



Third Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS (HANSARD)

40 Elizabeth II

Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Denis C. Rocan
Speaker



VOL. XLI No. 3B - 8 p.m., MONDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1991

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, Gulzar	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, Cliff	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
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	ND
MANNESS, 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	Flin 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 8 p.m.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Deputy Speaker (Louise Dacquay): I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the gallery, where we have seated this evening twelve members of the 1st Carman Boy Scout Troop under the direction of Mr. Edwin Pritchard. This troop is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Fort Garry, continuing debate on the throne speech, has 23 minutes remaining.

Mrs. Rosemary Vodrey (Fort Garry): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to carry on in answering the Speech from the Throne.

Vital services such as Education, Health and Family Services need a growing economy to generate the necessary resources to protect Manitoba's vulnerable citizens. We have a strong sense of community here, a Manitoba tradition, with an outstanding record of Manitobans working together to care for each other.

Our government remains firmly committed to protecting the services Manitobans turn to in difficult personal circumstances. We as a government will work with the caregivers in our society to make Manitoba a place that offers harmony, security and promise.

I am pleased with the current initiatives of this government: the Domestic Violence Court to provide a tougher and quicker system for cases of domestic violence; the announcement December 6 by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) of a commission to review and to help set priorities and implement the recommendations of the Pedlar report; the commitment to establish a child advocacy office to ensure children in the care of Child and Family Services are protected, well treated and that their interests and preferences are respected when decisions affecting them are made.

In health care, our government will place a stronger emphasis on community-based care. We will promote the integration of health services, including prevention, treatment and support.

We, as Manitobans, are becoming more personally involved in activities that benefit our health. In Fort Garry, my constituents are very concerned about these vital issues too. The Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre assists women and vulnerable families in my constituency. The Victoria General Hospital is working very hard to meet the needs of Manitobans.

I have appreciated my contact with our community hospital and their efforts to inform me on issues of health care. The staff have been very helpful in answering my questions and acquainting me with their projects. I particularly enjoyed my visit there a week ago Friday in visiting and meeting with the seniors in the extended care unit. My visit with the staff at the open house in the medical records department was very interesting. The complexity and the detail of their work made a real impression upon me.

Madam Deputy Speaker, all of this effort toward economic growth, positive attitude and speaking out about the strengths of Manitoba would be threatened without national unity.

I would like to congratulate the members of the all-party legislative task force on the Constitution and their chairperson for their work, but this is only one of the many challenges to be confronted in the year ahead. My government believes that by keeping taxes down, keeping spending under control, we have begun to lay the foundation for a strong economy, one that is capable of supporting the many important human services that Manitobans rely upon.

Economic growth in all of our communities, a better way of life for our children and ultimately a stronger Manitoba are all within our reach. The key to achieving these goals rests with our ability as a province to become more competitive, to become more innovative, to become even more determined to create the economic opportunities and jobs all

Manitobans want for themselves and for their families.

I encourage Manitobans to think on these issues, to speak up about their ideas for economic growth and to speak loudly about the strengths and the positive reasons to be a Manitoban. Together we can and we will build a stronger Manitoba.

Thank you.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to speak on the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition.

What is the purpose of a throne speech? Of course, in talking about our Leader's amendment, I must of necessity address the throne speech itself. I believe a throne speech should be a blueprint of the government's plans. It could be even a vision of the government's plan if they had such a vision. Well, does the government have a blueprint? If so, what is it?

This throne speech is full of a number of buzzwords. One of those buzzwords, which occurs about four times on the first page, is working together, one of those expressions that needs to be examined. Well, I agree. I think all of us would agree that we do need to work together, because the need is great. I think the government itself would admit that the reason that the need is great is because of the difficulty that the economy is in. In fact, they pointed that out in a number of places in their throne speech.

We know, for example, that employment figures for October show that there were 12,000 fewer jobs this year over last year and that almost 11 percent of the Manitoba work force was jobless. We know that Winnipeg's unemployment rate was 10.6 percent in October, and it ranked nine out of 11 of major Canadian cities surveyed, including Saint John's, Newfoundland. Winnipeg had the highest unemployment rate of any western Canadian city.

* (2005)

The projected unemployment rate in the last budget of this government was 7.8 percent for 1991 and 7.7 percent for 1992, but the average unemployment rate for this year has been 8.9 percent. The labour force has actually decreased by at least 2,000 people, and I say at least because we do not really know how many discouraged workers there are who have dropped out of the labour force. It could easily be higher. If they had not stopped actively seeking for work, I think the unemployment

rate would actually be higher than what the figures show.

The unemployment figures have been increasing steadily along with growing welfare rates and the numbers of people using food banks. Current statistics and actually surveys of food bank users in Canada show that more than 40 percent of regular food bank users are children, and I believe that Winnipeg Harvest can verify that is true for Winnipeg as well.

