



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIB
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	ND
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	ND
CARR, James	Crescentwood	LIB
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIB
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	ND
CHEEMA, Guizar	The Maples	LIB
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	ND
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	ND
DOER, Gary	Concordia	ND
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIB
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	ND
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	ND
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	ND
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIB
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	ND
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	ND
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	LIB
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	ND
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALLOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	ND
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	ND
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	ND
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	ND
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	ND
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Fin Flon	ND
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	ND
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	ND

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, December 9, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Mitch Podolak, Ava Kobrinsky, T. H. Sparling and others, requesting the provincial government to withdraw provincial funding for The Pines project.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Burrows, 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 the Winnipeg International Airport is vital to the economic health of the city of Winnipeg, and the project known as "The Pines", in its current location, will jeopardize the future of Winnipeg International Airport.

THAT to risk the jobs of the hundreds of people who are employed at the airport is not in the best interests of the community.

THAT "The Pines" project will inhibit riverbank access to the general public.

THAT the strip mall portion of "The Pines" project will give a foothold to commercial development which is incompatible with the residential nature of the neighbourhood.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to respect the wishes of the neighbourhood by requesting the provincial government to withdraw provincial funding of "The Pines" project;

AND as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I have a ministerial statement to make, and I have copies for the members of the opposition.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister responsible for Rural Development, I am pleased to share with members of the Legislature in the announcement of the formation of the first Manitoba Rural Development Bond Corporation, an announcement that I am sure will be the first of many.

In July of this year, the government of Manitoba challenged the people of this province to respond to the economic realities facing Manitoba with the introduction of legislation to support the Rural Grow Bond Program.

Rural Manitobans share a tradition of hard work, achievement and success, and with the spirit of working together, they will continue to grow.

We have always approached difficult situations with creativity and ingenuity. Rural Manitobans are known for their ability to survive and adapt, and we must change to survive.

Our economy has long been dependent on agriculture and related industries. Agriculture will always be at the heart of Manitoba's past, present and future.

However, we must diversify. The saying, "don't put all your eggs in one basket," is more appropriate now than ever before, and so our government set a challenge for the people of rural Manitoba, the rural development Grow Bond program.

This innovative program offers rural Manitobans the opportunity to invest in the future of their communities and this province and the chance to share in the economic growth of their communities through the generation of local business opportunities.

* (1335)

Having taken the first step and met the criteria of the act and regulations that allow for formation of a bond corporation, the Alco Rural Development Bond Corporation will now proceed through the

normal review process of its proposal and business plan.

I am delighted that the town and people of Morden have lent their support to the formation of this corporation. I look forward to following the progress of this community-based and locally driven investment vehicle.

Since October 21, 1991, the Grow Bond office has received 275 enquiries and sent out 260 information packages to individuals and businesses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the community of Morden on being the first to participate in Grow Bonds. It was an initiative that we supported. I am pleased that the government has followed the Saskatchewan initiative of making them an RRSP deduction.

I hope that we will see other communities who can take advantage of these bonds, and I hope that the government will work along with communities, but the real question is the agriculture community. I hope that the government can show leadership in the agriculture community as well to help the farmers stay on the land so that they can afford to invest in these bonds.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Oui, Monsieur le président, il me fait plaisir de répondre à cette annonce aujourd'hui, surtout au nom du rural. J'aimerais premièrement féliciter le village de Morden d'avoir pris cette première initiative et de vouloir mettre en vigueur ce programme afin de développer le rural. L'on sait qu'ils ont des problèmes et qu'on doit les supporter.

Mais, premièrement j'aimerais féliciter le gouvernement d'avoir pris l'initiative "libérale" que Madame Carstairs, la cheffe libérale, avait mentionné auparavant, et qui avait été ridiculisée peut-être par les Conservateurs à un moment. Mais je les félicite d'avoir pris cette initiative. Je le dis positivement car je ne suis pas une personne négative, alors je félicite le gouvernement de l'avoir fait. Puis on a toujours dit dès le début qu'on les supporterait et qu'on continuerait à les supporter. Mais la chose importante qui sera à voir dans les estimés, c'est qu'est-ce que cela va apporter pour le rural, puis qu'est-ce que cela coûte au gouvernement pour la publicité? Il y aura là certainement des questions à demander lors des estimés.

Mais, en terminant j'aimerais féliciter encore le gouvernement et le village de Morden d'avoir pris cette initiative, le premier à le faire.

Merci.

(Translation)

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to respond to today's announcement, especially on behalf of rural people. In the first place, I would like to congratulate the town of Morden for this first initiative and for endeavouring to put this program into effect to develop the rural area. We know that they have problems and we have to support them.

I would first like to congratulate the government for undertaking this "liberal" initiative that Mrs. Carstairs, the Liberal Leader, had proposed in the past and which had perhaps been ridiculed by the Conservatives at one time. Yet I do congratulate them for this initiative, and I say it positively because I am not a negative person, so I congratulate the government for having done it. We have always said from the start that we would support them and that we would continue to support them. The important thing is to see during Estimates what that will mean for the rural areas and what it is costing the government for advertising. There will certainly be some questions to ask about that during Estimates.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the government and the Town of Morden for having taken this initiative and to be the first to do so.

Thank you.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have with us this afternoon from the St. George School forty-two Grade 9 students. They are under the direction of Mrs. Kurylin. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render).

Also this afternoon from the Greenway School, we have twenty-seven Grade 5 students. They are under the direction of Betty Friesen. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Net Income Provincial Decline

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister.

Last year in dealing with the government's economic blueprint in the Budget Address the government stated clearly that we are confident that this government's fiscal strategy will result in more jobs and higher incomes for Manitobans. We already know about the job situation in the province of Manitoba. The government has yet to achieve its unemployment predictions in its budget in any month of this year since the budget has been presented. My question deals with the other side, both to the Conservative party, the government in power, in dealing with income.

I would ask the Premier, in light of his government's predictions on incomes, why Manitoba is last in Canada in labour income for September 1991 over September 1990 and why Manitoba has the only net decline in income of any province in Canada?

* (1340)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition obviously has not been following the farm economy at all. He was there at the farm rally a month and a half ago, but he was not listening and he did not care. We understand that, because the Leader of the Opposition obviously does not care about people who are outside the city of Winnipeg and is not aware of the plight of the farm community despite his grandstanding from time to time on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that Manitoba has the second lowest unemployment rate in the country, that in fact it dropped by three-quarters of a percentage point in the last month alone from 9.4 percent to 8.7 percent, well below the Canadian unemployment rate of 10.3 percent, I might say. We have in fact shown some very significant increases in particular areas that are important to the Manitoba economy. In fact, in manufacturing employment we have an increase over the first 11 months of this year versus the first 11 months of last year. In fact, that is the best performance of any province in the country in the manufacturing employment.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) prefers to have negative images of Manitoba, because that suits her desire. I do not share—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable First Minister to deal with the matter raised.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, because the Premier did not deal with the matter raised, I would also suggest that members opposite, while they are clapping, look at the fact that Manitoba had the largest dropout rate per capita of people in the labour force in the last month. If they are proud of that and can clap for that, then we really are in trouble in this province.

Mr. Speaker, can the Premier explain to the people of Manitoba, if he is using farm income which we recognize went down 6 percent in this province last year, double what the province and the Premier predicted in his last budget, why the province of Manitoba was the only province with a decline in income in the last 12 months, a labour income, when the province of Saskatchewan, which has many more farmers than Manitoba and is much more dependent on farm income than our province on a per capita basis, had a 3 percent increase in labour income? Can the Premier explain that to the people of Manitoba in his answer today?

* (1345)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, in addition to the good news about manufacturing employment being up in this province this year over last year, one of the few provinces in the country in which that is happening—in fact, it is well above the national average—Canada as a whole has declined by 4.3 percent in manufacturing employment while we are up almost 2 percent in manufacturing employment during that period of time. That is good news. In addition to that, of course, the Conference Board of Canada is projecting for 1992 that Manitoba will have a gross domestic product increase of 4 percent, 4 percent again above the national average and fourth best of any province in the country. That is because of the things that we are doing to ensure that there is a sound base for economic growth for job creation.

I am sure that the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) will be very interested in knowing that today Apotex, Canada's largest Canadian-owned pharmaceutical company, has announced a major investment of some \$20 million, Mr. Speaker.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, our time in Question Period is indeed limited, and our rules are very clear that answers must relate to the question that was raised. If the minister does not want to answer the question of the Leader of the Opposition, that is his option, but he should not get up and avoid the fact of the question which we have asked, and that is: Why has labour income dropped in Manitoba? Why?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised, Beuchesne 410 (3), time is extremely scarce. Brevity both in questions and answers is of great importance.

* * *

Mr. Doer: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr)—and I do not want to be Joe Biden here and take anybody's words. He just said, that is the same answer that George Bush has given to the people of United States as he dropped 40 percent in terms of his economic record in United States. I would suggest the Premier start walking outside of this building and find out what is really going on.

I asked the Premier a specific question. Can he explain to the people of Manitoba why Manitoba is the only province in Canada over the last 12 months to suffer a decline in labour income and why we are lagging behind every province, including provinces of western Canada that also rely on our agricultural and farm support programs in this province?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, wages are negotiated between management and labour. Wages are negotiated between the people who pay and the people who collect. The fact of the matter is that we are looking to create new opportunities, and we are looking for new investment. We are working very hard to do that, and we are having some modest degree of success.

I am sure that we will have more success so that the New Democrats can be very unhappy later in the session as more announcements are made, such as Apotex today, in which they have announced \$20 million protecting some 60 jobs and creating another 100 jobs. Those are high-tech jobs. Those are jobs of good calibre and good-paying jobs. That is the good news that we are concentrating on so that we can give the Leader of the Opposition more grief and more unhappiness later in the session.

CN Rail Job Relocations

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, recent reports have indicated that CN may transfer thousands of jobs to Edmonton. With last week's CN North American press release which referred to co-ordinated equipment maintenance procedures, I ask the Premier: Did he meet with CN before they made this announcement to get assurances that this announcement does not mean the transfers of more jobs to the city of Edmonton or to the U.S.A.?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the member for asking that question. I think it raises the fact that transportation is very important to this province.

The NDP opposition party is basically funded by the unions and is given directions by the unions, and, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) gets his direction from the unions as well. The member for Transcona, I believe, has been a union steward for the last 10 years or something like that. It is this party, when they were in power, that let the meat packing industry totally get out of this province, losing virtually hundreds and hundreds of union jobs—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I would like to emphasize again and ask you to call the minister to order. Our rules are very clear that answers to questions should relate to the matter raised. Perhaps the minister did not have his earphone working at the time, but he was asked very specific questions about the transportation industry. We would like to hear an answer on the very specific question.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I would like to remind the honourable minister of Beuchesne's 417. "Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate."

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, I am proud of my relationship with the employees of CN.

Layoffs

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, given that CN has significantly reduced its workload in its Transcona main shops for 1992, which in past years has been—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Transcona, kindly put your question now, please.

Mr. Reid: My question for the Premier (Mr. Filmon), Mr. Speaker, is: Has CN informed the Premier of its intention to lay off another 100-plus Manitobans from their railway jobs early in the new year?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, in the last three weeks, I have had the occasion to meet with the chairman of the CN board, who had the occasion to meet with the federal Minister of Transport, Mr. Corbeil. I have raised the issues of the rumours that have been coming out from time to time, and in many cases, we have been chasing down these rumours and find that some of the information is not factual. However, I want to indicate that I am very concerned about any job losses in Manitoba, and my government and I are going to fight to retain every job that we can.

I have raised these issues with the federal minister as well as with CN, and Mr. Speaker, we will continue to do that.

Transportation Issues Premier's Involvement

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): My final supplementary is to the Premier.

Can the Premier -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Transcona has the floor.

Mr. Reid: Can the Premier explain to the House and to all Manitobans why he has stood by on the sidelines on the issues of declining railway employment in this province and the Port of Churchill issue, because it is very apparent that he does not care about either issue. He will travel to Europe, but he will not walk down the hallway to meet with officials of—

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

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I might say that I have indeed met with the chairman of the

CN during the past six months, with senior officers of the corporation throughout western Canada. I have indeed become personally involved because of my commitment as has been expressed by the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) to as much as possible maintain all the jobs that we possibly can in the railway and transportation system in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, there have been responses that have been made public by CN to counter the false allegations and rumours that have been fostered by the member for Transcona, and I think it is unfortunate that he is doing that. He may think that that is in his political interest, but it is not in the interests of the workers of CN.

* (1350)

Anishinaabe Child and Family Services Funding Formula

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, where there is an economic downturn, the effect is those vulnerable Manitobans who find themselves out of work or suffering from low incomes. Those people find themselves at the doors of the Child and Family Services agencies of this province. Unfortunately, the Minister of Family Services tends to make his decisions himself and in secrecy.

Can the minister today tell this House why he acted unilaterally and without consultation by changing the funding to the Anishinaabe Family Services agency, and how does he expect them to operate with \$114,000 less in their budget?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, we have a very complex and comprehensive system of Child and Family Services agencies in the province of Manitoba and, in many areas of the province, the department looks after the delivery of service.

In three regions we have Child and Family Services agencies with a board, and of course we have the development over the last decade and more of the Native Child and Family Services agencies within the province of Manitoba. At the current time, the department is working with those agencies on a number of issues.

One of them is jurisdiction and the responsibility for Native children throughout the province. When they are from a specific reserve, we have agencies that are responsible for the reserve-based care of

those children. When they are off reserve and within the city of Winnipeg and other areas of the province, the department and the agency that has jurisdiction in that area and the Native agencies work together in a concerted effort to provide that service.

I believe the member is referring to the funding that agencies receive from this government for the supervision of Native children when they are off reserve. We are certainly in consultation with those agencies on a number of issues and we are in consultation with the federal government as well for what we feel are the government's primary—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell the House today why a funding formula and a supervision fee was transferred into an administrative fee without any consultation with the agency and was received by the agency in letter form just days after they had met with officials of this department, who let them know nothing about this change.

Mr. Gilleshammer: We are meeting with the agencies on a regular basis to discuss a number of issues, and we will flow information on decision making to the agencies in a timely fashion. If the member is asking us to make information known to the agencies prior to the finalizing of the details, we are not in a position to do that. We are working with those agencies and with the federal government to provide the best possible service for the Native children who come into supervision, whether it be on the reserves or whether it be within the areas of provincial jurisdiction, and we will work with the agencies to see that they have sufficient funding to do the work that they are mandated to do.

Mrs. Carstairs: It is very difficult to do the work you are mandated to do when the minister changes the funding formula without any consultation.

Will the minister tell the House how this agency is to pay for psychological assessment, occupational therapy and legal services when they are no longer covered by the fees that he has now prepared to pay for?

* (1355)

Mr. Gilleshammer: Again, I would indicate to the member that the funding the Native Child and Family Services agencies gets is basically from the federal government, but the province also provides funding for those agencies where they deliver the services to Native children who live off reserve. We

will continue to work with them through the Child and Family Services directorate and the directors of the Native agencies to provide the best possible care we can for those very vulnerable Manitobans.

MacLeod Stedman Secured Creditors

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

The minister and the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) have often referenced the government's involvement in opportunities in the province through the Industrial Opportunities Program. One such investment by the province was the \$1.5 million loan to MacLeod Stedman. On Friday in this House, the First Minister indicated that Manitoba was a secured creditor.

My question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism is: How is that security posed, and is the province going to recoup the \$1.5 million it paid for zero jobs?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, yes, the province has indicated it is secured on that particular loan by the real estate, MacLeod Stedman. I think, as the member for Flin Flon is aware, that negotiations are ongoing right now with the unsecured creditors of MacLeod Stedman, and certainly with the government, but we will continue to be sure that any loans that are advanced from this provincial government will be secured and will ultimately be repaid to the government.

Mr. Storie: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am sure their realtors will disagree.

My further question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism. Can the minister explain how the investment of some \$8.7 million of federal and provincial taxpayers' money is going to be secured in the creation of 40 jobs at Apotex?

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the honourable member for Flin Flon asks about Apotex, a \$50-million investment in our province that will occur over the next four years, not only creating upwards to 100 new high-tech jobs here in our province, but also maintaining about 34 jobs currently in the industry. The security that we will be receiving on the \$2-million interest-free loan, that is, interest free for 42 months and then is repaid over the next three years after that, will be first charge on

the real estate being developed by that particular organization.

We will be well secured. The loan will be repaid, and it will create 134 jobs here in our province and all of the economic activity that goes from a \$50-million expenditure, Mr. Speaker.

Funding Justification

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister's largesse is appreciated. Can the minister explain, given his comments today, why in the Free Press, July 18, 1991, Apotex already announced the creation of these jobs? What motivated the province and the federal government to pour in an additional \$8 million of taxpayers' money?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I certainly find these questions unbelievable. Is the honourable member for Flin Flon suggesting for a minute that he does not want to see \$50 million of economic activity and 134 jobs being created here in our province? The initial issue being addressed was the sale of the Rh Institute. That being addressed, Apotex then committed to develop a pilot production plant here in our province and a full-scale production plan.

Certainly, this government knows well that there are incidents where you provide some initial financial support to provide some incentive for that business to locate in your province, but as has been indicated, this is not a grant. It is a loan. It is the same as the programs that we offer under other situations. That money will be repaid, and our return in terms of the direct tax revenue to this government over the next five years is about \$1.5 million, whereas the cost is less than \$500,000, a return of three to one, which is excellent for the province of Manitoba.

Agricultural Industry Financial Assistance

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, the throne speech that the government tabled here in this Legislature on Thursday provided no comfort for farm families across Manitoba who are in trouble at this time. It seems that this minister has reduced his role to being little more than a cheerleader for the farmers in Manitoba.

I ask the minister, can he explain why he did not outline even one concrete plan to assist those farm families in Manitoba who are in crisis? Is it because

he did not believe there is a crisis, he does not care or he does not think he is responsible?

* (1400)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): The member fails to realize really what is going on with regard to the support this government is putting in place for rural Manitoba. The GRIP program, some \$45 million of premium support for this year, a deficit liability will probably accrue in the name of the province above \$50 million which will put in flow about \$300 million to \$400 million of direct income support to the province of Manitoba in the grains and oilseed sector to fight a grain trade war. We have just announced \$10.6 million for the NISA program for this year which will put in place about \$35 million for the province of Manitoba right now. That is significant substantial support.

Also, I want to remind the member that the number of applications coming to the Farm Debt Review Board is down over last year to about two-thirds of what it was last year. So the degree of support we are putting in place is obviously having a desired effect.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister explain, Mr. Speaker, why he did not bring forward specific measures targeted to those farm families who are in trouble, those 7,000 Manitoba farmers who may not make it through next year, such as debt restructuring? He could have gone with lower interest rates, debt moratoriums, cost of production, pricing through GRIP. None of those things are mentioned in this throne speech. Why did he not bring in those specific measures?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Speaker, those measures are already in place. The member does not even bother to read the Estimates or the budget process. His government had two years which they could have put a dollar of support into that program and they did not put a single dollar. Since we have been in power, there are about \$10 million of guarantees in place under The Family Farm Protection Act and about \$2 million is added each year to that support program. It helps many, many farmers stay viable on the farm with that kind of support behind them.

I also would like to tell the member that only about 30 percent of that money is called upon, so the farmers are doing a good job of meeting their commitments under restructured financial situations.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about all the great things he has done, and his programs are in shambles.

Can the minister explain why he neglected even to do something as obvious as having crop adjusters go out and do a complete inventory of crop carried over from the 1990 crop year before the 1991 harvest which is critical to the success of GRIP? Why did he not even have something as obvious as that done?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Speaker, every year the crop insurance program sends out a questionnaire to farmers to indicate their inventory carryover, every year. It has been in place like that for many, many years. No, that person wants to go out and tell the farmers that they cannot fill out an inventory form on their own. I believe they can and they have.

I would like to remind him that a crop insurance review is in place, ongoing, across the province of Manitoba right now. The Minister of Agriculture in Saskatchewan now notices that what we are doing is the right way, and he is following our lead.

