening Article 11, which has always been an integral part of Canada's position, and yet Dunkel did not include that strengthening of Article 11. Some might say that was just an oversight, and they just have to get him to put it in now. We hope that is the case.

* (1640)

At the same time—[Interjection] Well, I want to deal with some of the things the minister has been saying. He has been saying, and the federal minister has been saying, well, you know, should we sacrifice this deal if we cannot get everything we want? That is not everything we want. That is one of the basic principles we would not sacrifice, our supply managed commodities.

We would not walk away from the table; we would walk away from the table if Article 11 was not strengthened. That was one of the basics of the position, one of the most fundamental principles of the Canadian position.

Here we saw it left out, and we had Canada responding in a wishy-washy way saying, well, we are willing to go further on this talk, it does not give us everything we want, but what they should have said is that there is a fundamental point here that is not in this proposal and we cannot accept it under those circumstances. The minister should have said that, and he should have shown that support to those producers who were gathered at the Holiday Inn last week, gathered in Ottawa as well, demonstrating his support that Article 11 must be strengthened and must be included and that he would not sacrifice. [interjection] The minister says that the statement that was made by the ministers covered that off, but the fact is that the document that he was asked to sign said that as well.

It did not say, sacrifice the grain producers; it did not say, sacrifice the balance. It said that this has to be of the highest importance, that Article 11 must be strengthened and that tariffication cannot protect supply management and that there is no other way to do it except by the strengthening of Article 11. That is all that was said, and the minister refused to sign them, he says because that did not represent a balanced approach.

I fail to see how he could interpret that as failing to support a balanced approach, and I believe that he has put himself in the camp of the minister from Alberta, who is on record as wanting to destroy the Wheat Board and its marketing monopoly into the United States. This is the kind of right-wing position that this minister has now adopted in aligning himself with Izzly, who is the Minister of Agriculture in Alberta, and who wants to destroy our orderly marketing system.

Our orderly marketing system, Madam Deputy Speaker, as it applies to the Wheat Board, as it applies to the Honey Marketing Board and as it applies to marketing boards in general, and that is something that we think is starting us down the slippery slope, because certainly this minister is walking on thin ice when he starts to get aligned with that kind of position that will undermine our marketing boards in this country.

Where will he go next? [interjection] The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) talks about a banana peel. Indeed it is a slippery slope that this minister is now on, and we are going to watch him very closely as are the producers who were not very pleased with him, were not very pleased with the minister's position at the rally the other day. They were not very pleased with him. [interjection] Well, I know. The minister says I was not there, but Bill Uruski was there, Cliff Evans was there. They certainly took note of the minister's position at this time.

I want to tell the minister why I was not there. I had the opportunity of completing a plan that we had put forward about three or four months ago attending the mid-Canada hockey peewee tournament with my son in Thunder Bay. That is where I was on the weekend.

An Honourable Member: Did they win?

Mr. Plohman: They got third. Unfortunately, they lost in the semifinal but won four games and lost one. They won the final game. We were very pleased with that.

Now, as the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) said the other day when he spoke, he stood up and talked about the whole issue of semen distribution in this province in a way that some of my colleagues found quite offensive. I think my I talk about the reason I was not at that rally certainly was relevant to the minister's point that he was making as to why I was not there.

I want to say that does not mean that I cannot comment on the activities that happened there nor the position that he took there, which is probably consistent with what he has taken in this House, which is not in full defence of the producers who were there. They knew that. That is why they called on the minister to, in fact, come out of his hiding on this issue and to come clean and unequivocally support what they were asking for at that particular rally and here in this House. He has

not done that; he did not do it at the minister's meeting.

We are going to be, as I said, Madam Deputy Speaker, expressing our concern about this minister's position on orderly marketing. We find a little bit of a contradiction, a positive one I guess we could say in this particular instance, where he is actually transferring some powers to a marketing board under Bill 11. Whereas, on the larger principles of orderly marketing and supply management, he is content to see them go by the wayside if it means getting a deal, a deal at any cost at GATT.

I say the minister should prove and put forward information, documentation, that would demonstrate the tremendous benefits to Canada, to Manitoba producers in particular, of signing a GATT deal that would not ensure the protection of our supply management system, but would perhaps lower some of the export enhancement programs that other countries have put in place, the export subsidies for grain markets, international markets.

I would like to see the minister produce some documentation to demonstrate that there would be a net benefit and how much that net benefit would be, because we know they do not have that kind of documentation because it is speculative. There is no way of knowing whether there is a cause and effect and grain prices will go up as a result of that GATT deal for Canadian producers. They are going to go up anyway and the minister knows that.