Last month the welfare stats for the City of Winnipeg showed that almost 12,000 people were active welfare cases. Three years ago, when the Filmon government was elected, that number was 7,271. Another indicator that the economy is in trouble is that at the Community Unemployed Help Centre, which offers advocacy services to unemployed workers, they have experienced a 25 percent increase in demand for their services over the past year. Over the past 12 months, there has been a 13 percent increase in the number of regular unemployment insurance claims filed.

More than 152,000 person days have been lost already this year to strikes and lockouts, an indication of how poisoned the labour relations climate has become under the Filmon Conservatives, and I would point out this is a fairly recent change, because in the last couple of years under final offer selection there were almost no days lost to strikes in Manitoba. In fact, as I remember, Manitoba had fewer days lost to strikes and lockouts than any other province in Canada except for Prince Edward Island, and probably final offer selection was the reason why that was so low.

If we look at private capital investment in Manitoba, we see that in 1989 investment was -2.7 percent; in 1990, -1.3 percent; in 1991, presumably to date, -2.8 percent. If we look at manufacturing investment in Manitoba, there has been a decrease in investment in 1990 and a very small increase in 1991.

If we are to look at the government's budgets, we see that there are problems. We know that the government is not spending the money that they have approved in their budgets. This may change by the end of next year, and we hope that it does. We hope that the government spends all the money that they have allocated and does not try to reduce the deficit on budgets not meeting their targets.

For example, in Family Services the following areas were underspent by the Tories as of the end of the second quarter: Family Services, underspent by \$10.3 million; Education and Training, underspent by \$11.3 million; Agriculture, \$3.4 million; Rural Development, \$4.4 million; Health, \$8.3 million. By the government's own admission, there is a serious recession underway. It is the government's budget; those are your targets. Those are not our targets, those are the government's targets.

* (2010)

We know that consumer spending is down and bankruptcies are up. Now is not the time for the government to be holding back expenditures in vital social services, health care and education. Underspending in Agriculture and Rural Development should be directed to the crisis in our family farms.

The government talks a lot about working together, but we do not see the kind of solutions that we would like to see. What could the government do? Well, we have a number of suggestions which are quite similar in nature as to what they could do. For example, they could follow the example of Quebec, and I found an interesting article by Peter Newman in the December 2 issue of Maclean's magazine, and he talks about a conference that they had there called Rendezvous, which was organized by the Conseil du Patronat, roughly the Quebec equivalent of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. For two days in Montreal, the 100 participants under Bisson's leadership hammered out solutions to Quebec economic problems.

Unlike similar mind exercises in English Canada, and maybe that is an editorial on the Manitoba government, the gathering included the top representatives of the province's labour unions, universities, big and small business, and cabinet minister Jean Corbeil and Gerald Tremblay from Ottawa and Quebec City. What did they do? Well, during two days they set goals and objectives and costs and time tables. All these goals were endorsed unanimously by every participant. Quote: That kind of effective consultation is a unique phenomena in this country. We weren't just trading practical suggestions but sharing thoughts. I'm convinced that only out of this kind of chemistry can emerge the economic policies we so desperately need in Quebec and Canada.

Well, this suggestion is almost identical to the suggestion of the Leader of our party that the government bring together the leadership in the business community and in the labour community and with the government and work on setting goals and objectives and work on economic policy in a co-operative manner, not just by appointing a new cabinet committee, but by bringing those three sectors in Manitoba together.

In fact, this has been recommended by some of our members. For example, in a press release on November 8, our member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) repeated his call for an all-party task force to look at strategies to deal with the economic situation.

He said, I have asked the Premier time after time to throw aside his partisan political agenda and deal with the problems of working people. He hoped that both the Liberals and Conservatives would join in recognizing the real need for an all-party forum to deal with these issues. The sad part of this is that the Filmon government had no plan of action, the member for Flin Flon said, in the face of the failure of its economic policies. On the contrary, his policies have made the recession worse than it would have otherwise been. The member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) said almost identical things to what our member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) said.

We believe that these are good suggestions. They are suggestions that are being undertaken in other places, namely the example that I gave of Quebec. If the government of Quebec can bring together business and labour, there is no reason why the government of Manitoba cannot bring together business and labour.

The government seemed to have a lack of economic policies to announce, and so they listed some of the accomplishments in Manitoba, which really amount to boosterism, by listing three sports events. We recognize that sporting events contribute money to the local economy and that they are events that Manitobans can be proud of. However, in the absence of a coherent economic policy, the government should not just resort to sporting boosterism, but provide some real economic policies that are going to help all Manitobans.

We commend the government, and I must say that I have learned something about commending the government. In the Budget Debate I commended the government for three things, and

they used two of those against me, one in Question Period and one at a press release. So, from now on, I think I am going to be very careful in what I commend of the government's initiative. It is unfortunate because the public get tired of us constantly criticizing the government. I do not think they fully understand the role of Her Majesty's loyal opposition, and so they want us to be positive. I was positive. I praised the government for three things that they did, and then it was used against me.