Civil Service Commission Political Interference

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

Manitobans were infuriated to hear that the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) intervened in the hiring of at least one individual into his department. The Civil Service Commission can only discipline civil servants. Yet it is quite clear that the minister played a role in the Department of Education violating its hiring agreement.

It is our role to ensure that the minister is held to account for what he has done. Will the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) make public the Minister of Education and Training's role on the matter by tabling the Civil Service Commission's investigation report?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for The Civil Service Act): Mr. Speaker, I am answering as the minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission.

As the member for Inkster may be aware, the authority to hire for the Civil Service of the Province of Manitoba is the responsibility of the Civil Service Commission, pursuant to The Civil Service Act. They have that authority to hire under the rules, as

prescribed in The Civil Service Act, which is legislation of this House.

They have, within their purview, the ability to delegate that specific authority to departments from time to time. In doing that delegation they have the responsibility of ensuring that it is carried out properly. If there are errors, discrepancies, difficulties in carrying out that authority, they have the responsibility to ensure that does not happen.

I would remind members of the House that delegated authority has been withdrawn from departments from time to time. It was withdrawn from the Department of Education in 1984 when the Honourable Maureen Hemphill was minister and Mr. Ron Duhamel was deputy minister.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, that does not answer the question.

My supplementary question is to the Premier. What is the Premier's position on the role ministers play in the hiring of civil servants, given that I have received a number of calls from people concerned with the minister's role in the hiring of others to the certification branch within the Department of Education, people who are friends, a relative and so forth? What is the government's role—

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

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the member for Inkster that the process of hiring, the responsibility of hiring to an independent Civil Service Commission is a process that has been in place in this province for decades. It works, it provides protection. It provides protection proven in 1984, proven now. The Civil Service Commission has that responsibility. It is their responsibility to ensure it is properly exercised.

That process has worked. It has worked not because of stories coming from the media or questions from the opposition. It works because the Civil Service Commission monitors hiring in the Province of Manitoba and enforces those rules.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the minister has a responsibility. The Civil Service is not responsible—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Lamoureux: The Premier has a choice, what will it be? Will he fire the Minister of Education and

Training (Mr. Derkach)? Will he continue to allow ministers to intervene—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster, kindly rephrase your final supplementary question, please. Put your question, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is, what will it be? Will he immediately release the report from the Civil Service Commission on why the Department of Education was in violation of its hiring agreement and agree to investigate any new allegations that have been brought forward or fire the minister?

Mr. Praznik: Again to the member for Inkster, the Civil Service Commission is an independent body. It has the responsibility for hiring. It delegates it to a department. If they have problems with the manner in which that is dealt with in that department, as was the case in 1984 when Mr. Duhamel was the deputy and Ms. Hemphill was the minister, they removed that authority and they worked toward rectifying that problem. It is the only guarantee for any of us in this House over numerous decades of an independent Civil Service. It works, Mr. Speaker.

Economic Growth Employment Creation Strategy

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, we are suffering a tailor-made recession, courtesy of Conservative economic policies. We now have 45,000 workers who are idle with equipment and materials rusting and underutilized. We have a shrinking labour force, about 6,000 this last year. In the past year, about 12,000 jobs have disappeared, unemployment insurance claims are increasing faster than in any other province, and welfare cases are skyrocketing in Winnipeg.

Is the Minister of Finance prepared to introduce any kind of program in this province to get Manitobans working again?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I would like to draw note though to one of the preamble references in respect to investment within our manufacturing sector. It should be known that, within the province of Manitoba over the last three years, adjusted for inflation, we have had investment increases within our sector of

manufacturing at a level of 70 percent above the average for the preceding decade. Indeed within the context of provinces across Canada, we are within ranking second or third with respect to investment within the manufacturing industry.

Mr. Speaker, let me go on further to say to the member opposite that certainly through this period of recession, one of the greatest areas of concern certainly falls into the area as to whether or not there is renewal, a generational commitment by way of our existing manufacturers to our province and to the city of Winnipeg. That seems to be occurring in significant fashion and indeed that is the base upon which economic development will continue to occur through this decade into the next century.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, will this minister acknowledge that Manitoba has not shown any signs of employment growth after nearly four years of this government, with no increase in the number of jobs since 1988, and with Manitoba now averaging the highest level of unemployment this year since the Great Depression?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I will not acknowledge that. What I will acknowledge is that, within the area of manufacturing employment, now we are above the lowest level in the last 20 years. It happened to occur in 1983 in the months of January, February and March, employment levels of 54,000, and we are above that today.

Mr. Speaker, let me also say that, in the context of Canada, when one looks at all of those manufacturing provinces, specifically Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba, given massive restructuring throughout industry, we have hit a base on which we are going to be able to build far before those other provinces. That is what is going to put this province in good stead through the remaining decade of the 1990s.

* (1410)

Provincial Comparisons

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Can the Minister of Finance explain why Manitoba's economy continues to slip relative to the other provinces, whereby we are now 10 out of 10 in manufacturing output, 10 out of 10 in housing starts and near the bottom of the heap in construction activity, capital investment, wage increases and employment growth?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not accept any of the commentary of the member opposite. I can only go by the forecasts of those in the financial circles, indeed, the Conference Board of Canada, who for 1992, as they look forward and put Manitoba and relate them to the prospects in other provinces, show that our province is in the area of their forecasts, as the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) has said, 4 percent.

I would not, at this point, want to run to the bank with that type of forecast in all honesty, but nevertheless, when you take the independent forecasters' views into perspective, Manitoba is shown as leading the nation or close to it in context and in terms of 1992.

I would have to say that the member should be very happy about that type of information and support basically what the government has been trying to do in establishing a base for economic development for the rest of this decade.

Civil Service Commission Political Interference

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): These are tough times for most Manitobans, with the high unemployment rates and the deep recession we are in, but apparently not so tough for some Tories.

I would like to ask the Premier, since there is clear evidence of political interference in the Civil Service hiring process, as evidenced by the actions that have been taken in regard to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), I would like to ask the First Minister, how many positions did that minister interfere in in the hiring process?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for The Civil Service Act): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), the responsibility for hiring is with the Civil Service Commission. Where they delegate is their responsibility, and ensure that hiring is done properly. They have a review function. They review files, and if rules were not properly handled, those competitions are overturned.

That is the responsibility of the independent Civil Service Commission to conduct those investigations. They do, and they overturned competitions. The system works.

Mr. Ashton: If the minister cannot or will not say how many positions, I will ask another question, and

that is—and I believe the First Minister should have a direct response in such matters.

Can the First Minister indicate what kinds of positions the minister interfered with? Specifically, did the hiring process which was clearly interfered in lead to any individuals who are not qualified being placed in positions due to the influence of the minister?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, the conduct of those investigations is the responsibility of the Civil Service Commission as an independent body of the commission, and we support that. If the House is asking for involvement in that process, I do not think that is appropriate.

The report is a working document of that department, of the commission, but I would remind the member for Thompson that back in 1985 -(interjection)- I just want to remind the honourable member back in 1985, when the then minister of Highways and Transportation, when an executive assistant was hired into the Civil Service at that particular time, the then MGEA president called that blatant political hiring and called upon the Civil Service Commission to conduct that investigation. It shows the process is independent, it works, and the member's leader supported it then.

Civil Service Commission Political Interference

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): My final question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Premier, and that is: Is it the policy of this government that the minister should interfere in the Civil Service hiring policy up until the point at which they get caught?

Will the First Minister take no action to ensure the integrity of the Civil Service?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): No, Mr. Speaker.

Minister of Education Resignation Request

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Given what the Premier of the province has just finished saying, will the Premier then take immediate action and release the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach)?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): We are following exactly the same policy and precedent that was

established during previous administrations that has carried on as long as the Civil Service Commission was invoked. That is why Ron Duhamel was able to run for Parliament in Canada without anybody having knowledge that he had had his Civil Service hiring procedures taken away from him. That is exactly the case. We are following exactly the same procedures that have been there throughout the past number of decades.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, just because that administration was wrong does not justify you being wrong.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Civil Service Commission Political Interference

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Who then is going to be holding the Minister of Education accountable, because it is beyond the scope of the Civil Service Commission?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): It is not beyond the scope of the Civil Service Commission. The act lays out the responsibilities, the Civil Service Commission have taken on their responsibilities. I support what they have done, and they have taken the appropriate action.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Inkster, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, does the Premier support what the Minister of Education has done, and if that is the case, then every minister in his cabinet—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the appropriate action has been taken and the Civil Service Commission's integrity has been maintained. That is the way the procedure was intended to work, that is the way the act provides for it.

Multicultural Secretariat Hiring Policy

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, it is apparent that the government is continuing its policy of patronage hiring and political control in the Civil Service and the Multicultural Secretariat is a prime example.

This government delayed a hiring in the secretariat in such a manner so that another Tory supporter could be hired, another David Langtry supporter who was the candidate in the previous election in Kildonan.

My question is for the Premier. Why was another Tory hired for this secretariat office which has already been tainted with patronage and political control?

An Honourable Member: Good question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I have no idea what the member for Radisson is speaking of. I do know that in the course of all of the years that the New Democrats were in office they breached all sorts of procedures.

We have here an article from December 3, 1987, Winnipeg Free Press, that talks about the fact that the provincial Urban Affairs Department under the now Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) hired Ron Cavaluce to work in that department directly out of the position of executive director of the New Democratic Party of Manitoba.

We have information—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: We have information of the hiring of one David Chomiak who is now the member of the Legislature for Kildonan, again by the now Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) when he was in charge of the Crown Corporations Council, without competition, a direct hiring decision made—

Ms. Cerilli: Obviously reaching. I would like to explain to the Premier that the patronages made—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Radisson, kindly put your question, please.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the Premier explain how this hiring is consistent with the multicultural policy when it is happening at the same time when the Multicultural Resource Centre, the Department of Education, is being dismantled and more Tory supporters are being hired at the secretariat?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I think that the member for Radisson should be apologizing, not attempting to explain how. Not only was Mr. Chomiak hired without competition, not only was Mr. Cavaluce hired without competition, but of course we had Phil

Eyler, the NDP MLA for River East, was hired without competition into the government. We have Ron Bailey, the campaign manager for Bill Blaikie, the member of Parliament, hired directly into the Co-operative Development department. We had Elaine Cowan, the former special assistant in Northern Affairs who was hired directly into the government offices. We had Terry Sargeant, the former NDP MP, hired directly into the government.

*(1420)

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable opposition House leader, on a point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I have raised this before and I will ask you to remind members again that answers should relate directly to the matter raised. A specific question was asked about the Multicultural Secretariat. The First Minister (Mr. Filmon), who was strangely silent a few minutes ago, all of a sudden has found his tongue. Let us hear him answer questions by his own government's poor action on civil servants.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, Beauchesne's 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible and should deal with the matter raised.

The time for Oral Questions has expired.

Nonpolitical Statement

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Monsieur le président, c'est avec plaisir et enthousiasme que je demande aux membres de cette auguste assemblée de se joindre à moi en félicitant les membres-fondateurs et fondatrices de la toute dernière-née des stations radiophoniques, soit la "Radio communautaire du Manitoba": CKXL.

Emmetant sur la longueur d'ondes 91,1 en modulation de fréquence ou "FM 91,1" avec un rayonnement de 100 kilomètres autour de Saint-Boniface et provenant directement d'un des centres nerveux de la Francophonie manitobaine situé au Centre culturel franco-manitobain, l'existence de CKXL est un coup de chapeau à la jeunesse.

Le premier jour de diffusion était le 21 octobre dernier. Ce démarrage officiel est le couronnement mérité de nombreux efforts bénévoles et concrétise une idée lancée en 1982.

Comme je le mentionnais plus tôt, c'est à la jeunesse, par l'intermédiaire du Conseil jeunesse provincial, que reviennent les éloges et les félicitations, car c'est le Conseil jeunesse provincial qui en 1982 lança l'idée d'une radio communautaire qui répondrait aux besoins de la communauté franco-manitobaine.

Monsieur le président, il serait trop long de même essayer d'énumérer les possibilités et les richesses offertes par CKXL à la communauté franco-manitobaine.

C'est pourquoi, Monsieur le président, j'invite chaque membre de cette chambre parlementaire à brancher son poste de radio sur la longueur d'onde FM 91,1 afin de savourer non seulement la richesse culturelle et la qualité professionnelle mais aussi la bonne humeur et la joie de vivre des émissions.

Monsieur le président, permettez-moi de conclure en souhaitant une très longue vie à CKXL, la Radio communautaire du Manitoba. Merci.

(Translation)

Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure and enthusiasm that I ask members of this august assembly to join with me in congratulating the founding members of our very newest radio station, i.e. Radio communautaire du Manitoba, or Manitoba Community Radio, CKXL.

Broadcasting on the 91.1 FM band, with a radius of 100 kilometres around St. Boniface and coming direct from one of the nerve centres of the Manitoba Francophone community located at the Franco-Manitoban Cultural Centre, the existence of CKXL constitutes a feather in the cap of our young people.

The first day of broadcast was October 21 of this year. This official start-up is the crowning achievement of the many voluntary efforts directed at making an idea conceived in 1982 a reality.

As I mentioned just now, it is to these young people, via the Conseil jeunesse provincial, or Provincial Youth Council, that praise and congratulations are due. For it was the Conseil jeunesse provincial that in 1982 conceived of the idea of a community radio station that would address the needs of the Franco-Manitoban community.

Mr. Speaker, it would take far too long to try to list the opportunities and resources offered by CKXL to the Franco-Manitoban community. That is why I

invite all members of the Legislative Assembly to tune their radios in to 91.1 FM so that they can not only catch the flavour of the cultural richness and professional quality of the programs, but also their humour and joie de vivre.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to conclude by wishing a very long life to CKXL, Manitoba's community radio station. Thank you.

Committee Change

Mr. Gaudry: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that the composition of Standing Committee on Public Accounts be amended as follows: St. James (Mr. Edwards) for Osborne (Mr. Alcock).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, in answer to his speech at the opening of the session, standing in the name of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer).

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour again to rise on the Speech from the Throne. This is about the third Speech from the Throne in the last 14 months, and at least the fifth Speech from the Throne that I have had to reply to in opposition since the election of the minority government in 1988, and the subsequent election in 1990, of the government of the day.

I would like to say again what an honour it is to reply to the Speech from the Throne and have a chance to participate in the debate. It is an honour, I think, in our democracy that we all cherish and we all respect, and I hope the debate will be on the high road on issues of substance, not be on the so-called low road.

I would also like to welcome members back to the Chamber. All members are back here again in this session of the Legislature, and we would like to welcome you all back. We hope we will have a "productive session." Our views of what productive will be will obviously vary, but I wish everyone well.

I would also like to pay tribute again to you, Mr. Speaker, and welcome you back again this year.

We also want to say in a public way, Mr. Speaker, what we have said privately. Our caucus wants to express our condolences to you and your family on the passing of your mother. Some of us know from personal experience the pain and peace that represents to your family with the terrible disease, and we wish your family and your relatives very well in this very, very difficult time for you, Sir.

We are determined to work with you and with Manitobans on both the traditions of this Legislature and the challenges that we have from the public on the decorum in the Legislature.

From time to time, we will challenge you on your interpretation of the rules and the way in which they are interpreted in this House. I want to say at the outset that that will not represent any disrespect to you or the office, Sir, but really a disagreement about how we believe the thrusts and parry of parliamentary tradition should be conducted in this Chamber.

We believe that the debate that takes place in Question Period, in legislation, and in committees and other forums should encourage all of us to hold each other accountable on behalf of the people of the province. Our emphasis on decorum, Sir, will be on the issue of manners. We believe debate and holding each other accountable is a positive thing, something that Manitobans want and desire. I think the issue of manners and the way in which we treat each other is another matter, and we will of course work with you in that regard.

I thought, Mr. Speaker that we started off in a very positive way. Friday, on the debate in this Chamber, I was pleased that all members of the House supported the motion from the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) dealing with violence, domestic violence in Manitoba. I was pleased that we could have that emergency debate that was requested by the community by many of the groups that are on the front lines of domestic violence.

I was able to attend the candlelight vigil on the Friday night, Mr. Speaker. It was a very moving time for me, Sir, with the number of people out there at that candlelight vigil in recognition of the December 6 massacre at the university of Montreal.

It was a very touching experience for those of us who were there. I was pleased with the positive nature of the debate, but I think all of us remain committed to dealing with the fact that one in four women will suffer abuse, physical or psychological

abuse in their lifetime, that much of the abuse will be conducted by people they know, whether it is their father, their brother, their spouse, their friend, or members of their community, that the number of sexual assaults in Canada were double in 1990 than in 1984. We have considerable statistics that tell us that we have a real challenge and crisis in our society on our hands.

I was moved by not only the comments made by our critic and the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), I was moved by comments made from members of the Liberal Party and members of the Conservative Party. I did not get a chance to hear all the speeches, but most of the speeches. I would like to compliment speakers on this very, very important issue, and the fact that we started off this session in a positive parliamentary way on an issue that affects all our communities and all our families.

* (1430)

To some degree, Mr. Speaker, this House and this Chamber does not suffer through some of the indignities that we see in the House of Commons, words that we have heard in the last session, the terrible words that have been used to describe other members of the Chamber, in Parliament, has been, I think, reflected on all of us in a parliamentary system. We will also work with our parliamentary parties to clean up the words—I think the most recent example was “Sambo” that was used to describe another member of the Chamber, a member of the visible minority. Those kinds of words and that kind of language has no place in any legislative or parliamentary forum. All of us, I think, are committed to removing that kind of debate, which is not debate, those kinds of comments from the parliamentary language that we are privileged enough to have an opportunity to participate in.

I think we should reflect, Mr. Speaker. There is some criticism of politicians and political institutions in Canada, our democratic forums are not one of the things we did give away in the free trade debate with the United States. We do have that still near and dear to our hearts. I would note very carefully that we still enjoy a much higher turnout rate, and a participation rate, and an empowerment rate in Canada in our political elections and in our political forums than they do in the United States.

While members opposite may somewhat from time to time emulate American institutions and emulate American structures, Mr. Speaker, and

want to bring those institutions into Canada, I would remind members opposite that there is about a 50 percent empowerment rate and voting rate in the democratic institutions of the United States. We see a tremendously negative kind of politics in the United States. Witness the latest campaign in Louisiana, which I believe the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) had a chance to observe, a recent kind of ‘Do you want to vote for a crook or do you want to vote for a racist’ kind of campaign that was portrayed in the United States with the kind of 50-percent turnout they had. We believe the solution to that is obviously go to a third party, but that is a biased response to that dilemma.

I would point out that in Canadian federal elections and in Canadian federal institutions, we have 80 percent turnouts at minimum in our institutions in Canada and we have a good system. We as individuals are the problem, and we as individuals have to change, but our institutions, I would say, are solid democratic institutions that have stood the test of time, Mr. Speaker.

It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that we have only had three elections in Canada since our House last sat. I say that because I am sure all members of this House—I am sure members opposite, and members from all parties in this House really wanted to have the ‘big one’ between the last time we sat in this chamber and the time we are sitting today. I am sure with all the comments from the members opposite about that big bad Conservative government in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, that they too wanted to join the Liberals and New Democrats and have a federal election so we can throw those people out.

I am sure you would have wanted to have had a federal election so the federal Conservatives that the members opposite supported in 1988 in rallies, campaigns and door-to-door and the kind of economic agenda of the Conservative party with the Free Trade Agreement that is now proving to be unworkable because nobody is working in this country, Mr. Speaker—I am sure the members opposite would have liked to have had the big one—the big test in the sky for Canada with a federal election, but lo and behold, the federal prime minister did not have the courage to go to the people, did not have the courage to test democracy before he proceeded with another constitutional proposal. He did not have the courage to resign after the failure of his last constitutional proposal. He did

not have the courage to resign on the basis of the failure of the Free Trade Agreement, and we were left with three provincial elections since the last time we sat.