The minister knows that and so does Charlie Mayer and McKnight know that. So they think this is excellent timing for them because they know the prices are going to go up because world supplies are going down. American supplies are going down. The prices on the trade commissions are going up.

So clearly, Madam Deputy Speaker, the prices are on the way up in any event. They are going to take credit if they get a GATT deal, at any cost, even sacrificing supply management. They are going to say, see, if we would not have got that GATT deal, the prices would not have gone up in grain. Yes, they are going to say, we did the right thing, and they are going to take all of the credit because of the GATT deal.

The fact is, those prices are going through a cycle and they have been hurt, of course, by export

programs that the other countries have put in place but that they will be recovering in any event.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the minister asks if we would leave the export subsidies in place. No, we would not, but we certainly would not negotiate ourselves into a corner where the historic Crow benefit in this country is equated with the export enhancement program, or our management boards and our domestic subsidies and our import quotas would be equated with the export enhancement programs that the Americans have slapped on in the last few years and that have impacted so negatively on our producers and the Europeans. We cannot find any legitimacy insofar as the discussions to see that these two are being equated when they talk about a 36 percent reduction and the Crow is put into the same basket with these export enhancement programs which are trade distorting, so flagrantly, and everyone agrees.

I say that we have really lost it in those negotiations and I admit that we are playing with a very powerful partner in the Americans. They are going ahead with their private negotiations with the European Community, and they are cooking up their deals. It makes it difficult for us, but I think that is all the more important or more reason why we have to have our allies lined up on these issues. We cannot find ourselves isolated as the Canadian government has allowed us to do up to this point in time.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we are pleased to speak to this important issue of supply management. We think that it must be broadened for our producers in this country rather than sacrificed, and we will be continuing to raise these issues for clarification from the minister. He has brought in legislation that has given us an opportunity to talk about orderly marketing. We will use this opportunity.

Insofar as doing away with The Bee-Keepers Act, we will certainly, after due consultation, in very short order, bring it forward to committee, let it go forward to committee, and pass it through—[interjection]

* (1650)

Very shortly, I said, not today. Of course, we will, as I said earlier, want to ensure that there are no hitches in some of the information that the minister gave us insofar as the consultation and the information that was put forward. So that is what we are going to do.

Now the minister said that we should check with the member in the back row. I do not know whether

he has read that document too thoroughly. He has told me that he is interested in other areas more than the issues—Mr. Reimer, it is of course—rather than the issues of the repeal, The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act.

Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, with that I would like to close. I would ask the minister to put forward his position much more clearly in support of marketing boards, not only through a small token gesture of transferring a few powers to the Honey Marketing Board, but ensuring that he carries that forward to support all of our marketing boards in the orderly marketing system in this country.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): I move, seconded by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), that debate on this bill be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 12—The Animal Husbandry Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 12 (The Animal Husbandry Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'élevage), standing in the name of the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Stand? Agreed.

Bill 14—The Highways and Transportation Department Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 14 (The Highways and Transportation Department Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le ministère de la Voirie et du Transport), standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

Stand? Leave to allow it to stand? Agreed.

Bill 15—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Highways and

Transportation (Mr. Driedger), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 15 (The Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route), standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Stand? Leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed.

Bill 20—The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 20 (The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale), standing in the name of the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk).

Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed. Leave has been granted.

Bill 21—The Provincial Park Lands Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 21 (The Provincial Park Lands Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale), standing in the name of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans).

Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed.

Bill 22—The Lodge Operators and Outfitters Licensing and Consequential Amendments Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 22 (The Lodge Operators and Outfitters Licensing and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les permis relatifs aux exploitants de camps de chasse et de pêche et aux pourvoyeurs et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres dispositions législatives), standing in the name of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans).

Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed.

Bill 34—The Surveys Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 34 (The Surveys Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'arpentage), standing in the name of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans).

Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed.

Bill 38—The Manitoba Evidence Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 38 (The Manitoba Evidence Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la preuve au Manitoba), standing in the name of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans).

Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed.

Bill 42—The Amusements Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) to resume debate on second reading of Bill 42 (The Amusements Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les divertissements), standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson. (Mr. Ashton).

Stand? Leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed.

Bill 45—The City of Winnipeg Amendment, Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 45 (The City of Winnipeg Amendment, Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg, la Loi sur les municipalités et d'autres dispositions législatives), standing in the name of the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen).

Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed.

Bill 47—The Petty Trespasses Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), to resume debate on second reading of Bill 47 (The Petty Trespasses Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'intrusion), standing in the name of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak).

Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? Agreed.

What is the will of the House? Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

This House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Tuesday, February 25, 1992

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