Now we had results from three elections. In New Brunswick which was the first one, Mr. Speaker, we saw the return of an incumbent government with a less majority, I would point out, and with some interesting results. I will say no more because you never second-guess the public but the government of Premier McKenna, the Liberal government of Premier McKenna was re-elected. We were proud that Elizabeth Weir was able to win a seat for the first time in that province. We would congratulate the premier of New Brunswick on his re-election. We found him to be a very interesting character in the last Meech Lake discussions, I would think. One day we thought he was with us in Manitoba, and the next day he was gone, but other than that, Mr. Speaker, the people of New Brunswick have returned him -(interjection)- but I never said Meech Lake was dead. I never said Meech Lake was dead. It is a sensitive issue—I will get off it. I will get off it, I promise. We will get on to the other issues.

Mr. Speaker, we would like to congratulate Premier McKenna. Then we had another election in the province of British Columbia.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

We had an election in British Columbia and the Social Credit omelette, the Liberal-Conservative omelette, and I did not think you could unscramble omelettes, but it became unscrambled in the last provincial election in British Columbia, Mr. Acting Speaker, and we saw the coalition, the corporate coalition, fall apart, and of course, we saw the election of a New Democratic government under Mike Harcourt in British Columbia. Unbiased as we are, we were pleased with those election results in the province of British Columbia.

Some five days later -(interjection)- unbiased, I said. Some five days later, another election in western Canada and it was a squeaker there too; it was a real tight race, but we were absolutely delighted that Roy Romanow and the New Democrats were overwhelmingly elected in our province to the west. I think that will represent—besides the comments I am making here today, we would like to congratulate obviously Premier Harcourt and Premier Romanow and their

colleagues and all members who were elected to the Legislature from all parties, the Liberal opposition in British Columbia, the remnants of the Social Credit in British Columbia, the two parties that were elected in Saskatchewan. Mr. Acting Speaker, we have been third, we have been first and we have been second. Democracy has a way of doing that. We applaud all members who are participating in those elections.

I would say, though, Mr. Acting Speaker, that does represent a fundamental change in western Canada, and it does represent a change in terms of the policies that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) participated in and his Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) participated in at the so-called reality meeting or the reality session at Lloydminster some year and a half ago, the results of which trickled out into the Manitoba public arena days, weeks and newspaper articles at a time, because at that meeting, that new reality session -(interjection)- Well, the news release did not include the -(interjection)- I will show the Premier his pool light media release, and then I will show him the backroom dark strategy paper from Couvelier—

An Honourable Member: The missing link rises again.

Mr. Doer: Yes, I will have to put some members of this Chamber in the Museum of Man and Nature between the orangutan and homo sapiens with their latest comments and utterings in this Chamber.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it does represent a fundamental change in the positions that have been taken by the western Canadian premiers, the Conservative club up to now. It is not going to be a Conservative club any more. I think that is good for medicare. I think that is good for post-secondary education. I think that is good for a more creative response in agriculture, and certainly it is good for a couple of provinces of western Canada that are worried, like the member for Portage (Mr. Connery) is worried, about the free trade agreement proposed with Mexico to join on with the Free Trade Agreement with the United States.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we in opposition have opposed the Couvelier position, the position to take away EPF funding and just go to equalization. We think that the visibility and the vision that is contained within the equalization payments and the EPF payments should remain in Canada, something that we said throughout the discussion

paper that we had that was signed by the Minister of Finance and supported by the Premier.

We thought that the move that was in the Couvelier paper that was supported by the western Premiers in 1990 and supported by this government in 1990 was the wrong way to go. It was wrong for western Canada. It was a major departure, in fact, from the traditions of Conservative governments and New Democratic governments in Manitoba since medicare and post-secondary education had been established. It was a major departure from the way in which we collectively have financed and established the visibility of federal-provincial funding in this province. We would note that there is a change now, and certainly in the Constitutional Task Force, that is reflected as well, consistent with the vision of Manitobans.

I would also note, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the Province of Saskatchewan before the election and the Province of Saskatchewan now, after the election, do have a different position on some of the agricultural support programs in this province. I was pleased that the Deputy Premier and the Minister of Agriculture could attend the farm organization meeting that took place in Ottawa recently, but I would note that, in the Speech from the Throne in Saskatchewan, they talked about some of the inadequacies, inequities of the GRIP program, and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) did not mention that in his Speech from the Throne in this Chamber.

I think that it is important that we have a united front in western Canada. I hope the Premier of Manitoba is able to participate, if it is necessary, in the next farm delegation to Ottawa, but we were certainly pleased to have some ministers participate in that meeting. I will get to the GRIP program later.

* (1440)

The other good news for Manitoba, Mr. Acting Speaker, about those elections, besides a different strategy, different philosophy and a different vision at the western Premiers' meetings is, of course, the position on the harmonization of the GST.

An Honourable Member: Ah, yes.

Mr. Doer: Ah, yes, that is right. Remember, we had this great study that was announced by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Mr. Acting Speaker: The Chamber of Commerce had met with us, we had read comments from the provincial Conservative government that they were studying the matter of harmonization, and there were positive parts of the

harmonization of the GST and negative parts of the harmonization of the GST. We knew they were going on with this in-depth debit and credit study on the harmonization of the GST.

Then, lo and behold, the day that the Saskatchewan government is turfed out, that harmonized the GST, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) announced that the study was completed because he could read the best study of all time, the sands of time study, that said the people did not want the harmonization of GST in Saskatchewan. We were absolutely delighted that the Premier immediately nixed the study on the GST harmonization in Manitoba and immediately released his decision to not harmonize the GST. We think the people of Saskatchewan did the people of Manitoba a real favour in terms of the harmonization of the GST with that election result.

In dealing with the Speech from the Throne, one must start with the style of government. Mr. Acting Speaker, we get around to town hall meetings. We get around to going door to door in our ridings. We listen to people. The members opposite may not get as much chance to get out and listen to people now that they are ensconced in their secure offices, the cabinet offices. This is one of the weaknesses of being in government

You know, over a period of time, you spend a lot more time in this building than you want to and a lot more time on briefing books than you would like to. You sometimes—and I say this for all of us—over a period of time, start to lose touch. You lose touch with your constituents. You lose touch with the public. You lose touch with the kind of energy and the integrity that brought you to office.

If we can find a set of words to describe the feedback we receive about this government opposite, and I probably should not be giving them any unsolicited or free advice, but then, you could take it or leave it. If we receive any advice about the members opposite, led by the Premier, at doorsteps—this starts even with Conservative doorsteps. Conservatives will tell us, you know, they were not that bad when they were in a minority government situation; they were not that bad a group when they were in minority, but I am a Conservative and I am starting to worry about their arrogance and their attitude as well, now. I do not like these people and I am a Conservative, they say to us. I do not like the way this government is going; it is starting to go the same arrogant and cynical way

of the federal Conservative government, and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) himself is starting to act like Brian Mulroney, not like the person that they saw in those ads in a canoe. The kind of sensitivity—

An Honourable Member: Can you not deal with policy?

Mr. Doer: We will get to policy; I am talking about style. I know the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) does not want to talk about style. The person who gave us the comment that they did not vote right, I guess would not want to deal with those kinds of things, Mr. Acting Speaker, but we are talking about a style of government, and that is the feedback we are getting, that this government has changed. It is now an extreme ideological government that on substance and policy is following the same absolute free-trade policy of Mulroney and George Bush and now the Filmon government with the member for Tuxedo, the Premier of this province (Mr. Filmon) is now following the same, same ideological and extreme kinds of governments and arrogant kinds of actions that Canadians have begun to know and despise in the rest of this country.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we therefore have to come to the boasts that have been made by this government, in terms of what they said last year would happen to the economy of Manitoba and what has indeed happened this year to the economy of the province. The Premier of the province on March 19, 1991, said: The Province of Manitoba is poised to launch one of the most expansive industrial initiatives in our history. Well—

An Honourable Member: Who said that?

Mr. Doer: The Premier (Mr. Filmon).

An Honourable Member: He was just joking.

Mr. Doer: You know he had more comments on MacLeod Stedman than any other economic development in the province of Manitoba. Did he mention it once, did he mention it twice, did he mention it three times? He goes on and on and on. It was his recorded announcement in the last session, Mr. Acting Speaker. Every time the Premier got asked a question on the economy, he stood up and said, MacLeod Stedman, MacLeod Stedman. It was like a jack-in-the-box. He had been briefed by his handlers to answer MacLeod Stedman. He even went so far as to put it in the Speech from the Throne.

I only have one advice for a worker or company owner, when the government is heading over to their

operation with pool lights, and a media release with pool lights will be available for a press conference with the minister, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson). I only have one bit of advice, you better be very careful, because if you have the Premier coming near your shop today, promising great things tomorrow, you are going to be unemployed on the next day, because we have seen the Premier and his Repap announcements. He had his pool lights up there in The Pas. He had media, kits will be available, he had his killer bees from down the hall ready to work the media over about this great economic expansion, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Then the next year we had MacLeod Stedman as the symbol, the symbol of Conservative economic philosophy, and unfortunately—it is tragic and I hope it turns around. I hope he is able to read these comments back to me because we do want those people in those warehouses and those people in those stores to keep their jobs. Mr. Acting Speaker, we had 117 jobs in the warehouse last time when the Premier made his announcement, and now we have 24. We have no more in the stores, in fact less; we have no more in the head office, in fact less, and the head office that was going to be in Winnipeg from Toronto is now going to be in Chicago. With the takeover, potentially, of Cotter—although the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is shaking his head no—Cotter is going to move its head office from Chicago to Winnipeg. Right!

Mr. Acting Speaker, four or five times the Premier started to answer his questions with a recorded announcement—just like he is doing again today when he could not answer the question on why Manitoba was the only province with no increase in labour salary—the only province in Canada to go down. Now if he thinks that increases the purchasing power and is going to improve retail sales, is going to stop bankruptcy, if he is proud of that—we are certainly not—but Manitoba is the only province to go down. P.E.I. had zero, it did not go up or down; Saskatchewan went up 3 percent, and that includes agricultural income. We know Manitoba is down 6 percent unlike the 3 percent projected by the members opposite.

He should not be very proud of those figures. They were clapping to the recorded announcements today just like they clapped in unison to the recorded announcement on MacLeod Stedman. March 19: I took part in the opening ceremonies for the new

MacLeod head office. Jobs move from Toronto to Winnipeg, the kind of thing we know will happen. One hundred and twenty new jobs, good jobs—jobs.

* (1450)

The Premier said again on April 5 and March 11: Symbolic is MacLeod Stedman's decision to relocate. It is far too long since we gained a head office in Manitoba. Again on April 5, again in answer to question: We brought the MacLeod Stedman job from Toronto to Winnipeg. We are on the right path to economic renewal. This is part of our solid foundation.

The Premier boasted of the recovery: It will be Manitoba that will gain most in the recovery period. On May 10 the Premier said: The Manitoba economy is well positioned to benefit from the recovering economies in Canada and the United States later this year. Results of the policies were implemented. I wonder if the converse is true. If we are not well positioned and if we are not doing well, does the Premier therefore accept responsibility for the economy in the province of Manitoba?

Then, Mr. Acting Speaker, the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) in his budget went to quote again MacLeod Stedman. Again, this is the big economic symbol of last session. He quoted a couple of other companies that we actually were involved in bringing to Manitoba—the Western Glove was our core area job strategy. He said, again, the government said: The government's fiscal strategy will result in more jobs and higher incomes for Manitobans well into the future.

His best comment is: The first thing the government of Manitoba must do to encourage economic growth is get out of the way and step aside. Step aside is what the Premier said. That is the kind of government we have had in Manitoba with the worst recession since the Great Depression. It has not been R.B. Bennett or Herbert Hoover who said that, Mr. Acting Speaker. It is the Premier who said: We are going to step aside in these tough times in the recession; that is our strategy. That is the leadership of the Premier and the Conservative government, to step aside.

I guess he wonders why the cartoon that we saw on Saturday in one of the media publications with the Premier with the whip with no horse is the kind of economic image that people outside of this building perceive is happening in Manitoba as opposed to the rhetoric that is inside this building.

The government made some predictions. Besides the symbol of MacLeod Stedman, the government made some predictions. We were in a recession at that time. They said, at that point in time, last year when they presented their budget that they would have—just like they are making predictions again today in the House with all the reports they have when they cannot answer the questions. They said we will have 7.8 percent unemployment in the province of Manitoba, 7.8 percent.

Well, let us see how accurate the government is. Did they meet their target in April, the month they announced the 7.8 percent unemployment? No, it was 8.9 percent. Did they meet their target in May of 1991? No. Did the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the member for Tuxedo, meet his target in June of 1991? No. Well, it is zero for three at that point.

Let us go on to the next quarter. Did the member for Tuxedo meet his target in July of 1991? No, it was the highest July on record, 9.6 percent. Did the Premier meet his target again in August of 1991? No, did not meet it again then -(interjection)- It is a list of accounting, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Did the Premier meet the government's target in September of 1991, 9.3 percent unemployment? No, we did not meet it then.

Well, let us try October. Usually, people are starting to work then. You know, the students who could not get jobs because of all the CareerStart and other programs the government cut and the Native youth employment programs that the government cut, usually that gets a little better in October—9.4 percent, a long way off of 7.8 percent, a long way off.

Well, then we get the first six months. Did the Premier meet his target in October—9.4 percent again. Did the Premier meet his target in November of 1991, the last month, the month that the members opposite are clapping about when the Premier stands up with his answers—8.7 percent.

He has not met his unemployment targets for eight straight months, Mr. Acting Speaker. For not one month have members opposite reached the target and goals that they publicly articulated to the province of Manitoba, not one month. You would need 5 percent unemployment rates in the next four or five months to reach your targets.

He has been wrong and wrong again on the unemployment rates in this province. More

importantly, Mr. Acting Speaker, for the government to be concerned about—and that is why I was surprised that they were clapping so vigorously here today, this afternoon, on the unemployment rate. There were 45,000 people that dropped out of the labour force in Canada in 1991. Six thousand of those people who quit looking for work or have moved out of the province, or part of the despair index as opposed to the hope index of people looking for work, 6,000 of them left from Manitoba, those labour force numbers.

That means, Mr. Acting Speaker, when the Premier talks about how great thou art, he should know that the drop-out rate in Manitoba represents a 13 percent to 14 percent drop-out rate relative to the rest of the country, three times more than the number of people in the labour force in Manitoba. Your despair rate is the highest per capita in the country, the people who have lost hope, and the members opposite clap when the Premier talks about how great the economy is in Manitoba.

As I say, Mr. Acting Speaker, the members opposite should spend a lot more time out of this building. I hope they do so in the recess in January and February, because it is brutal out there. The statistics back and forth between all of us will not change what people are saying outside of this building, and that is workers, that is farmers, that is families.

I met with a number of accountants the other day, and they said they have never met more people who are just teetering, teetering on bankruptcy, never met more people who are teetering on bankruptcy. I met some lawyers the other day, not New Democratic lawyers, who were talking about the numbers of businesses and the number of files that they have that are this close to going down.

Those unemployment statistics on Friday, I was happy it was 8.7 rather than 9.4, but, Mr. Acting Speaker, when you look at 12,000 less people working today than a year ago and 6,000 have given up hope, I suggest whoever is doing the sort of spinning that goes in the member opposite's briefing book, look at those numbers, because those are the worst numbers, the people who drop out.

We see a situation now where close to 51,000 people are on welfare in the province of Manitoba. Now, it is high across Canada, and I do not dispute that. It is high in other provinces. Fifty-one thousand people are on welfare. You have an increase of

23,000 in the number of UI claimants in the province of Manitoba, September over September, a 38 percent increase according to media reports we have read.

Manitoba was the only province, again according to media reports this weekend and material we have received from the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), the only province—(interjection)—Well, go out of this building. Go out of this building, I would suggest to the member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay). Go in your own constituency, to the member for Springfield. Find out what is going on out there. It is brutal, and people are scared.

It is very serious, 38 percent increase in the UI claims in August, the highest in the country, the only province in fact to have that kind of increase in the province. The government is saying to us, we are going to stay the course. That is what they are saying in the Speech from the Throne. You would think, Mr. Acting Speaker, that somebody who was wrong eight months out of eight months and somebody who was wrong about increases in income for Manitobans and some government that was so wrong on retail sales and a government that was so wrong about the number of people who are dropping out of the labour force in Manitoba, you would think the government would, as the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) said, wake up and smell the coffee.

You would think they would have some corrections, some mid-course corrections in their strategy, their economic strategy. You would think the kind of step-aside strategy of the Conservative government would be dropped by a more balanced approach to the economy. You would think that would happen, because when any of us are dealing with economic factors and if the facts are not consistent with our own predictions, you have to make an adjustment, whether it is a business or whether it is an organization or a health care institution, a nonprofit organization, you have to make changes, but we see the same stubborn stand-aside, step-aside philosophy with the same devastating effect.

Oh, no, I should correct myself. The government did do something. It announced the cabinet committee, and then they did something else. They announced the cabinet committee again. Then they did something else. They announced the cabinet committee for a third time. That is what they did, three times, a cabinet committee. Three times, that

was their big announcement over cold eggs with the Chamber of Commerce.

* (1500)

I guess they had to announce a cabinet committee because last year that is what they did, too. They announced a cabinet committee with the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson). They announced a cabinet committee to deal with Ottawa in a more effective way. They announced an embassy the year before. Then they are going to have a cabinet committee. This year they announced a cabinet committee.

I wonder if anybody from that cabinet committee walked down the hall and met with the chairman of the board of CN. I wonder if anybody from that cabinet committee joined the minister of transportation, when the federal minister of transportation was in this building. The minister of transportation was by himself.

We can go all over the world looking for economic development. The cabinet committee will go three weeks to Europe. I do not begrudge the Premier that. I think it is good for the Premier and his economic board, the cabinet committee to be out looking for opportunities for Manitoba. You will never hear us complain about that at all.

I will complain when the Premier of this province will go for three weeks to Europe and will not go 300 yards to fight for jobs in Transcona in the transportation sector of this province. That is where we draw the line, Mr. Acting Speaker. This Premier does not want to get involved in a real fight. He only wants to get involved with pool lights and media opportunities and press releases.

I respect the fact that the minister of transportation was meeting with those people. I respect that. The fact you were not joined by the so-called economic council—what is it?—the economic committee of cabinet, or whatever it is, on some of the most important jobs in this province, what kind of hypocrisy, what kind of real resolve do we have over there?

They leave the minister of transportation out alone. What could be more important than fighting for jobs and the transportation centre for Manitoba? What could be more important? What activity was more important than the whole cabinet committee could not go down the hall and join his minister of transportation when the two most important people dealing with that decision were in our building?

An Honourable Member: They were researching old clippings.

Mr. Doer: Researching old clippings, perhaps. There is nothing wrong with that.

What are we going to tell the people at CN? What do you recommend we tell the people at CN when January 15 comes along? What do you think we would tell the people of Churchill with the kind of stance the federal government, the federal minister of transportation is taking on the Port of Churchill? What do we tell the people who are losing their jobs to Edmonton? What do we tell the people who are losing their jobs potentially to Detroit, Michigan, under the new North American headquarters of a Canadian Crown corporation? What do we tell them—oh, we sent Albert, the minister of transportation, nice guy. He is a nice person. I respect him.

Our side respects the minister of transportation. We respected the fact that he told the truth on The Pines project. We respected that. I know it got him in trouble. I know he got taken to the woodshed by the Premier, but he made the right decision. I talked to some transportation experts last week, and they still respect the minister of transportation. They do not respect some other people across the way, Mr. Acting Speaker, in terms of the decision on The Pines.

Even last week, again, a transportation expert, who is not a New Democrat by any means, told me that it was a horrible decision, and they could not understand why the Premier (Mr. Filmon) allowed it to go ahead. The real question is, did that decision ever go to cabinet? The Premier has never told us whether that decision went to cabinet.

The other member from west-end Winnipeg is chortling from the back seat -(interjection)- Commenting, I am sorry. I take that back. I apologize for saying chortling. We respect the minister of transportation, but what is the Premier (Mr. Filmon) going to tell people in Transcona and other places in this province? You know what, Mr. Acting Speaker, this chairman of the board and the minister responsible for CN, and Albert knows this, they already know what is going to happen January 15. Albert knows that they know. The minister of transportation knows that, and yet the Premier could not come down the hallway and join his minister of transportation to show that we really care about this issue.

I want to say to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), and the member for Tuxedo, that we will hold you accountable for every change in job and employment status in the province of Manitoba, because the last time, in 1987, when there was a major dispute between the federal government and the provincial government on transportation jobs on CN and CP, the Premier was involved with the minister of transportation. Yes, he risked losing a fight. He risked losing a media battle against the federal government. He risked losing face.

He risked having pool lights and all these other things saying, oh, you lost this one, but if we are not sworn in to protect and fight for the jobs that are at risk, what is the sense of even being in government? What is the sense of even having an economic committee of cabinet when all they can do is travel around Europe and go to Toronto three times in six months but cannot go down the hallway? That is wrong. That is very wrong. That is not going to be forgotten by members opposite when the member was left alone.

So you think the government was going to look at their position. You know, Mr. Acting Speaker, what we said last week, where the government has surrendered in terms of the Speech from the Throne with their step-aside philosophy, one only has to look at the transportation sector. The word transportation is not in the Speech from the Throne. Did the minister of transportation disagree with his cabinet colleagues when they were looking at the draft Speech from the Throne? Did he suggest that transportation be in the Speech from the Throne?

Did the Premier (Mr. Filmon) edit it out, or did they not want to put transportation in the Speech from the Throne because they knew they were in a tough fight on CN, they were in a tough fight at CP, they are losing all kinds of trucking jobs under their free trade philosophy and the Port of Churchill is in real trouble? They took the real tough way out. They ducked. They stepped aside. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) stepped aside. I do not know how a minister of transportation—I guess it is another Pines situation. The minister of transportation said, put the word transportation in, and the media specialist said, no, we cannot do that because we are going to lose that, so we will duck. We just will not mention it.

We are happy to see that the space program is mentioned, and we were involved. I participated in—I was in Churchill personally with the member

for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) and the former member for Churchill in '89 when a number of scientists were there with the satellite that was sent from Churchill, one of the best places for purposes of technology. The satellite was going up there to examine the ozone layer of the province of Manitoba, and the technology is certainly really positive. I think that is positive, but it is very unfortunate that we did not see any stand-up for the Port of Churchill and the grain transportation system there from the Premier in his Speech from the Throne. Again he stepped aside with all the transportation issues.

Nine thousand jobs lost in construction last year, one of the largest losses of jobs anywhere in Canada, manufacturing sector. The Premier supported free trade with the United States. He and Robert Bourassa and Brian Mulroney were there side by side, shoulder to shoulder supporting the Free Trade Agreement with the United States in 1988.

* (1510)

Look at the value of manufacturing shipments so far year to date in 1991—9.7 percent drop in January of 1991, nine out of 10; 15 percent drop in February, 10 out of 10; March, 20 percent decline, 10 out of 10; April, 18 percent decline, 10 out of 10; May, 17.9 percent decline in manufacturing shipments, 10 out of 10; June, 10 out of 10 again; July, 16.5 percent decline, 10 out of 10; August, 16 percent decline, 10 out of 10; September, the last month, 14 percent decline in manufacturing shipments, 10 out of 10. So we have one month where we are 9 out of 10 and eight months where we are 10 out of 10 in manufacturing shipments.

Mr. Acting Speaker, private capital investment is down in 1991. We have not had a chance to analyze the numbers for my purposes well enough, because it has been down before, but it is down again in 1991.

Look at how this is reflecting on our economy, back again to the government's own statements on the economy. The revenue from sales tax in 1991 for the first two quarters of this year is down \$13.8 million. This is not positive news; this is not news you would clap about when the Premier answers questions about how great thou art. This is not the kind of news that you say we are going to step aside with. This is the kind of news you get in and you say, hey, something is going real wrong here and we

have to do something about it—we have to do something about it.

Again the casualties are seen again everywhere. We were in the community of Beausejour, and there is a food bank now on the front streets of Beausejour, and we met with the volunteers who were running that food bank, and there has never been a food bank before in the community of Beausejour—never. It may even be the first one in rural Manitoba, if I am not mistaken, or rural western Canada. I do not know that, so I had better not say that, but people and children are going to food banks, and that is not unique to Manitoba.

It is happening in Ontario; yes, it is happening in other provinces as well, but there is a 40 percent increase in the food banks in Manitoba for children. So when we talk about how great the things are going with the Mulroney Conservative trade agreement and the welfare cases—a 40 percent increase in kids that have to go to food banks—we had better stop, look and listen about what is going on to the people who are most vulnerable.

There are 12,000 cases of welfare in the city of Winnipeg. When the government was elected, there was 7,000. In fact, it had gone up to about 8,000 in 1986 or '87, and it came down to 7,000 in the other years. Our sources in the community unemployment centre, Mr. Acting Speaker, an agency that this government cut off funding in 1988-89—I guess the people in some constituencies do not use the unemployed help centre—a 25 percent increase in the demand over the last year.

Look at something else in terms of the economy—labour management relations. This government has the worst record in the 1980s in labour management relations of any government in this province in the last decade. We have gone up to—and the year is not even over yet—close to 150,000 days lost to strike and lockout in the province of Manitoba under the Filmon Conservative—poison government relations and labour management relations. Now do you think that is positive for the economy? Do you think that helps people buy goods and services? Do you think that is helping people stay at work? Most of them, by the way, have been across the table from the Premier.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, the economy of Manitoba, when we look at any objective indicator, is in real desperate straits, real desperate straits. We

should then look at the regional breakdown of the economy. In rural Manitoba, we have an agricultural crisis. Yes, the income levels in rural Manitoba in the farm sector, I believe, were down 6 percent this year so far compared to the 3 percent that was predicted by this government.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have gone to meetings with farmers across Manitoba with our agricultural critic, the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), and I found them quite enlightening. I have been to farm meetings before, I have been to farms before, but I have never heard the kind of despair that I have heard this year and this winter. I have to say that. I did not hear that a couple of years ago, and I have not heard it as serious as now.

We went to meetings all across southwestern Manitoba. We were in the Deputy Premier's (Mr. Downey) riding and had a good meeting with many of his own constituents. We were in other ridings that were Conservative-held ridings, and hundreds of farmers came out to those meetings. They told us a number of things about agriculture. They told us the same things we heard at the rallies that were organized by grassroots farm organizations across Manitoba.

You know, a lot of the farmers are saying at the meetings I went to the same things the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) said last spring. You know, I know the Premier when I asked him questions about GRIP and the deficiency payment usually deferred to his Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay). In fact, the question I asked about deficiency payment and the NISA program for the federal government he referred to the Minister of Agriculture at that point.

This government supported the federal government's GRIP program, Mr. Acting Speaker. It supported many of the measures the federal government introduced and the speed at which they introduced them. Even members opposite in the front bench who are farmers were quietly telling us they did not know what decision to make on enrolling or not enrolling into GRIP. Many farmers told us last spring, and we would go after this many days. Hansard is full of the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) asking a question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), then the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) asking on behalf of the Premier, that—again stepping aside from this issue—the Minister of Agriculture was answering the questions

about this was a program produced by producers and therefore they were satisfied with it.

Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, I heard the member for Dauphin raise the inequities of the program, the calculations of the 15-year averaging, the calculations of the cost per acre, the discrepancies across the farm gate and across the farm road. I heard the member from Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) raise these issues time and time again and we were told that everything would be fine.

Well, unfortunately, after we left this House we saw the announcement of the price of wheat, and since that time, in September and October, the real payments are being made for producers and farmers in agriculture under the GRIP program that is really troublesome to our side of the House, the New Democrats. Because unlike the members opposite and the Liberals initially, when they supported it last March in Brandon, we did not support the GRIP program. We asked for the program to be stopped and go back to the drawing board and have the third line of defence and the deficiency payment and the cash the farmers needed, the \$1.3 billion that was identified last April to be paid out this year, and let us deal with those agricultural support programs so that we can really know in the long run whether we would have the true cost of production formula in the GRIP and NISA programs, Mr. Acting Speaker, that was being announced.

I think we have been vindicated because when I talk to a farmer with an average acreage of 1,000 acres of land that they have seeded, they told me after GRIP payments have come in they have lost about \$30 an acre and they are going to lose about \$30 after they pay for everything for their farm. Then, of course, we had all the rallies that took place. It started in Manitoba and I want to pay tribute to those farmers who started those rallies across Manitoba. The grassroots farmers I think were way out in front of this issue, Mr. Acting Speaker, because they were saying some of the same things the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) said that they are not going to be able to make ends meet. In fact, we had predicted 7,000 farmers to lose and go bankrupt in the province of Manitoba if we would have stayed pat with the agriculture programs in this province.

* (1520)

Mr. Acting Speaker, we then had a situation where the federal government did announce \$700

million that they could magically find with corporations to make up some of the shortfall for farmers. We still believe that shortfall will work out to a minimum of about \$9 per seeded acre and farmers are still going to be left with about \$21 per seeded acre behind with all the programs that have been announced, and that works out to about \$21,000 per average farm family of 1,000 acres. I believe—if I am wrong let me know. That is just the evidence I have had from listening to farmers in the winter of 1991-92.

I am not a person that understands all the intricacies of all the programs in agriculture, but I do understand the discrepancies of a certain program between farmers across the road from each other. I understand what a 15-year average works out to be as opposed to a shorter period of time in terms of average. I understand that the real cost of production has to be the underpinnings of a long-term agricultural support program in Manitoba. Mr. Acting Speaker, I understand if you lose \$21 an acre and if you are losing \$21,000 per farm you cannot stay alive, especially with the debt costs that many farmers, up to one-third of the farmers, are holding in this province.

If you are talking about a farm protection act that is like the U.S.A. farm protection act, which protects to some degree—not as much as we would prefer—farmers against the international trade wars that are taking place, we will look at that act with interest. We have seen absolutely no principles contained within the farm protection act program this government plans on introducing. We are very worried about this situation with farmers in Manitoba and the rural economy in Manitoba.

We were shocked that the Premier did not mention the GRIP program in the Speech from the Throne. In Saskatchewan, the government said we must totally revamp the GRIP program in the Speech from the Throne that was introduced four days before the Premier's Speech from the Throne. In Manitoba again the Premier stuck the issue aside and did not take any stand on GRIP, did not take any stand on what the deficiency payments would be in terms of farmers in western Canada and Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have advice we have received from the farmers that there is more contained in the Saskatchewan Speech from the Throne, in terms of what they are saying should happen, rather than the Manitoba Speech from the

Throne. I would ask this government and this Premier to get on board with farmers about revamping GRIP. Get on board with farmers.

The members opposite know GRIP is not working the way the federal government said it would work. They have heard from farmers. They are not saying anything different to us than they are saying to you. They are not saying anything different. It is not working. It must be totally revamped.

There is a disagreement about whether it should be scrapped and revamped or revamped. Suffice it to say, whether you scrap it or revamp it, all the fundamental principles that are contained within GRIP have to be changed. We have to do that quickly. We do not have a lot of time.

Now the government has said that the international trade wars are doing this and they are doing that. There is even starting to be some disagreement from agricultural economists about what relief agricultural talks will provide for producers in western Canada in terms of the agricultural crisis. There is even talk about that problem, Mr. Acting Speaker. There are reports that we have had—I should back up, by the way.

In Brandon, on the GRIP program, when Charlie Mayer was confronted by farmers—and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) was there—the federal minister of oilseeds and grains said that, if GRIP is not working, we will scrap it and start all over again.

An Honourable Member: He said—

Mr. Doer: What did he say?

An Honourable Member: He said we will improve it.

Mr. Doer: We will improve it. Okay, we will revamp it.

I would suggest the first place this government should start is with the window that has been opened by their own Conservative colleague in southwest Manitoba, in terms of that program. It is the first time I ever heard him say that. I guess he had to say it when he had a thousand angry people sitting there asking pretty pointed questions about the program. I would suggest, Mr. Acting Speaker, that was an opening.

Moving back to the European talks. The Premier usually answers agricultural questions about the European talks and the European GATT negotiations. Mr. Acting Speaker, watch out for all the intricacies going on at the GATT table, because

the federal government says the marketing boards—and the Deputy Premier said in Ottawa, if I recall correctly, the marketing boards are not on the table.

I would like the government to answer the questions whether the transportation policies of Canada are on the table and whether the present means of transportation policy to the railways is on the table, whether the Crow benefit is on the table as a GATT-able item, and whether on the one hand we will not get relief—small relief—at the GATT negotiations dealing with the subsidy issue for international markets and on the other hand the federal government, because they want to offload again onto the producer, onto the GATT negotiations, will make some of the transportation policies in Canada GATT-able.

I wonder if the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) is aware of that issue. I am sure he is worried about it. He is worried about it. I am glad to see that, because we are very worried about that. Maybe that is another reason why the Premier did not put transportation in the Speech from the Throne. Maybe it was an honest omission or maybe it was purposeful when you add up all the jobs of transportation and you add up the agricultural sector.

The European talks are important and the government members opposite say that marketing boards are not on the table. They would know that better than we do. I suspect that when the federal government has to make a move the federal Conservative government will make a move in favour of the poultry producers, the milk producers and the other producers in the province of Quebec rather than on the transportation policies in western Canada. I am worried about that, so what the government is not saying is what the government worries us about, both the federal government and the provincial government.

We are very worried because the federal government is negotiating away the Crow benefit as part of a GATT-able solution, and that will result in a major decline in the ability of producers in western Canada to deal with all the issues that are facing them. Of course, the Americans have already said that under the Free Trade Agreement they will want to get at Canada's transportation policies. Yeutter, the former trade minister, who is now the minister of agriculture in the United States, has said -(interjection)- okay, but he was the minister of

agriculture for a while—Yeutter already said that they would try to get at the transportation policies of Canada and the marketing boards. Mr. Acting Speaker, we are very, very worried about that.

Rural Manitoba has some challenges. We had proposed emergency debates last spring that this government defeated. We said that this should be an emergency debate on the deficiency payments because we said it was not enough. We said that this should be an emergency debate on the GRIP payments because the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) pointed out it would not work. The members opposite sided with their federal Conservatives and said, yes, agriculture is working well and we are okay with GRIP and NISA and the deficiency payments. They voted it down. They said there is no crisis. They said there is no crisis in agriculture. They voted down the debate on the crisis in agriculture in Manitoba.

We would have agreed for a one- or two-hour debate. The other day we just had a consensus with the House leaders to have the ordinary business be conducted and not lose debating time on the vote motions. We have agreed to those before as we did Friday. We have done that before in this House, but no, there is no crisis in agriculture, says the members opposite. When those farm rallies started, they were running like crazy to get in front of the parade and say: Oh, yes, we are opposed to GRIP the way it is drafted now, and we are worried about it too, Mr. Acting Speaker.

You were not listening last spring. You were not listening last spring to your own constituents about GRIP and the deficiency payment, and you were not listening when the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) were asking those questions, because the only thing that has changed since the last time we sat and those questions were posed in this House is it has got more serious and the concerns about those programs you were defending have got more acute, not less acute.

We have unemployment in Winnipeg now that is very serious, one of the highest unemployment rates for any city in Canada.

I noted the Premier (Mr. Filmon) did not mention western Canada's economy, that Manitoba does not suffer through the booms and busts of the western Canadian economy because of our diversity, in his Speech from the Throne as he did last year,

because he cannot, because Winnipeg has a higher unemployment rate than any other western Canadian city in the latest statistics that were released.

Now, when we talk about rural Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg, we have to conclude with another very sorry state of our economy, and that is the situation in northern Manitoba. This goes right back to the Premier's government and right back to the Deputy Premier's (Mr. Downey) philosophy dealing with northern Manitoba.

* (1530)

Northern Manitoba has the highest unemployment rate of any region in Canada, and those statistics do not include aboriginal communities in the calculation of those statistics. Over 20 percent of people in northern Manitoba are unemployed, and we have seen the government, how they have acted on Lynn Lake; we have seen the government and how they have acted on Repap. You know, Mr. Acting Speaker, we have seen the government act on the Northern Youth job Corps.

A thousand jobs last summer could have done a lot for northern people. Natural Resources people have been laid off in northern Manitoba; Highways people have been laid off in northern Manitoba, so we have the double whammy of the private sector and the public sector devastating northern Manitoba. What do they do about it? They lay off some more people in the nursery in The Pas this last week. You know, I would ask the Premier, what kind of standards does he have for treating jobs in the public sector in an area where there is high unemployment in the private sector?

When Portage was being devastated by news that all people supported and dealt with, the issue of the Portage base when the Portage base was being closed, the government and the Department of Highways cancelled a bypass or overpass to the base in Portage, because they said there is going to be no traffic down there any more, and quickly thereafter the government reversed their decision. I applauded the work from the member for Portage (Mr. Connery) and the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) to reverse the decision in terms of the overpass to the Southport and south base because I thought the last thing that Portage needed, after they got a kick in the teeth from the federal government, was to get another kick in the teeth from the provincial government.

An Honourable Member: We never cancelled it, we revised it.

Mr. Doer: Well, one day I heard it was stopped, and the next day I heard it was on, and I applaud you for that.

Mr. Acting Speaker, what about The Pas? We have hundreds of people out of work in the woodlands, we have hundreds of people out of work in the sawmill, we have hundreds of people out of work in the plant, we have hundreds of people out of work in the woods, period, and the government lays off people in the Department of Natural Resources in the nursery department.

Now maybe the minister, the Deputy Premier was correct, they did not vote the right way, because they acted one way in Portage, which we supported, and you are acting a directly opposite way; the Premier, the member for Tuxedo, is acting a directly opposite way in the nursery in The Pas.

The private sector has kicked the community of The Pas in the teeth. In last year's budget, the Premier and the cabinet kicked The Pas in the teeth again, and now they give them another kick in the teeth. If they are not down far enough, they give them another kick in the teeth.

What was their answer on Friday? No answer. No answer to the people of The Pas and the northern community.

I would suggest to the government that they take a look at their policies on the economy. The step-aside approach of the government is not working, because Manitobans are not working. The approach of the government is not keeping Manitoba productive when you have a decline in investment and a decline in labour salaries.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the government should look at their whole approach to the Free Trade Agreement with the United States. The government should look at its policies on the free trade agreement with Mexico. The government said in the last election that they would oppose the free trade agreement with Mexico. Then they said in the last Speech from the Throne that they would monitor the free trade agreement with Mexico, and now we have got six conditions for the free trade agreement with Canada, United States and Mexico. I guess what really surprised me is the position of the Liberal Party on the free trade agreement with Mexico.

An Honourable Member: We oppose it.

Mr. Doer: Well, no. They want to take a proactive approach. The Liberals want to take a proactive approach with the Free Trade Agreement with United States. They go to the Aylmer retreat—the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) goes to the Aylmer retreat and the Liberals retreat from everything they stood up for the last 20 years in Canada, Mr. Acting Speaker, and then bring that retreat back to this Legislative Chamber. Shame, shame -(interjection)- We will talk about leaders any day of the week. What did they call the honourable member from New Brunswick, the little guy from Shawinigan who now represents New Brunswick? The hedgehog, that is what they call him, one time on the GST, the other day the next thing, the Liberal hedgehog party federally.

Getting back to the provincial Liberal Party. They are going to take a proactive approach to the free trade agreements with Mexico. Well, that is really a curious position to take. Have you heard of anybody being so naive to take a proactive approach to George Bush, a proactive approach to Brian Mulroney. Oh, they are going to take a proactive approach to Michael Wilson, and they are going to take a proactive approach to Salinas. Make no mistake about it, Mr. Acting Speaker, they have a naive approach to take a proactive approach.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this is a corporate trade agenda just like the Free Trade Agreement was with the United States that has been designed -(interjection)- Well, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) can explain his position on Mexico in Inkster soon enough, I hope. It will go over real well with your constituents. A proactive approach to the position and a stand with George Bush, a proactive approach to Brian Mulroney—I am shocked. The member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr)—I thought the Axworthy group would keep away from this sort of move to the right that is taking place in the Liberal Party. I mean, when they said to Lloyd Axworthy the other day, eat your heart out, Lloyd Axworthy, I thought it was okay in Manitoba.

We had the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr), the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) who are part of the sort of Axworthy forces, and I thought everything would be okay. I did not think you would let that get through caucus, but they did. It is the first resolution. We cannot wait to get at it. We will give leave to debate it for two nights. We want to get at this positive approach to Georgie Bush, positive approach to Brian Mulroney, positive approach to

Michael Wilson. Boy, we sure like giving Michael Wilson a blank cheque to go in there and negotiate for us.

We believe in multilateral trade, Mr. Acting Speaker. We understand the trading environment under which all countries are under in the world. We dealt with trade before. We will deal with trade again, but trade does not mean you give away your energy, not mentioned in the resolution from the Liberal Party. Trade does not mean you give away your resources—not mentioned in the resolution by the Liberal Party. Trade does not mean you give away your sovereignty—not mentioned by the Liberals. It does not mean you give away the sovereignty and investment decisions. It does not mean you give away the issues of medicare and other issues.

Multilateral trade to us and a world trading environment to us does not mean the Canada/U.S. Free Trade Agreement which gives away the decisions of Canadians to other groups. It does not mean to us that we are going to extend that in a proactive way to Mexico. We are opposed to it. We will be proud to vote accordingly when that resolution hits this Assembly forum.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

The government also stated that Manitobans must work together. They must work together to meet the past challenges and meet the future challenges. This government is working together with some Manitobans but only some Manitobans. It is not working together with all Manitobans. What it means "working together with Manitobans"—it means a backroom cabinet committee having breakfast only with the Chamber of Commerce.

An Honourable Member: Over and over again.

Mr. Doer: Over and over again, you are right, time and time again, announce the committee. If that does not work, announce the committee again and announce the committee a third time. -(interjection)- Oh, you know we cannot get chuckles out of the First Minister because it is pretty serious.

Mr. Speaker, we have suggested a different way. If the government is truly serious about the economy, why does not the government bring together an economic summit of business, labour, government and farmers? We had one in Manitoba in the early '80s, business, labour and government and with agricultural groups meeting together to plot out how best Manitobans can work together. That is what the winners in the world are doing. The Japans,

the West Germanies and the other countries that are doing well in our economy are doing well because they have all of the country and all of the groups working together in a consensus way. This sort of breakfast with the Chamber is useful. We had meetings with business too, but it is much more appropriate to have meetings with and have a challenge and have a summit with all parts of your economy.

* (1540)

We will recommend again to the government: If it is going to put into practice what the words were in the Speech from the Throne, they should have an economic summit with business, agriculture, labour and the government together, because then you get some real ideas and some real consensus going on in your economy.

Mr. Speaker, we have also suggested that the government have an all-party committee on the economy. We have suggested that the government have an all-party committee dealing with the economy. You know, Manitobans cannot answer the question of why we could work together on the Constitution in an all-party way, and why the Premier says the economy is equally important to the Constitution. Then the Premier turns around and says no to having an all-party committee on the economy. Now, some part of his logic is missing.

If the Constitution is worthy of doing in an all-party way and if the economy is equally important for the people of Manitoba—and we believe it is equally important—as the Constitution, then why cannot the same forum be used to get input for Manitobans on the economy.

Mr. Speaker, we would suggest again that the government review its position on the all-party task force dealing with the economy.

I think when we talk with Manitobans and listen to Manitobans, we work better. Then you would be practising what you are preaching, not what you are doing, in terms of only meeting with one group in our economy.

I also want to move off the economy for a minute. While it is a serious issue and I know the Premier—we just want to give him a little bit of reality, Mr. Speaker, just a little bit of what is going on outside of this hall. I want to say, in terms of the all party committee on the economy that we want to start, too, in applauding the all party committee that worked on the constitution of Manitoba.

It was an excellent all party committee, Mr. Speaker. It was chaired by an excellent person for whom I have a lot of respect. I was pleased to see that he was able to win the award, the Public Service Award of Distinction again this summer. I was able to observe that ceremony and I think Manitobans have been well served by the all party legislative committee that worked on behalf of Manitobans, and I want to applaud all members from all parties on their work and their consensus report that provided the recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, the members of the committee and the people of Manitoba should be applauded because the people of Manitoba had two or three items of priority and those are articulated, I think, very well in the consensus report signed by all parties.

Manitobans stated very clearly they wanted the principle of inherent right of aboriginal peoples to self government entrenched in this round of the constitutional debate. That is a recommendation that this caucus and this party will support with the package that will be presented ultimately in this Chamber. We stand by that recommendation and we will be watching the final package to see whether that is included.

Mr. Speaker, this package also included positions on dissolving the patronage Senate. You will have absolutely no argument from the New Democrats on dissolving the patronage Senate. We have no members from the New Democratic Party that are part of the existing patronage Senate. I believe there are about 54 Conservatives and about 52 Liberals on that august body. You will have absolutely no problems from us in supporting dissolving the patronage Senate and the spectacle of patronage that we have seen in our country.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the changes in the second Chamber. We have met with a number of Manitobans, and this report reflects the opinion of Manitobans. We have certainly found the dissolving of the Senate a palatable recommendation, and we look forward to the kind of reforms of a second Chamber that ultimately will be articulated in the final report.

You have already heard our position on American institutions. We would ask the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) to remember Canadian institutions, not American institutions, and we will

watch accordingly as the presentations are forwarded to us.

We certainly support the recommendation for a strong federal government, a strong federal government that has the ability to redistribute wealth from the less prosperous regions of Canada and a government that has the ability to redistribute wealth to the less fortunate individuals in our country, and we are pleased that the Tories have signed that document, because maybe now we can get real tax reform in this country so we can have a truly redistributed country rather than the existing status quo that we see in the federal government.

We are also very pleased to see the Canada clause again contained within the document. It is something, of course, that I hate to say came out of the Ontario public hearings and was worded a little bit by the Manitoba members in the Meech Lake Task Force. One Brian Schwartz I think had something to do with that; members of different parties had something to do with that. We think the Canada round and the Canada clause makes a lot of sense.

Mr. Speaker, we heard the Premier last year talk about in the Speech from the Throne that Manitobans will not tolerate a back-room process of issues that are vital to Canadians, a back-room process that was similar to the process in Meech Lake, where elites went in the back room and met and resolved issues of vital importance to Canadians. That was the Premier's statement last year in the Meech Lake Accord.

Mr. Speaker, we agree with that approach. We agree with that approach on the Constitution, but we cannot understand why the Premier then is taking the same approach on health care. Why is the Premier taking the same approach on health care of 45 committees—or how many committees do they have now that we know of?

An Honourable Member: Forty-four.

Mr. Doer: Forty-four committees, I am sorry—44 committees meeting in the back room with various stages of deliberation. Some are part of implementation, some are not part of implementation, some are recommended, some are going along and they are making cuts, some are not making cuts. Why is the Premier stepping aside in dealing with the health care system in this province, and why does he not ask his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to account for himself and make all those

studies public and all the implementation plans public? Why does he not have those documents public for the people of Manitoba? Why do we have secret meetings with secret committees with secret agendas dealing with the most vital issue facing Manitobans, and that is their health care? It is completely intolerable, Mr. Speaker, completely intolerable for the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we want the government to make all those studies public and we want the government to make their implementation plans public as well. We should not have to get those documents out of Saskatchewan; we should not have to get those documents out of leaks in the Minister of Health's department, which is becoming a sieve, because people in Manitoba want to know what is going on with their health care system, and they deserve to know.

Mr. Speaker, the biggest issue facing Canadians in terms of their health care is the Americanization of health care under the federal Conservative government. Bill C-20 is before the Parliament of Canada, and it will represent the erosion of health care funding to Manitoba in the early 2000 years and will mean the end of medicare as we know it, and again, what does the provincial government do?

Oh yes, it will fed-bash in this House, and it will fed-bash in a budget, and it will fed-bash when we are cut back, but when it comes to being eyeball to eyeball with the federal government, the Minister of Health is staying the same way as the Premier did last year at the First Ministers' meeting when he applauded Brian Mulroney for the consultation dealing with cutbacks in health care and post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, the only member that presented a brief to the House of Commons from this Chamber was the critic of Health, the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), who said that we cannot tolerate the Americanization of our health care system. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) did not even show up to present a brief to Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that Conservatives opposite, along with their federal Conservative government, do not care about the Americanization of health care. They will feign indignation. They will have the damage-control press conferences complete with the pool lights and all these other things.

When it comes to going eyeball to eyeball with the Prime Minister, the Premier applauds him. When it comes to going eyeball to eyeball with their federal Conservative cousins, as the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) did, they step aside again. They are nowhere to be seen. All the federal funding will be gone in six or seven years, and the provincial government here is nowhere to be seen.

* (1550)

Mr. Speaker, we want to talk about a few facts on medicare, because I think it is very important in this Chamber and this Speech from the Throne, which gives very little attention to the Americanization of medicare, to talk about that issue.

All Canadians have access to health care. Thirty-seven million Americans do not have access to health care. All Canadians have access to health care in a full and complete way, and 35 million Americans are underinsured. When they need vital operations and vital services in health care, many of those families have to mortgage their house, sell their house to have an operation for their children.

In the wealthiest country in the world we see a situation where the health care standards are below the standards of Canada in terms of health care. The United States had a better infant mortality rate than Canada in 1968 before medicare was fully implemented in this country. Now Canada's mortality rate for infants, per 100,000 births, is 20 percent lower. I believe it is seven per 1,000 births compared to the United States where it is close to 10 per 1,000 deaths—10 deaths per 1,000 births in the United States compared to Canada.

In the wealthiest country in the world we have a situation where a child born in Canada, under our Canadian medicare system, has a better chance of living than the United States, yet this government is silent about this development. On life expectancy, Mr. Speaker, again Canada has a rate of life expectancy higher than the United States, again with all their wealth.

The Premier talks about making cardiopulmonary and heart disease a priority of their government. The United States has a 20 percent higher rate of deaths by heart attacks than Canada. What better way to start on the words in your Speech from the Throne by having a Minister of Health go out and fight for health care in Canada rather than sitting aside and standing aside as we see with this government.

When we look at cost effectiveness—we talked about fairness in terms of access. We talked about the whole issue of health care standards for infants to life expectancy. We also have to look at the cost effectiveness of the United States.

The cost in Canada of our health care system, which is better health care and fairer health care, is 8.7 percent of the GNP compared to 11.2 percent of the United States. The per capita cost is \$1,805 in Canada compared to \$2,354 in the United States. The administrative costs in Canada are 11 percent compared to 24 percent in the United States. That is because we have hospitals and insurance companies, 50 insurance companies and all kinds of groups making profit in the American system rather than the Canadian system which is universally accessible to all. Even the efficient use of our hospital beds is better in Canada than United States—80 percent utilization rate of hospital beds in Canada. We know that Manitoba is right on that number as well, as compared to a 65 percent utilization rate in the United States.

The fact of the matter is that if United States switched to the Canadian system of medicare, according to the U.S. Office of Accounting, they would save \$67 billion and that money could be used for the infants, the children and the poor who do not have health care in the United States. It could be used to have a better system in North America.

That is the true test that we are facing, and yet the government opposite does not care about that. They do not send their Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) out to fight. They do not care about those issues, Mr. Speaker. They say we are fearmongering when we raise them in the House. When our critic, the critic for Health, the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), raises this, they say, oh we are fearmongering. They probably like the Americanization of our health care system because they are certainly not there fighting for it.

It is rather ironic, Mr. Speaker, because at the same time that Canada, under the Conservatives in Ottawa and subtly under the Conservatives here in Manitoba, is losing the best health care system in the world, the Americans are finally starting to wake up and starting to realize that they need a health care system in the United States. The election of Wofford in Pennsylvania, who was 40 percent down to the Bush-appointed candidate and who won on 10 percent victory just last month on the basis of medicare, is a hopeful sign, is a very hopeful sign.

The fact that last week 60 members of Congress said clearly that they would now support the Canada medicare system is a good sign, a hopeful sign, Mr. Speaker.

At the same time we have the capitulation of the Conservatives in Ottawa and the Conservatives here in Manitoba on the national health care system and medicare, the Americans are starting to realize that we have a darn good thing going for us. It is too bad the members opposite do not realize it and are not willing to fight for it, are not willing to send their Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) down as the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) went down last week to fight for medicare. We are proud that the member for St. Johns is fighting. We do not feel she is a fearmonger, Mr. Speaker. We feel she is fighting for the vision of Canada that includes a national medicare program in this country.

Mr. Speaker, we have already had some questions in this Chamber dealing with the education in this province. The ministerial leadership in education is nowhere to be seen. I have heard from trustees, from teachers, from students, from parent groups that this is the worst ministry of Education under the worst Minister of Education that they have ever experienced. We are hearing that from people from all walks of life and from all political stripes. The member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon) thinks it is funny. The Premier thinks it is funny. Of all the predictions from all the pundits and all the people across the way dealing with—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I know that the member for Concordia would not like to leave on the record a falsehood that implies that I think the matter of education is funny. I think that the matter of education is very, very serious. I think that his colleague from Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) is funny, and I said that.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I retract the comments to the Premier. About the member for Flin Flon's (Mr. Storie) comments, we do find that the member for Flin Flon is able to get under the thin skin of the

member for Tuxedo, the Premier of the province, very easily. I do apologize to the Premier on that point.

Mr. Speaker, if the Premier wants to take a real stand on education, if he is really serious about what is going on about education in this province, he will fire the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) right now, today, and make a lot of people happy, a lot of Manitobans happy, everybody. -(interjection)- That is right. Everybody will be happy if the Premier does that.

Mr. Speaker, public education has never been in the state of chaos that it is today. The government goes ahead with their funding policies and their various policies. Last year, we had a 10 percent increase in taxes in the public education system. We had funding levels to the public education system way below the funding levels to the provincial government from the federal government.

The state of the public education system is in a state of chaos, and there is absolutely no stewardship from the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). There is no accounting with the Premier dealing with the education system in this province, because any Premier who can allow that Minister of Education to stay where he is does not care really about the education system and the students and the parents and the school divisions of this province.

Under this Premier, Mr. Speaker, the universities have gone from the second lowest tuition fee to about fifth or sixth. We are going to have another crippling year in our education system for access to education in the post-secondary area.

The universities are under severe strain. The ability of all Manitobans to access the education system is eroding year after year after year, on the 1950s education philosophy of the Conservative government, the kind of Edsel education philosophy that we see from members opposite. Mr. Speaker, that follows on the issues of community colleges where people were cut from our community colleges. People were cut from our community colleges, in spite of the fact that we had a 90 percent success ratio in the province of Manitoba. People were cut; jobs were cut; and investment for our youth was cut.

We have many programs now that are not available, because this government does not believe in investing in a public education system where skills are imparted to students, skills that

would stay with people for life. They would rather put the money into their corporate friends so that orientation programs that should be paid by the private sector would now be paid for by the public sector, and, therefore, skills will be less available to Manitobans as this government is offloading its education responsibilities in terms of orientation to the private sector.

* (1600)

Mr. Speaker, suffice to say that there are many issues that the government did not resolve in the Speech from the Throne. They did not take a position on the issue of governance. They did not take a position on some of the issues of funding. They did not take a position on some of the tougher issues. Again, they have stepped aside and ducked the important issues before this Chamber, and we will await to see whether we will have any real answers from the government on those issues.

Mr. Speaker, we will deal with the environment for a moment. The member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) wants to deal with some issues that are more relevant to him. Let us deal with the environment.

Mr. Speaker, we now have articles in the Washington Post condemning the Conservative environmental policy. When was the last time you saw an issue covered on the front page of the Washington Post—I do not know whether it is the front page—condemning the Premier's investment in our wetlands region with the Ducks Unlimited project going into the Oak Hammock Marsh?

The Premier defends or steps aside while his Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) blatantly ignores all environmental groups in the province, ignores all environmental groups in the country. Now he is ignoring all the international groups in the United States in terms of the environmental policy of this province.

I guess the Ducks Unlimited project is right up there with MacLeod Stedman as a symbol for this government. It symbolizes an environmental policy that is a bulldozer not a canoe, and it is not consistent with good, sound environmental stewardship in this province.

It will be interesting to see whether the government changes its position on Rafferty-Alameda dam, because the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), after he got the environmental impact study, came out and said that

he supported the licensing of that project, that he supported the issuance of that report. That report said there would be serious damage to our downstream water quality. It said we would have less water during a drought period. It said Manitobans do not even know the impact of that water on the Nelson River system, Mr. Speaker. In spite of that, the Minister of Environment said, oh, it was not a bad report, we can support the licensing in Saskatchewan. We will wait to see whether the government takes a different position on water quality and water quantity now that there is a change in government in Saskatchewan.

We would also note that the government has done nothing on the Assiniboine diversion project. We note with care the comment from the member for Portage (Mr. Connery). We are sure the member for Portage will be voting with us when we have some amendments to the Natural Resources amendments dealing with the Assiniboine diversion project—(interjection)—A couple of weeks ago it did, yes.

Then we had the sorry state of the Domtar, Mr. Speaker. The government is running again like crazy to get in front of the parade after they had the Cherry Report in their hands for six months, a report that said there is creosote and carcinogens in the soil site left by Domtar. From the day the minister had that report in the—

An Honourable Member: You knew that in 1978.

Mr. Doer: Well, we will talk about the Premier approving the zoning of the Genstar development in 1981, when he was the Minister of Environment, after a report was submitted to him showing there was damage and that we should not proceed. I wonder whose expert he used to change his position on Genstar. It will be interesting to see him table that document, what document he did use in 1981 to approve the Genstar site. If he wants to go back in history on Domtar, we are willing to go back in history on Domtar starting with the former Minister of Environment in 1981.

However, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is this Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) had the Cherry Report in the spring of this year. The member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) was asking very serious questions about that report. The member for Radisson was asking questions and asking the government to attend public hearings to let the public know what was going on on that site. I think

the negligence shown by the Minister of Environment in not bringing to the attention of those citizens and those residents and the public in general the site and the dangers on that site while their kids were playing all last summer on that site is absolutely scandalous and tells us that the only thing this government does on the environment is when an issue becomes public, they run as fast as they can to get in front of the public relations parade, but when they have a document that should be made public, Mr. Speaker, they do not have the integrity to make that document public. That is a shame, an absolute shame.

Point of Order

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I hope the member does not want to leave on the record that that material was not available. It has always been available to the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the member for Brandon makes another comment. The bottom line is, I was in this Chamber when the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) asked the question of the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), and the Minister of Environment did not table the document which he had, did not make the document public and did not tell the citizens of that area not to have their kids in that area, and we will not excuse the Minister of Environment on that point, absolutely not.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to the positive announcement on the modernization of Flin Flon—(interjection)—Well, the member for Tuxedo, again when the former Minister of Environment raises this point, will be curious to see the document that allowed him to change his word from "no on Genstar" to "yes on Genstar". What gave him the green light?—because the Cherry Report totally repudiates your decision, and it was your decision. Mr. Speaker, we will be looking for—(interjection)—Oh, the buck does not stop here, the buck does not stop at the Premier's desk. He is going to step aside on this one too just like he did on CN, just like he did on GRIP, just like he is doing on education, just like he is doing on health care and medicare. He is going to step aside, he is not going to take the accountability again.

We look forward to the modernization program in Flin Flon. When we had the acid rain agreement with the federal government, we thought the announcement was eminent in 1988.

An Honourable Member: Imminent.

Mr. Doer: You are right about that—imminent—and I hope you do not make one trip in your speech next Tuesday, but you are right. Mr. Speaker, we do not know why it has taken three years to announce it. We had some information that the government was going to announce it in July of 1988 after (interjection)- Well, Mr. Speaker, I will have to dig out that old memo from Mike Bessey again. We will see if we can find it for the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, we look forward to that announcement; we think it is long overdue, consistent with the federal-provincial agreement on acid rain, which we signed. We are still opposed to the government's policy on dealing with Repap and the chlorine bleach. We think the government is making a major mistake in that issue. We have agreed to disagree before.

Mr. Speaker, we think that the government's public relations campaign on the independent process on the environmental assessment on Conawapa is not the process that they are following, they are following the advice that John McCallum made to the government, cc'd to the Minister of Environment, to (a) have a quick environmental process; (b) to have that process completed by January of 1993; and (c) not to revisit the capital works projects that were dealt with in the Public Utilities Board decision. They do not want to revisit the capital works decisions, because the original submission to the PUB was based on a non-target domestic use of the year 2000, not the year 2009.

I applaud the Minister of Energy for getting those numbers out about the year 2009, and I would suggest to the Minister of Energy we know that those numbers are not even firm; it may even be a lot later on in terms of what the domestic use is for the requirements of Conawapa, and I think that will be a strong issue in the next environmental assessment, and we believe the capital decisions that were part of that old decision should be reflected.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of Family Services, the child care policies in this government again are consistent with the privatization and Americanization of our child care system in

Manitoba. We are seeing the trickle down of the government's policies onto the average family, the average wage earner. Many people cannot afford the 20 percent increases in their communities on the Family Services programs of this government. It is the slippery kind of announcements we see, but people using child care know that they are not better off today under Conservative child care policies than they were a couple of years ago. We are continuing to see bad economic policy and bad social policy with the development of child care policies of this government under Family Services.

* (1610)

Mr. Speaker, the whole issue of domestic violence I dealt with in my opening remarks. We look forward to the recommendations, the full implementation of the recommendations that the government has. We would note all the preventative services that could go into play in the Department of Family Services have not been announced by the provincial government, and we do await the answers to the questions that the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) made on Friday morning.

Mr. Speaker, the government talked in their health care policy about a strong sense of community, yet in Child and Family Services all the community volunteers and all the community-based programs were taken away overnight. What hypocrisy to have one policy on health care and to have another policy on Child and Family Services in the city of Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, we already know that there has been a decrease in volunteers in the area of Just Say No to Child Abuse. We already know there has been a decrease in the activity of the communities. I find it rather curious that the Conservatives would increase the bureaucracy and increase the power of cabinet and decrease the rights of citizens to deal with their own children. The preventative programs that we had introduced were working. They were not perfect, and the information system that the government is introducing could have been introduced and still have the active role of the community and the people in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the government has announced a child advocate. I welcome that announcement. The real interesting question is will the child advocate answer independently to the Legislature like the Ombudsman, like the Auditor, like Elections Manitoba; or will the child advocate answer to the minister who will account to the Legislature in terms

of the child advocate? We would encourage the government to have that child advocate answer the same way as we created the Ombudsman's job years ago in the early 70s. We would ask that that person answer directly to the Legislature.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the substance of the Speech from the Throne, we have to talk about the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. My—

An Honourable Member: We will give that at least five minutes.

Mr. Doer: If we spent five minutes on it, it may be a lot longer than this government has spent on announcing their strategy on that -(interjection)- Well, we will see the doozie that the Premier's five speech writers write for him next Tuesday. Maybe he should write an original word for a change, Mr. Speaker, like we members opposite attempt to do instead of his high-priced—

An Honourable Member: I would not be proud of your original word.

An Honourable Member: We have not seen any of yours so we would not know.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the high-road member from Tuxedo continues to bluster and blunder around this Chamber, sending out signals to Manitobans, you know, happy days are here again. He is whistling past the graveyard as Manitobans are going unemployed and the welfare lines are increasing. That is the sorry state of his record.

Mr. Speaker, the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry presents -(interjection)- Is the member for Tuxedo finished? Can we proceed with the debate? Is it the new high roads, great decorum with the member for Tuxedo in play now, or is this the low road member for Tuxedo that we have come to know?

The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry perhaps gives us some of the greatest illustrations of where the provincial government is at with decisions we are facing. When the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry was announced, the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) and the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) were at a press conference and said that they would take absolutely no position on both the principles and recommendations contained within the report even though they had the report for a number of days and even though they had an interdepartmental working group dealing with the report. The Minister of Justice said to the media and the public that he would not take a stand on any of

the recommendations in the report because it was only the opinion of two people, two commissioners.

When he was asked the question about the chief of police in dealing with the document that said there was a cover-up in the investigation dealing with the J. J. Harper shooting, the Minister of Justice said he would not take a position because it was only the opinion of two people. He would not take a position as the chief law enforcement officer in this province. He would lower his voice and—

Point of Order

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the honourable Leader of the Opposition would like to quote the source for his allegation that I made such a comment about the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Justice did not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we have it and the bottom line is this Minister of Justice does not like any accountability. He just lowers his voice and walks away. We are going to hold him accountable in this session, so he better get used to it.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice then went on to say that he would take absolutely no position on the chief of police as the chief law enforcement officer in this province. The chief law enforcement officer of this province would take no public position on the shooting inquiry of J. J. Harper. He would take absolutely no position on the documented evidence that was produced in the Aboriginal Justice report on that shooting. Two weeks later the Hughes report is tabled and the Minister of Justice is in the newspaper saying, I phoned the mayor on Sunday night, I phoned the mayor on Tuesday night, I phoned this person the next day, I think the Chief of Police should go on the Pollock inquiry.

Now look at the contrasts. You have a shooting death of a citizen and you have a documented inquiry—and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) will not take a position on it—of the Chief of Police as the chief law enforcement officer in this province. Two weeks later Justice Hughes writes a very good report on the Pollock inquiry dealing with the inappropriate charge of a citizen, which I suggest to the Minister of Justice in terms of severity for the

citizens dealing with the shooting death versus an inappropriate charge is quite a bit different. He is out now saying the Chief of Police should leave and there should be a change now at the City of Winnipeg Police.

The contrast between the decisions that the Minister of Justice made on those two incidents are striking to members opposite. They are striking and they do tell the story, Mr. Speaker, a very big story. So we will be asking a lot of questions on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. We will be asking why the government can be so quick on the Hughes inquiry to run in front of the parade and why, as the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) asked the other day, we could take no position dealing with an inquiry dealing with a citizen dealing with a shooting death. Surely all citizens deserve a position from the Minister of Justice in dealing with an independent process for the shooting death of any citizens.

Mr. Speaker, we will be asking a number of questions in the House on the principles and recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry so the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) should get ready for them, and the Minister of Justice should get ready for all the questions we are going to ask about the way in which he treats reports.

Mr. Speaker, we will be asking the Minister of Justice a number of questions about the recommendations, and we intend on making that a major issue in the session and the upcoming session because we believe the work that was conducted by the many citizens in this province, across this province, by the two excellent commissioners, Justice Sinclair and Justice Hamilton, is good work and there are good recommendations. We will be asking those questions, and we do not apologize that for a moment, and the Minister of Justice can get up all he wants on points of order, but that will not stop members opposite from asking questions that Manitobans deserve to have answered.

* (1620)

Mr. Speaker, this government said last year that it would step aside with the economy. It has. It has said that it is going to step aside and not fight for the Canadian health care system, and it has. It has said that it is going to step aside with the environment, and it has. It is stepping aside with our education system as the Premier indicated. It is stepping aside

with our family services. It will not take a position on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that Manitobans need more than a step-aside government from a step-aside Premier. Manitobans need men and women who are going to work for them and try to do something about the crisis instead of trying to say that no crisis exists.

Mr. Speaker, we believe the people of Manitoba need some energy and some enthusiasm and need men and women who will not step aside in this crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), that since the government's throne speech shows no evidence that the government has any faith in its own ability to promote economic well-being—

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Deputy Premier on a point of order.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I would like the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) to note that the seconder was not in her chair for the seconding of his—

Mr. Doer: Since the government's throne speech shows no evidence that the government—I will read it over for the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey)—no evidence that the government has any faith in its own ability to promote economic well-being, I move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis),

THAT the motion be amended by adding thereto the following words:

But this House regrets that:

1. since assuming office, after September 1990, this government has been both arrogant and extreme in its disregard for the people of Manitoba;

2. this government's inaction, in particular in our key transportation sector, will lead to further economic tragedy adding even more families to the roles of those Manitobans who are unemployed or on welfare;

3. this government's inaction has been especially harmful in northern Manitoba where we are now experiencing unprecedented levels of joblessness;

4. this government has taken no initiative to guarantee farmers receive the real cost of production and, instead, has supported inadequate

farm programs which continue to force family farms off the land and is standing aside as the federal government abandons the Port of Churchill;

5. this government is allowing the essential health, education and social services Manitobans cherish to erode steadily through financial neglect and shortsighted and uncoordinated policy approaches;

6. this government, despite its words to the contrary, has failed to implement the vital recommendations contained within the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry;

7. this government's environmental strategy is based on public relations and lacks a vision for long-term stewardship of our natural resources;

8. this government continues to support the Mulroney Free Trade Agreement and remains silent on the proposed North American trade deal with Mexico; and finally;

this government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba.

Thank you very, very much.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member's amendment is in order.

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to join in the throne speech debate and to share some of my thoughts on the throne speech and probably put into a clearer perspective some of the comments made by the Leader of the official Opposition. Before I do, I would like to welcome you back, Sir, to your accustomed post and to all my colleagues for this brief but important session prior to the Christmas break.

As a rural Manitoban from a very helping and caring community, I was glad of the recognition that our government paid to the important contribution so many of our province's residents make as partners in dealing with the challenges that life presents to us. We certainly do have a tradition of working together through times both good and bad. I need only reflect on some of the many positive contributions made in our rural communities and, I dare say, in our urban communities by formal organizations such as the Kinsmen and the Lions and the Rotary clubs, and to be reminded of how significant a role each Manitoban plays in assisting those in need.

I can also recall the many times that our community informally yet spontaneously rallied around families who had fallen onto hard times or who had experienced sudden and unexpected tragedies, that the communities still have that feeling of empowerment that they can resolve many of their own problems. However, one of the most significant partners in protecting and enhancing the quality of life in Manitoba is our provincial government.

As taxpayers we provide the funds necessary so that this partner can provide services and programs to Manitobans in a wide variety of areas ranging from acute health care to education services for the mentally handicapped. The job of our partner, the provincial government, is to expend our tax dollars in the most appropriate and effective manner possible. This government, as stated in the throne speech, has chosen to spend our tax dollars very carefully and to also manage the use of our tax dollars very wisely.

* (1630)

In these tremendously difficult economic times, governments often experience the strong temptation to spend, spend, spend, as if somewhere down the road the taxpayers will be able to foot the resultant bill. This government is very ably resisting this temptation and instead is charting a responsible course of action that will avoid the severe grief caused to taxpayers faced with uncontrolled deficits.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with my colleagues the Family Services ministers from across the country and discuss the issues that were before those governments. In many cases they were similar. The difference, however, is the approach we are taking. The minister from Ontario had to rush away from our meetings to try and make more cutbacks to their budget to keep their deficit under the \$10 billion record levels. They were making very difficult decisions on that particular weekend.

My honourable friend the critic from the NDP talks about the hardship faced by people who are unemployed and people who are drawing municipal or social assistance from the Province of Manitoba. Yet I have not heard any comments made on our latest initiative to do with social allowance recipients. I suspect there is some split in that caucus about the manner in which that program was brought forward. I would be very interested in

hearing the comments from the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) as well as the critic of the official opposition.

In this province we have taken a different tact of keeping our spending under control. It is a contrast to what we see in our neighbouring province of Ontario, and it is a struggle that new governments in Saskatchewan and B.C. are facing, both of whom are acknowledging that they are going to have to cut back on programs. Both are promising a balanced budget by the end of their mandate. It will be very interesting to see how they achieve that goal and what decisions they have to make in the coming months and coming years.

The economic development initiatives of this government for the coming year play strong reliance on the inherent abilities of Manitoba businesses and individuals to be their own generators of wealth. The Rural Development Grow Bond Program is a perfect example of the powerful marriage of a government framework for economic growth with communities of dedicated and sincere people eager and willing to expand their economic base.

Today the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey) announced the first bond corporation that has been formed in Morden. I am confident there will be many more such announcements in the coming months. The results are local economics built on a solid foundation. The illusory strength of an economy built on short-term, reactive government programs soon reveals itself to be yet another legacy of long-term pain that our future generations end up being saddled with.

My community, along with all communities in Manitoba, particularly hard hit by the current agricultural crisis, can breathe a collective sigh of relief that once again, for the fourth year in a row, this government has not increased personal income taxes. This is the only government in this country that has made that commitment not to increase personal income taxes. It is a very strong stand against our fight to keep the budget under control, and it is one that other governments, who have not followed this lead, are going to regret as they form budgets this year, next year, and the year after.

They are talking about balancing their budget. They are talking about having balanced budgets in the next three or four years. Yet they are going to have to make those difficult decisions starting immediately. It will be interesting to see what

arrangements they make, what direction they take. I suspect it will be a different arrangement than Ontario has taken.

Our government has shown a great sensitivity to the strains that the GST and other federal tax increases have placed on our often static incomes. This measure has been made possible only because of the diligent planning and projecting undertaken by all government departments. A common theme that has been echoed over the past four years of this administration is the determination to utilize existing funds in the most effective and efficient manner possible. This dedication to ensuring that the taxpayers' dollars reap the highest value possible have led to another full fiscal year without the burden of increased personal income taxes.

Often, as the general public, we do not have the opportunity to observe the internal workings of government, but I can assure all Manitobans that every area of government has been tireless in stretching available dollars as far as they will possibly go.

My honourable critic in the opposition party is making comments, many of which I cannot hear, but I would be very interested in hearing her comments on the social allowance announcements that we made. I believe they are probably going to be inconsistent with what her colleague from Burrows said on the record back in the spring session. I will get to that later. She will have an opportunity, I am sure, to put her thoughts on the record as we go through this Throne Speech Debate.

I would now like to frame my remarks as the Minister of Family Services. The tremendous efforts of government to manage wisely and spend carefully have not only resulted in the ability to hold personal income taxes at 1987 levels, but they have also created the flexibility for government to strengthen and enhance our social safety net. As you may recall, my department in fiscal year 1991-92 received the highest increase in funding across government, almost 7 percent. During this difficult economic time, government visibly demonstrated its commitment to the work of Family Services by allocating almost \$600 million needed to provide quality, caring service to over 180,000 Manitobans who access service from the Department of Family Services.

As outlined in the throne speech, the action plan for Family Services for 1992-93 is a very ambitious one. This government recognizes that during times of trouble in the economy our social programs become a necessity for an increased number of Manitoba families. There is also the continued commitment to improvements to our existing programs.

Along with my colleagues in Justice, Health, Status of Women and Education, I am placing a strong emphasis on tackling the problems of partner abuse. The recommendations of the Domestic Violence Review report provide us with a blueprint to systematically and effectively stem the tide of domestic violence and to transmit the signal to our community that partner abuse is not acceptable. Family Services, as a partner in the domestic violence working group, will be formulating implementation strategies for government's consideration.

The recently announced Domestic Violence Community Advisory Committee is well represented by key players from our crisis shelter community. I recognize that both opposition parties have applauded the government for the formation of that committee. I believe we have their support in bringing forward recommendations which are going to help stem the number of incidents of spousal abuse that have occurred not only in Manitoba, but I think we have the opportunity to provide some of the leading-edge ideas that will be copied around this particular issue across the country.

Within our own Family Dispute Services, we are examining a new crisis shelter funding model designed to ensure consistent and stable services to those Manitobans in need of crisis assistance.

One of the things that we did when we formed government four years ago was to stabilize the funding. We had a very much smaller and underfunded service delivery system in Family Services at that time for these shelters that existed across this province. Now the number of shelters has increased and we did stabilize the funding by putting new funding into those shelters. Now we are looking at that funding model and, hopefully, we will still maintain and be able to enhance the funding where there has been a core amount of money plus per diems based on volume in the past. We have found that some of the shelters are in the position where they are accumulating a surplus while others are having some difficulties. So we will be working

with the shelter directors and coming forward with a new funding model in the coming months.

Very shortly, the Parklands area community will be served by a new crisis shelter costing some \$300,000, and we look forward to the opening of that particular shelter. Our Family Dispute Services division will soon be headed by a new director. We hope to be able to make that announcement soon, and we hope to have someone with a fair degree of experience in the service and shelter management and planning to head up that particular area of our department. Great strides are possible with the combined and concerted effort of as wide a variety of participants as possible.

* (1640)

I am pleased that I have been able to meet with members of the boards, shelter directors from time to time, over the last year and that staff from my department have visited those shelters regularly. We have made some good changes, I think, in some of those shelters. We recognize that there is more work to do, and we will work in a partnership with those boards, with those directors to enhance that service.

Within Family Services we are also responsible for ensuring that services and supports are available to our most vulnerable Manitobans. I recently had the opportunity to watch a movie that addressed the issue of the most appropriate type of support system that our mentally and physically handicapped residents should be able to access. The focus of this film centered around institutional versus community care. I was surprised to discover that in other jurisdictions there is still discussion as to what option is preferred. Manitoba in comparison is a significant leader in providing care in a community living setting. We will be continuing to take the lead in the area of further supporting community living by undertaking initiatives that respond directly to the recommendations of the working group on community living.

These important efforts by government are even further enhanced by the tremendous input of the community providing service to these vulnerable Manitobans. Again, the partnership of the community's resources channelled through government and direct community support has resulted in quality programs for those in need. I speak there of the day programs and the group homes that have been established over the last

decade. We are moving thoughtfully in that area, and we hope to bring forward some ideas from that working group that will be enacted in the coming months.

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

In June of this year, I appointed The Mental Health Act Part II Review Committee, co-chaired by Gail Watson and John Sinclair and comprised of representatives from government and the community providing service and support to mentally handicapped Manitobans.

I have very closely followed the progress of this important review and have met with the committee on a number of occasions. Very shortly the committee will be presenting its final report to me, and as the next step, we will be introducing legislation that will replace The Mental Health Act Part II. What is important here to note is that within six short months government in partnership with the community was able to successfully get down to the business of examining an outdated piece of legislation and reworking it entirely to be in harmony with the current thought and direction of the community.

Recently, I also announced a significant step in enhancing the economic well-being of those disabled Manitobans who must rely on our social allowances program for their income. This \$60 per month supplement for all of our disabled clients is an \$8-million program for government, and it is part of our income security allocation—funds made available by this government's long-term and effective management of our resources. I say again to members of the opposition, our ability to add programs like this, to add an initiative that the previous government and other governments recognized in rhetoric but did not either have the ability to put into practice or the will to put into practice, is able to come to fruition now because of the wise money management by this department. This is an initiative that was one that I am very proud of—that it is a recognition of the special needs of the disabled community.

I know my honourable friend for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) has been silent on this issue, but I think it is a need that was out there. The community, through a variety of vehicles, that there were some 15 or 20 groups that we have met with over the last number of months who brought the concerns of the disabled

community to us to highlight the special dietary needs, the special clothing needs, and basically the special needs faced by social allowance recipients who are disabled. I am very pleased that we have been able to take this first step in recognizing those special needs and look forward to meeting with representatives of the disabled community in future months to see how this is being accepted and how it is being administered and what more steps we can take in the future to make life for the disabled community better than it is at the current time.

In tandem, with our much-supported increase to benefits for the disabled, our government also proceeded with the provincial tax credit initiative. To illustrate the positive impact that this change will have on our clients' income, I would like to describe the dollars flowing to our clients pre- and post-initiative.

For the 1991 taxation year, our clients will collect their property and cost-of-living tax credits some time in May or June of 1992 in one lump sum. A number of them will decide to sell their 1991 provincial tax credits to a tax discounting service and receive in December 1991 up to 30 percent less in cash than they would be receiving a regular tax return cheque directly from Revenue Canada in May or June of 1992.

For the 1992 taxation year, our clients will receive the maximum provincial property and cost-of-living tax credit on a monthly basis starting the day they start earning that credit, January 1, 1992. An additional \$60 per family, which translates to \$69 for the disabled clients, will be on the January cheques issued in late December. So, in comparison—

An Honourable Member: . . . it is an additional source of revenue, it is not additional funding—

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, my honourable friend says it is not additional funding, and I readily admit that. What we are doing is changing the timeliness of the payment, and I am pleased that I have got the support of the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) on this. Maybe this is a time that I could just remind members of his comments here on April 22. He said:

"For example, converting the annual tax credit for social assistance recipients into monthly payments is a good thing because what the government did by that was they cut out the tax discounters. It was not just that it was depriving money from people on social assistance, but it was also the taxpayers'

money that was being skimmed off the top by the tax discounters.

"When the minister announced this in his Budget Address, I was pleased to hear that. That was a progressive thing they did in this budget, something that they should have done years ago and something that the federal government should have done years ago and could still do. In fact, I would hope that the federal government would take this good example, imitate it and do the same thing."

So I am pleased that the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) is on the same track of thinking as government is, and the member for Burrows says, not anymore. I know that she usually does not speak for him, but it would seem that there is a change in the thinking in the opposition steps.

I am a little concerned that members opposite would come down on the side of tax discounters instead of on the side of recipients. I am concerned that they want to support the tax discounting industry instead of seeing that money flowing into the pockets of those that need it on a more timely basis. I know even though my critic is opposed to that, I have faith in my friend from Burrows that he will stick to his words that he read into the record April 22, 1991, or if not, perhaps he will have a chance to further elaborate. Maybe it was not clear what he said. It appears to be clear, and I am surprised that he would change his mind on this.

To continue then, this is an additional \$60 on the January cheques that will be issued in late December. In comparison, our clients will now be receiving their provincial tax credits up to 18 months prior to when they would have under the old system, and 100 percent of tax dollars provided for this benefit will end up in their pockets and not be diluted by the administrative and interest fees of tax return purchasers.

* (1650)

My friend the MLA for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), although originally supportive of this measure, has apparently changed his mind and is opposed to increasing the dollars available to families in need. I am rather surprised at that, that he prefers to support the tax discounters rather than these most vulnerable Manitoba families. I know as a former activist on poverty issues the reverend devoted much energy to trying to improve the position of Manitoba's poor, and I am somewhat puzzled by his

new-found support of diluting the funds that are available to them.

While we are on the topic of social allowances, I would also like to contrast the 1992 annual increase in rates announced by our government and the 1992 rates just announced by the government of Ontario. Thanks to careful planning and good government, our social allowance clients in Manitoba will receive a 3.6 percent increase effective January 1, 1992. In Ontario, however, where they are faced with the extreme burden of a \$10 billion, self-imposed deficit, their clients will have to scrape by on a 2 percent increase.

Certainly this is a compelling example of the wisdom of solid management of taxpayers' resources as compared to the irresponsible course of spending far beyond the capacity of the taxpayers' contributions. Part of the reason for the small increase in Ontario is that not only has their spending gone up to an unprecedented \$10 billion deficit level, but they have now found that their income has been reduced by \$1 billion and they simply do not have the capacity to give the type of interest to social allowance recipients that we do here in Manitoba.

I would now like to turn my attention to those within Manitoba -(interjection)- The member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) continues to want to discuss the social allowances, and I think we have governments in Saskatchewan and B.C. who are now talking about balancing their budget and going a different direction from Ontario. I am wondering where my friend from Wellington stands on these issues, whether she would support the \$10 billion Ontario deficit or whether she would prefer to see a balanced budget as the premiers of both Saskatchewan and B.C. say they are going to achieve in the next three years. -(interjection)- Well, my honourable friend says they do not want to achieve it on the backs of the poor. Well, how do you—essentially that is what Ontario is doing with the 2 percent increase in social allowances, yet hiring people to run their hydro operation at a salary of \$400,000.

I would like to now turn my attention to those within Manitoba whom we have the greatest obligation toward, our children. Our children are the most vulnerable of Manitobans. They are the community within our province who rely on our wisdom and our support more than others in Manitoba. Our deepest responsibility lies in

ensuring that they are protected from danger and that as a society we act in their best interest at all times. As the minister responsible for child protection in Manitoba, I have not hesitated to take bold steps to ensure that service to children is paramount beyond all other considerations.

Our recent restructuring of the Winnipeg agencies has resulted in a consolidated, consistent management directing the work of a dedicated and enhanced front line service component. We now have the luxury of turning our full attention to the business of providing protection and service to our children and families in need. Our automated information system is on target for 1992 implementation. What a tremendous improvement there will be in our field workers' ability to track and flag cases as they move throughout the system. Previously, cases were tracked through the file folder method, many of these far behind the child who moved from foster home to treatment centre, back to his or her family. In this day and age of technology and computerization, there was very little capacity within the system to track these individuals. Often the case files were three or four or five moves behind the child. We have done considerable work on the information system, and we will have it up and running in part, if not in whole, in 1992, and it will be a tremendous asset to those front line workers.

Our leading edge assessment tool, the Reid-Sigurdson high-risk indicator, is now being taught to our workers in our agencies. Last week, many of the directors and supervisors spent two days looking at this assessment tool. It was developed here in Manitoba by Professor Reid and Dr. Sigurdson. It is being looked upon in other jurisdictions across Canada and the United States as a tool for social workers that is long, long overdue, and I am pleased that we have signed a contract with these gentlemen who designed this tool and are now in the process of working with our department, with agencies to put it into effect.

Again, members opposite sometimes have talked about the governance of agencies and have shown little interest in the service component, and we think we have a number of initiatives that we announced last June on the service side that are going to make the service providers that much more ready to provide the service that is so required by the children who need protection and need guidance in our province.

Legislation establishing the office of the Children's Advocate is on the agenda this session, and I also look forward to receiving the report of the independent review of residential care facilities for children.

The first of those two, the Children's Advocate, was something recommended in the early '80s that came from a judicial report by one of the Manitoba justices. The previous government chose not to go this direction and put into effect the child advocate. It is something that I am very interested in. We announced it last June, and we will be making the required legislative changes in the coming session to put into place a child advocate.

At the present time, we are busy looking at the child advocate system in Alberta and in some American jurisdictions, and we think that this will again enhance the service that government and the service providers can provide to the vulnerable children and families in Manitoba.

The second item that I just mentioned is the Suche report, the report on the residential care facilities for children. We originally hoped to have this report by the end of this calendar year. It appears now it will be mid to late January before that report is available. I suspect that from that report we are going to shortly be taking some action to improve the treatment centres and the treatment that children in those treatment centres get. We simply cannot ignore the fact that some of those centres perhaps could benefit from the guidance of the ideas brought forward through the Suche report by the children who are currently in the system, by adults who were once in the system, and by staff who populate these treatment centres. We look forward to that report, and I suspect in the coming months that we will be in a position to make some announcements to enact the recommendations of that report.

Perhaps it is because we have a population of manageable size in the province that we are able to effect positive changes so steadily and quickly, and the announcements that we made last June will become a reality during this current legislative year.

We do have the good fortune of being able to rapidly identify emerging concerns and respond on a very timely basis. If any of you had the opportunity to watch a recent front line program exposing the inadequacy of American bureaus of child welfare, you would realize as I do how proficient and

dedicated and effective our own Manitoba child welfare system is. That is not to say that there are still many, many children who are going to be accessing the service.

It is a sad commentary on our society that families are breaking down, that parenting skills often are not there, and that our agencies, whether they be in the areas of the province where the department offers the service, or whether it be where we have agencies, or the native agencies, there is certainly a lot of work that has to be done on the service end. Through the adoption of the high-risk indicators, the child advocate and the information system, and others, I believe we are going to have a better system in the coming months and years.

I would like to just respond to a couple of things the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) mentioned in his remarks. He made reference to the lack of funding in the child-care community. I would point out to him that this government has increased the funding for child care by some 61 percent over the last three budgets, and that we have put considerable financial resources into the child-care program in this province. We do have a fundamental difference: we feel that tax dollars that this government spends should go to families. It should go to families through subsidies; it should go to families who want to access the child care that best suits them.

My honourable friend in opposition and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) would rather see government tax dollars funding institutions, and we have a fundamental difference there. They would like to see those institutions receive the bulk of that funding through the previous grant system.

This province has the highest standards of child care in North America, and we are able to maintain those standards, and we fund to that level. Last year in very difficult times as many of the groups that rely on government funding either had some funding adjustments downward or received the same funding as they did the previous year, in the child care community, even in these difficult times, we were able to increase the amount of funding by some 2 percent and put another million dollars into the child care community.

I am pleased that we have been able to work with various advisory groups and members who work in the child-care community to follow a number of their recommendations. I recall that the previous minister

put into effect in total the short-term recommendations of that task force, and last year we were able to follow up and put into effect many of the recommendations that came forward from that group.

* (1700)

We still have a model child-care system, and when I meet with my colleagues from across the country, they are amazed at the amount of tax dollars that Manitoba is able to put into child care and are constantly asking questions about the child-care situation in Manitoba. We recognize this fundamental difference, that we feel that our tax dollars should go to people, people who want to access the system, people who want to access subsidies, and our tax dollars will flow to those people. The institutions that the opposition would like to fund will still get grants from government, but they have the capacity to access through the people who access the daycares, the subsidies as well as the parent fees.

Working with the child-care community we were able to identify the daily cost of care, something that was not clear before, to parents, to people in the daycare system, and I dare say perhaps even to opposition members. Because of the ratios that we have existing in the daycare field, the daily cost of care is very important, that we be able to focus on that.

I want to also comment on another remark made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) when he talks about the administration and the board composition that existed before, where in the care system in Winnipeg, where they preferred to have a lot of individuals who are very much involved with the Child and Family Services agencies, making a living from it, drawing their salary from it, also be part of the executive and administration of that.

We have made a change in the governance of the Winnipeg agency, but we have also indicated that we are going to focus on service, and we are going to bring in that information system that is so badly needed that I referenced before. We are going to create through legislative change this session, the child advocate, and we are going to push ahead with the high-risk indicators as quickly as possible. I know that I can count on the support of my honourable friend on those issues, and I am interested in hearing her comments when she has an opportunity to speak later.

In conclusion then as we embark upon this, the Third Session of the Thirty-fifth Legislature, I want to recognize the foresight and the strength of this government in our utilization of taxpayers' resources, and to, on behalf of the 180,000 Manitobans that my department serves, thank government for again giving prominence in the issues facing our Manitobans most in need. I think, again, as in previous years, we are giving tremendous attention to those Manitobans who are served by this Department of Family Services, by the Department of Education, and by the Department of Health. We have very clearly indicated that those are our priorities, and they have received priority funding in the past.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for this opportunity to put these thoughts on the record, and I am very interested in hearing what my critic across the way has to say on these issues. I do hope that within their caucus, they are able to resolve the disparity over their opinions on the social allowances, and I look forward to hearing my critic make her remarks on that.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to further debate.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I wish I could say that I was looking forward to standing up and responding to the Speech from the Throne that we are discussing in the House today. I am afraid I cannot though, because unlike the other two Speeches from the Throne that I have been involved in responding to since the election last September, this one is not even very high on rhetoric. There is virtually nothing there.

In the midst of a crisis in our society that in many ways is deeper than the crisis faced by our society in the depression, in the social fabric of our country, in the political fabric of our country, in the economic fabric of our country, in our role as citizens in the city, in the rural areas, in the northern areas, our role as citizens in our province, our role as citizens in our country, our role as citizens in the world; we are at crossroads, at watersheds in all of those areas.

This government's Speech from the Throne does not reflect that at all. As a matter of fact, on page 1 of the almost 19 pages in the Speech from the Throne, their Speech from the Throne references three activities in the province of Manitoba over the last year that the government holds up—the only

three activities that the government is able to hold up that the Province of Manitoba has undertaken in the last year.

I am not for a moment suggesting that hosting the Grey Cup, that hosting the World Curling Championships, that hosting the baseball tournament were not significant and well-organized and positive events to have happened for the province of Manitoba. However, to put that in the context of what is happening to us in our province, to put into context the fact that there were three paragraphs on page 1 of the Speech from the Throne dealing with those three sporting events, and there were three paragraphs on page 12 or 13 dealing with the whole issue of domestic violence is a shameful statement and speaks very loudly about the priorities of this government.

There are virtually no new initiatives in this Speech from the Throne. It talks a lot about co-operation. Where was the Premier (Mr. Filmon) when the all-party delegation went to Ottawa to talk to the federal government about the plight of farmers in Manitoba and western Canada? There were representatives from all four political parties that are now represented in provincial legislatures in western Canada. Where was the Premier of the province of Manitoba? Nowhere to be found. Playing petty partisan politics is where he was.

Where was the Premier when the president of the CN came to visit? When the minister who has had little or no luck in dealing with the issue of jobs in the CN for years is faced with an enormous problem, where is his Premier there to help him? Nowhere to be found—the spirit of co-operation.

Another thing this Speech from the Throne is very high on is that private investment will win the day. Private investment is certainly speaking its mind in the province of Manitoba. Investment in all areas is down. Housing starts are at their lowest rates since 1982, the last recession. Getting back to CN, what is CN doing? It is going to put its head office in Detroit. If we do not think that is not a specific direct reaction to the Tory Free Trade Agreement then members opposite are less economically astute than even I give them credit for. The farm economy—The Globe and Mail, not the most radical paper ever written, says that the farm economy in Manitoba is in desperate straits. This government talks about it. It is doing very little about it.

* (1710)

Capital is fleeing this province. It is not coming into the province. The government's Speech from the Throne talks about the need to co-operate and work together and that Manitobans can do it. Well, we agree that Manitobans can do it. They have proven in the past that they can do it in partnership with government. This government is doing nothing to give the assistance for the people of Manitoba, both in the city and in the suburbs and in the rural areas and in the northern areas, to be able to work the magic that they have been able to work in the past.

A healthy economy is based on a healthy, vibrant, working work force. There are 100,000 Manitobans, one-tenth of our whole population, not just adult population, who are either unemployed or on social assistance. One-tenth of our entire population from infants to the oldest people in this country, in this province, are not productive members of this society, largely due to the monetary and fiscal policies of the federal Conservatives ably or disably aided and abetted by their provincial government cousins.

As a matter of fact, the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) in his remarks talked about not having a deficit and being proud of the fact that they were going to come in under their deficit predictions so that future generations will not have to pay.

Well, future generations—excuse me—the current generation is already paying the cost. The Tories do not think about social costs, they only think about bottom line costs. What do you think the social and long-term economic costs are of those 100,000 people who are not actively, productively part of this work force, part of a productive society.

No wonder capital is leaving. No wonder people do not want to come to Manitoba. No wonder the out-population in this province is almost as high as it has ever been, higher than any other province except Saskatchewan, higher than Newfoundland.

The deficit, as I said, has social as well as economic spin-offs, but this government does not respond to that, does not see that is important.

Jobs—the Speech from the Throne mentions jobs five times, the backbone of our economy, the thing that is going to make our economy function. There is no strategy; there is no recognition of this as an important facet of government's actions, of government's need.

Of course, the Department of Family Services increased their budget by 7 percent. Fully half of that

increase was in social assistance payments and not because of a major increase to the rates, but just a recognition of failure, a recognition that the social assistance rolls in this province are unbelievable and unconscionable and a direct result of the policies of this government.

I certainly wish the Minister of Family Services would continue to listen to my remarks as I listened to his.

An interesting statistic that I found out over the weekend is that the jobs that are in Manitoba—well, we all know the jobs that are in Manitoba. We are losing jobs. We have lost 19,000 jobs in Manitoba. Most of those jobs are in the higher-paying, full-time categories that have a future. The jobs that are remaining in Manitoba are more likely to be in the part-time service sector. The McDonald's jobs. The jobs in the fast food industry. The jobs that used to be considered entry level positions for students, for people who needed job training, that they would start there and then move on. These now are the only jobs that people can have.

The majority of the poor people in this province are working. They are not on social assistance. They are working. They are often single mothers with children. They are working. They are often families who need two, three and four jobs just to make ends meet, and this is not to buy a second VCR or to put chlorine in the family swimming pool; this is in order to meet the basic necessities of life. That is what this government has done with their job creation program which is nonexistent.

The government boasts that their deficit is going to be under control, the only province whose deficit is going to be under control. At whose expense, I would like to ask.

I think that those of us on this side know exactly at whose expense. It is certainly not at the expense of the upper-income earners; it is certainly not at the expense of those who can take comfort in the fact that the income tax has not been raised since 1987, those people who can afford to take advantage of the income tax loopholes as put forward first by the federal Liberals and followed by the federal Conservative governments.

The people on whose backs this deficit reduction is being maintained are the people of the education system—the students, the teachers, the school divisions of this province—the health care system, the expense of families—families with children who

need to access the programs of Child and Family Services agencies, families with children and young adults with mental disabilities, families and individuals with physical disabilities.

The minister talked about the services to community groups. The minister should read his correspondence and go back and listen to the people that have attempted to and have actually spoken with him, people who are attempting to provide community homes, community services for their children, many of whom are now adults, who are living with mental and physical disabilities and who cannot get money from this government to provide services for their children in their own families and in group homes, people that the minister has had many pieces of correspondence from and meetings with.

Let us talk about the cutbacks in the vocational rehabilitation program, the fact that there is no additional funding available. Why is there no additional funding available? Because the minister has decided that an x number of dollars will be available and once that is done, that is it. So, even though there are more people who are eligible and should be allowed to access these funds, more businesses that should be allowed to access these funds, the government has said, we do not have any more money, too bad.

What it means is that someone who is in hospital who has had an injury, who is now disabled, who is ready to go back to work, whose company, whose business under VRDP should be able to access dollars to be able to make that business accessible, who should be able to put in computer terminals to be able to help that person function in a job setting, can no longer access that money. So, instead of the government putting out a small amount of money under VRDP, what they are in effect doing is consigning that individual to the social assistance rolls. They are going to end up with a nonproductive citizen who is going to cost the government in money and in social costs far more than if they had put in some funds into the VRDP program.

In the words of one person who has used this system and is very concerned that it is no longer available until the end of March: You go home and you learn to be not productive, not a taxpaying citizen, not a worker. You go home and you learn to be disabled.

That is what this government is doing. It is perpetuating the cycle of poverty with its shortsighted, fiscally irresponsible actions.

As the minister said, the government recently announced an increase in rates. This increase in rates is less by almost 2 percent than the inflation rate. That means individuals on social assistance are continuing to lose ground, not gain ground. According to the Winnipeg Free Press on November 20: Welfare provides only 52 percent of what Ottawa considers the minimum to survive.

In the cases of the disabled, even with the additional funding provided by this government, that figure is even lower.

There are also a couple of things that this government does or does not do to social assistance recipients that make their lives even more difficult. The government has been asked by those groups and individuals that the minister states I have not been in touch with, which is an inaccurate statement. I have spoken with many groups and individuals in the poverty, the disabled and social assistance fields who have said to me, one of the worst things that we have been asking this government to do, to make a change in, is the amount of liquid assets that we can have. Currently, it is the lowest in the country. Four hundred dollars per individual is all that a Manitoban can have in the bank at any one time, \$2,500 in Ontario. Newfoundland, not exactly a province that is swimming in money these days—even Newfoundland recognizes the fact that individuals need more than \$400 in liquid assets.

* (1720)

Single parents in Newfoundland and Ontario are allowed to have up to \$5,000 in cash, bonds and life insurance, while in Manitoba they are allowed \$2,000. Because of that, many people are kept even further down on poverty. I would like to speak very briefly about the whole issue of the lump sum payment.

I will, of course, let the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) discuss this issue, which I know he wants to discuss. The whole idea of the lump sum payment being taken away from individuals on social assistance has in the last three or four weeks or a month been very much in the forefront of people's minds on social assistance. There are several issues to be dealt with here.

One is, and this was brought up by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) in the Estimates process when discussing the change that was to take place in the tax law amendment statute. The question was asked, had the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization and other such organizations been consulted? Had social assistance recipients been consulted by the government before making this change? The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) stated that to the best of his knowledge no consultation had taken place. No consultation took place between then and the time that the change was initiated. No consultation.

The other major concern of the people on social assistance when it came to their awareness, and certainly in that they were made aware of the change, the immediate change, not by anything that the government did. The government did not say: Hmm, this is a major change in how we are providing assistance to these people, a major change; we should let them know well ahead of time so that they can make arrangements. No, they did not do that. They probably would not have done anything if the individuals concerned had not found out about it and raised a very large ruckus with the government.

The whole concept of empowerment here, which is one that appears to be foreign to this government, is one of the major issues in this whole thing. Yes, there is a problem with tax discounters. There is no question about that, but people on social assistance are not the only ones who use tax discounters, and not all social assistance recipients use them. What this government has done by not consulting, by unilaterally making this change, is that they have taken away from individuals who are on social assistance a right to make a choice that every other taxpaying member of Manitoba has.

They have said, in effect, that we do not trust you to make a decision as to how to use your money, so we are going to make that decision for you. How patronizing can you be? So it is an issue of consultation originally, it is an issue of not listening to the social assistance recipients in the last four weeks, and it is a clear case of discrimination, and I certainly hope someone takes it to court, because this class of social assistance recipients is being told that they do not have the same rights that other Manitobans have. That is the problem with a lump sum payment, and it is an indicator of this

government's total lack of concern for the people it is supposed to be supporting.

Another area of many areas that the government is cutting back on is services to our new Canadians. The English as a Second Language programs have been decimated at the same time that \$45,000 is now being put into The Bridging Cultures Program to do a great many things which are excellent in and of themselves, but \$45,000 will not begin to make a dent in the job that needs to be done. In the meantime many new Canadians are not going to be able to access job-training programs or jobs because they do not have the language skills to do it, another case of the shortsightedness of this government.

It is interesting that they are cutting services to new Canadians, to people for whom English is not their first language. They are paying lip service to the multicultural community, but in the Premier's own New Year's address which we got, or New Year's message, which we all received this last week, he states and I quote: I am sure the New Year will continue to offer Manitobans many new challenges and opportunities for growth. I am confident that our hard-working, resourceful people, descendants of the hardy pioneers upon whose sturdy foundation we are continuing to build, will help to fashion this new era of growth and well-being.

When I read that, I thought, is that not classic? They talk about multiculturalism; they talk about the need to provide programs for new Canadians and new Manitobans. They cut back the programs that could help these people access jobs and services in the community, and then the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has the gall in his New Year's speech to totally disregard the contribution that new Canadians have made since 100 years ago, it would appear, absolutely no speaking of new immigrants or refugees in this province, classic, classic.

The government has said again that there are no new personal income tax hikes. Of course, there are not. People in the upper income tax brackets, as I said before, can take advantage of the tax loopholes, but do not for a moment think, and do not for a moment think that Manitobans are not aware of this, that the Manitoba taxpayer and individual is not being taxed as a direct result of this government's actions and inactions. It is offloading, just like the provincial government complains about with the federal government. It is classic offloading,

offloading onto the municipalities, offloading onto the school boards, offloading onto the backs of the weakest and most vulnerable.

Again, we are dealing with a government which does not care, which does not see the need to help those most vulnerable.

An Honourable Member: You know better, and you say it anyway. Right, Becky?

Ms. Barrett: No, I do not know better. I know this is exactly it. I know that—again let us go back to welfare statistics which are again an example of a case of a policy that is not working. It is an admission of failure. Last month the welfare stats for the City of Winnipeg showed almost 12,000 active cases, 12,000. Three years ago, when the Filmon government was elected, that number was 7,200. It has almost doubled in the last three years. There has been a 13 percent increase in the number of regular U.I. unemployment claims as a direct result, not only of this government's inaction, but also the federal government's change to the U.I. regulations, which also has a trickle-down effect on the social assistance rolls.

At the same time, while these social assistance and unemployment insurance and economic disasters are befalling the lower parts of our income earners, and again we must not forget the civil servants of this province who have been forced to take a zero percent increase with Bill 70. Doctors in Manitoba received a 7 percent increase, and the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) political staff received increases of over 15 percent.

* (1730)

Again, who does this government represent? Well, we know whom they do not represent. They do not represent the majority of working Manitobans. They do not represent Manitobans who are forced to collect unemployment insurance. They do not represent new Canadians. They do not represent those on social assistance. They do not represent students. They do not represent single parents. They do not represent children. They do not represent abused women and children. They do not represent the seniors in this province.

An Honourable Member: I wonder who elected . . .

Ms. Barrett: One of my honourable colleagues asks he wonders who elected him. The question should be, who is going to vote for you next time? Not very many.

The government talks about the fact that it is protecting its citizens by not having a personal income tax hike and by its programs to reduce and maintain the deficit.

I would like to quote a paragraph from the Status of Women critic of the federal New Democratic Party when she says—she says it far better than I could which is why I am quoting it—the Conservative philosophy fundamentally seems to misunderstand what social assistance is all about. It is not to throw out scraps of money to people so that they can just scrape by, their self-esteem disintegrating day by day. It is there to help people to get back on their feet and to become self-sufficient. It is there to ensure that children do not go to school hungry, and that they have a real chance in life. It is there to train people so they have the skills and the education necessary to participate in the job market. These are investments for the future, and you cannot build a strong economy without it, something this government seems to not have understood.

You cannot build a strong economy by leaving children without care, hungry, so that they grow up on the fringes of society, chronically on social assistance or in conflict with the law. This is not the way to reduce the deficit, but this is the way Conservative governments throughout history and certainly in this country are doing it on the backs of those who are least able to protect themselves. It is shameful. The people of Manitoba know it is shameful, and they will do the correct thing at the next opportunity.

The provincial government talks about and takes great pride in its work on the restructuring of the Child and Family Services system in the city of Winnipeg. I find it difficult to believe that the minister can actually honestly stand up in the House and say the system is working better. When he talks about enhanced front-line service delivery, has he actually spoken to front-line service workers? The front-line service workers that I am speaking to say that morale has never been lower, caseloads have never been higher. The volunteer sector is completely demoralized. It is a centralized, oligarchical, not service-oriented system.

The automated information system, the high-risk indicators and the child advocate that the minister is speaking very highly of—none of these are a negative thing. They are all very positive. Not a single one of these initiatives needed to have a recentralized Child and Family Services system in

order to be implemented. As a matter of fact, the whole point of a computer system and information system is that you can be decentralized and still have centralized information. You do not need to restructure. So he is being dishonest with the community when he puts together the need to recentralize with the other things that he is talking about doing.

When the minister said it is a sad commentary on society that the family is breaking down, that is true. The family, as we have known it in the past—the norm, as we have known it in the past, which was always honoured more in the breach than in the observance, is breaking down. The only reason the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) can give for that breakdown is that parenting skills are negligent, totally ignoring the economic factors that lead to poverty, that lead to the cycle of violence, that lead to the cycle of remaining on social assistance—no concept about the broader, larger rationales and reasons for this system breakdown.

The child care funding system is something else I would like to speak about in my remarks. I have spoken at length with the minister and with individuals in the child care community and daycares throughout the province. The child care system in Manitoba up until last June, July, was a model for North America for which this government can take absolutely no credit. It was developed and devised and the process instituted under the previous NDP government.

What this government can take credit for is a very good first step at dismantling that model child care system as the minister would know if he had listened to the hundreds of child care centres in this province, both family daycare and daycare centres and families, many families, and child care workers who are finding that under this new system they have to lay off qualified staff. The waiting lists that many centres had are gone. There are vacancies in the centres now, and by changing the funding formula to represent more, the fee structure being with the parents and the children rather than an operating grant, the system is going to get worse rather than better.

This is the system that the Liberals instituted in the province of Ontario and this is what happened with that province daycare system. It became a two-tier daycare system with only the very wealthy and the people who were on complete subsidy being able to access the system. The middle class, the

middle-income family, which is the bulk and the backbone of our province and the daycare users are being frozen out, and if the minister would listen, he would find that out.

The minister might also listen to the fact that morale in the child care directorate has never been lower, has never been lower. So when he talks about children being the most vulnerable members of our society, again it is words not followed in any way, shape or form by actions.

I would like to just very briefly talk about the whole issue of domestic violence that we have discussed at great length, not probably enough, but at certain length in this House. I am glad to hear that there is going to be a new crisis shelter in the Parklands. It is certainly needed, and I welcome that. I also welcome the money that is being given to the shelter in Selkirk for renovating or buying a new building. I understand that it will not result in any more spaces or beds available but that it will be a far better system, and that is good news as well.

However, the funding formula issue, which the minister is also saying is about to be finally resolved, was within six months of resolution in 1988 when the previous government was defeated. That was almost four years ago. In that four years shelters have had to live with a funding formula that, from the very beginning, was seen by the previous government as inequitable, and they began working with the shelters to make changes to that system.

Almost four years later, the government is finally maybe going to do something with it. We still do not know. We do not know what the government is going to do with the funding formula for shelters. We do not know what the government is going to do with the new working group that has been established to deal with the recommendations out of the Pedlar report. I am hopeful that it is going to be very positive.

We do have some experience with this government's use of advisors and working groups. The working group on daycare is a case in point where the government effectively muzzled, through forcing the working group on day care to sign an oath on secrecy, 18 months, and then the government came up with not the recommendations that the working group had come up with but a complete misrepresentation of what that working group's recommendations had been for funding for child care.

There has been no action on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, to date no action on the Pedlar Commission recommendations that deal with economic security, long-term training, additional support for shelters, telephones, very specific things that this minister could, on his own initiative, have made changes. Nothing has happened. We are very leery of this government's handling of working groups and advisory committees. I will not go into the situation in the Department of Health in this regard. Suffice it to say, we will be monitoring and asking questions very closely and holding the government accountable, as will the people who are on these working committees, to ensure that they actually use the recommendations of these working committees to effect real change and not just as another way of stalling, of not actually doing anything while being seen to be doing something.

* (1740)

In conclusion, I just think that this Speech from the Throne is another example of this government's ideological bent, its classic neoconservative philosophy, and its total disregard for the needs and aspirations and abilities of the majority of Manitobans. The resources, the human and social and economic resources, have been wasted and underutilized in this province over the last three and a half years. That is a major shame and a crime.

What this government has not done by its inactions and by its actions, in some cases, is unconscionable, and this government will be held accountable by the people of Manitoba ultimately, but this government will know that the opposition will hold it accountable daily in this House, in Estimates, in questions, as will groups in our community who are finally beginning to understand that a Tory government in a minority situation is not nearly the same animal as a Tory government in a majority situation. It is a far different animal and not nearly as warm and cuddly as it would appear to be or would like to be seen to be.

Mr. Speaker, I will just end by saying, the people of Manitoba are disappointed. They have every reason to be disappointed. They are angry. They have every reason to be angry, and they will hold this government accountable. Thank you.

Mrs. Rosemary Vodrey (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to stand to respond to the Speech from the Throne.

I would like to start by welcoming back all members to this House, and then I would like to welcome you back, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to your fair and reasoned approach in this Chamber. I also would like to welcome back my colleague the member for Seine River (Mrs. Daquay) as Deputy Speaker of the House. I also look forward to her approach and her participation in this session.

Then I would like to welcome the pages, because we always appreciate their work and their contributions in this Chamber. I also believe this is a wonderful opportunity for young people, so I would like to welcome Nicole Robertson, John O'Neill, James Brennan, Geoffrey MacDonnell, Ian Grant and David Andrews.

Mr. Speaker, this has been a difficult year for Canadians and for Manitobans. We have suffered the effects of a national recession. Our first priority now for this government is economic growth. We as Manitobans have an outstanding record of working together and we now must use our individual and our collective energy to get our province growing.

In the first phase of our term we worked hard to bring spending under control. We as Manitobans had to recognize our serious situation, and as a government we did recognize our serious situation. We realized that Manitobans could not pay increased personal income tax. We as a government worked hard to set a plan to manage, to manage the economy and to keep spending under control. Now, Mr. Speaker, we are in the second phase. We have recognized the problem, and now we have to get Manitoba growing.

In this throne speech of December 5, 1991, it explained my government's plan to get Manitoba growing. Our plan will be based on the fiscal foundation that we have worked hard to lay in the past three and a half years. It is also aimed at capitalizing on Manitoba's strengths to provide a competitive advantage in attracting business and investment.

We have prepared the way for phase two, and we have prepared it by keeping taxes down, by controlling government spending and by fighting spiralling deficits. These actions are the important steps toward creating a positive climate for investment and for making Manitoba more competitive. Our Premier has said higher taxes mean fewer jobs 10 times out of 10.

In this throne speech, my government intends to protect Manitoba taxpayers by extending the freeze on personal income taxes for a fourth consecutive year. My government has also created a new senior management committee in cabinet. This new cabinet committee called the Economic Committee of Cabinet will place a greater priority and focus on economical growth. This new committee will act as a focal and co-ordination point for government's economic priorities and initiatives. Our Premier (Mr. Filmon) will chair this committee. This is a concrete indicator of the priority and the importance of stimulating our economic growth.

The Premier also announced the restructuring of the Manitoba Research Council into the Manitoba Economic Innovation and Technology Council. This council will act as the new cabinet committee's link to the private sector, but while our government's economic initiatives are important to recovery, they can only be a part of our plan for success. Manitobans must join in the challenge of getting Manitoba growing by putting their energy, their determination, and their resourcefulness into action.

Manitobans know best what their needs are. They know what will sell and what will not. They know how to use their local advantages to attract investment, capture economic development opportunities and to create jobs. Our government believes that no one will be as effective or work harder at getting the economy growing than Manitobans themselves. Our government will stand with Manitobans to meet these challenges, and we will work with them to help them find solutions.

Mr. Speaker, in Fort Garry I have knocked on doors in the community, I have held coffee parties in the community, I have visited at events and community clubs and schools, and I have found that the people of Manitoba have ideas to share. They have ideas to put Manitobans back to work, and those ideas are coming from communities like mine, Fort Garry. Members of my community have voiced ideas for jobs that will put one, three or five people back to work in Manitoba.

So our plan to get Manitoba working and growing is twofold. Firstly, we have to try to attract new businesses and investments that will create jobs, but perhaps most importantly, we have to look at ourselves. We have to bring forward ideas. They may be on a smaller scale, but we want to tell Manitobans these ideas are important one person at a time.

I found this same enthusiasm as I toured Manitoba with our caucus. People are anxious to be part of the solution and to put their ideas forward.

* (1750)

Mr. Speaker, this plan involves the positive thinking of Manitobans. We live in a wonderful province. My family and I chose Manitoba.

I was at a tea yesterday afternoon. Sixty women were there to welcome a woman and her family to Manitoba. This woman said she could not believe the warmth of coming to Manitoba. They had never experienced it in any other place that they lived.

Another family said that they had considered moving away. One of their children had a very serious accident and was hit by a car. That family experienced the support, the supportive network and the very wonderful services that we have to offer in Manitoba, and they are not moving anywhere.

We also have a number of other advantages. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) on Saturday made some very significant points. He said we have low-cost housing. We have clean air. We have low-cost rental space for businesses. We have low absenteeism in the workplace. We have low turnover in jobs, and we have research at our universities. These business advantages, plus the advantage of community, make Manitoba great.

Another example of our positive attitude was our Grey Cup celebration. It was considered the best ever. I want to congratulate the volunteers and the people of Manitoba who worked and who participated in this most spirited event. We need to speak out loud about our strengths.

In Fort Garry I have asked at each tea and coffee party I have attended, each community group I have sat with: What is good about Manitoba? Why are you here?

The reasons have come pouring out. People have said they have lived here all their lives and they like it. They like the family community, they think we have good housing, they like the weather, they like the clean air, they like the schools, they like our way of life.

Seniors, young people, families, businesses—they say the same thing. These are the attitudes that we need to speak about; these are the ideas we need to put forward, and let us not be shy.

I challenge anyone, and I ask you to challenge anyone who uses an image that is contrived from a book or a TV show, an image that is put forward by somebody who has never even been here. Let us tell them what Manitoba is truly about.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is also widely known for its agricultural base. This year has been a very difficult one for our farming communities, but their difficulties are our difficulties. The farmers have been pawns in an international subsidy war that has depressed the price of wheat. These issues and these crises affect us in the city, and we must understand them.

I attended the three farm rallies. I am an urban MLA, but I was elected to serve in the Manitoba Legislature and to consider the needs of all Manitobans and to know how the needs of some affect others. I went to the Miami rally. I enjoyed the country and the drive down, but I also enjoyed the people who I spoke to. I spoke with people one person at a time. I spoke with men, I spoke with women, I spoke with farm families. They told me their story, so that I could go back to my community and relate it. I went to Brandon and I spoke with farm families from the West and from the northern parts of Manitoba. I attended the rally here in Winnipeg on the steps of our Legislature. I spoke again with those same men and women, and I joined them in their walk through our streets in Winnipeg. Their goal was to bring their position and their concerns to the attention of all Manitobans.

I said I spoke with men and women, and that is true. They told me that some of them simply cannot continue to make a living on the farm. They told me about their needs to work off the farm and the struggle that it is in their family. I heard how sadly the stress that the farming community is under is leading to a preoccupation and a worry and that preoccupation is leading to accidents, to family breakdown, and to health problems.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Fort Garry, an urban constituency, are affected by the farm crisis. The sugar beet plant is in Fort Garry, and it is a major employer in my area. Their strength depends upon the rural strength of the sugar beet farmer. When I toured southern Manitoba with my caucus several weeks ago, I met several sugar beet farmers. It is important for urban residents to have the opportunity to understand the whole process from the planting in the fields to the package of sugar that we open and use at our table. These issues affect all of us.

Our Faculties of Agriculture and Human Ecology at the University of Manitoba in Fort Garry constituency know very well the value of our rural economy. In a recent visit to the Department of Foods and Nutrition in the Faculty of Human Ecology I looked in on a metabolic study using canola oil in a study of lipid fats, while in Altona several of my colleagues had a visit to the major canola processing plant. Again, this is an opportunity to see the whole picture, the connection and the interdependence of the rural and the urban economy. I am also proud of our agricultural companies such as Roy Legumex who send seed and faba beans around the world. I enjoyed a visit to this international company, a family business, while I was in St. Jean. This is an example of Manitobans competing in an international marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, education and training also play a vital part in our ability to compete economically. Our government recognizes the importance of our educational system and in the spring released a new five-year plan for educational renewal. It includes initiatives in elementary schools, high school, advanced training and skills development and university education. We also have a continued emphasis on standards with the implementation of our provincial examinations.

In Fort Garry, my community is particularly interested in education. I have enjoyed visits to the schools in Fort Garry as a celebrity reader to focus on literacy, to watch debates and sporting events, and to take part in graduations. I appreciate the efforts of the Fort Garry School Division administration and trustees in keeping me well informed on issues and the impact on our schools and our educational process.

Post-secondary education is also very important to our government and in my constituency. The University of Manitoba is in Fort Garry constituency and has made many efforts to keep me informed about their concerns. I have appreciated my visits with the administration and the invitations to meet with the Board of Governors and to the many faculties. I have been able to become familiar with their work, both research and clinical.

I would like to make a point that the University of Manitoba brought my family here. The Faculty of Dentistry and Human Ecology moved us to Manitoba, and I became very closely connected with the Faculty of Law, where I was studying until my

election. The President of our University of Manitoba in our community, and the research it provides is a real advantage to attracting new business and industry, and we have expertise already in place. Young people, in fact all Manitobans of all ages, have the opportunity of lifelong learning.

I would like to take a moment to tell you about a faculty member who I am particularly proud of, and I would like to congratulate Dr. Beverley Zakaluk, an Associate Professor of Education at the University of Manitoba. Dr. Zakaluk has been awarded the 1991 Lieutenant-Governor's Medal for Literacy in Manitoba. Dr. Zakaluk and I have met many times in her community work, most recently at the U of M's convocation earlier in the fall, and in her project in

the inner city. Literacy is a very important issue to Manitobans. It is very important to me, having chaired the task force on literacy, and I am proud of her work. There are many others at the universities in Manitoba who have made very significant professional contributions.

Mr. Speaker, vital services such as education, health and family services need a growing economy to generate the necessary resources to protect Manitoba's vulnerable citizens.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., in accordance with the rules, I am leaving the Chair and will return at 8 p.m., at which time the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey) will have 23 minutes remaining.

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Monday, December 9, 1991

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