It is not easy to be positive and to praise the government when you know that they are going to dig up your remarks in Hansard and use them in speeches like the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) did today. Unfortunately, I did not hear what he had to say, so I am not going to take time to rebut him, but I think I can guess what he said. I think my colleague from Wellington (Ms. Barrett) probably rebutted what he said this afternoon.

* (2015)

I commend the government for recognizing the contribution of the Winnipeg Grenadiers, and it is appropriate that we recognize those who died and those who are prisoners of war.

There is another group that I believe we as a Canadian society and Manitobans should recognize, and that is the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion. This group have no monuments in Canada. They have one plaque at City Hall, but they have been unable to get benefits as veterans, and that is unfortunate because they were fighting and giving their lives for the same cause against Fascism and Nazism, which only six months after the Spanish Civil War many, many Canadians engaged in. So there is a group in society who have not been recognized, and I think the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion could be and should be recognized both by giving them the benefits to which other veterans are entitled and by assisting them in putting up a monument or a cairn, which is something that their organization is trying to do.

Why are we in this recession? I think the throne speech tries to put some blame, the throne speech suggests that it is an international situation that Manitoba does not have much control over and lists United States, United Kingdom and Australia as also experiencing recessions, and then goes on to blame the federal government for their policies of

fighting inflation with high interest rates and the resulting rise in the exchange rate of our dollar.

Well, a couple of days ago I had an interesting discussion with one of the members of the government in cabinet, and it was rather interesting that when we got talking about the economy and free trade and what could be done and what was to blame, I suggested that if the government lowered the Canadian dollar that our exports would greatly increase. It was the one item that my honourable friend across the way had no rebuttal for, and this is someone who always has a rebuttal, especially for me.

I think that if -(interjection)- I guess he knows who I am talking about. If the government was serious about fighting the recession, they should be giving a very strong message to Ottawa and saying -(interjection)- Well, I thank the honourable member for helping me write my speech. That is much appreciated. He is always honourable in or out of cabinet.

If the government wanted to give a strong message to the Canadian public and to the federal government, they would say on behalf of all Manitobans, lower the Canadian dollar, because we know that is going to cause exports to go up, we know that is going to create jobs including here in Manitoba.

In the throne speech, the government says they will continue to protect taxpayers by freezing personal income taxes for the fourth consecutive year. Why is the government repeating this phrase over and over and over? Well, it is part of their rhetoric by which they have sold the public a bill of goods and which they continue to sell the public on, some of which is well based, but other parts of that rhetoric I believe miss the mark, because they will tell the public that taxes are too high, but they never make interprovincial comparisons, for example.

* (2020)

I discovered something rather interesting in reading from Fraser Forum, which is commonly known as a right-wing think tank, and it is rather interesting reading. I would like to quote their July 1991 issue, because they have a table about taxes. I think this would come as quite a surprise to Manitobans after listening to the Filmon government for three years about taxes, because if you look at spending per capita, Manitoba in 1991 had the lowest spending in Canada per capita; it had the

lowest adjusted per capita spending in Canada. Their rank by spending was tenth, and the rank by taxation was eighth.

Now, I do not think that the average person in Manitoba knows that, because the government does not tell them what the tax comparisons are in other provinces. I think they just perpetuate this myth that we are overtaxed but never tell people what taxation rates are in other provinces. Well, I have my own suggestion.

What could the government do? Well, the government and our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), if he wanted to, if he chose to attack his brothers and sisters in Ottawa, could campaign and join many other Canadians in a campaign for fair taxation, because we know that since 1984, personal income taxes for the rich have declined, and we know that the middle class is paying more. In fact, Canadians earning \$24,000 a year are paying an average of 60 percent more in tax each year than they were at the start when Mr. Wilson became Minister of Finance, but for the fortunate few at the end of the scale, taxes have actually dropped and more people are paying no tax at all every year. We do not hear the Minister of Finance for Manitoba (Mr. Manness) talking about that, something he conveniently chooses to ignore.

We could also talk about corporate taxation. I do not think I have ever heard our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) say that corporations that are not paying any tax should be paying tax. In fact, there are policies in the United States that are more progressive than in Canada, because I believe there is a minimum corporate tax in the United States.

In 1988 the corporate tax rate was reduced from 36 percent to 28 percent and more than 60,000 corporations paid no taxes at all. What are some examples? Well, for example, Bramalea Corporation, they had profits of \$33 million. How much tax did they pay? Zero. How much did they donate to the Conservative Party? \$12,625. Brascan, profits of \$263 million; taxes paid, zero. How much did they donate to the Conservative Party? \$50,362. Confederation Life Insurance, \$62 million in profits. Did they pay any taxes? No. How much did they donate to the Conservative Party? \$11,186. Fletcher-Challenge Finance, \$24 million in profits, zero taxes paid. How much did Fletcher-Challenge Finance donate to the Conservative Party? \$30,000. Standard Trustco, profits of \$13 million, donated \$15,363. Tridel,

profits \$72 million, zero taxes paid, \$29,441. Xerox Canada, \$74 million profit. How much taxes paid? Zero. Donations to the Conservative Party, \$11,558.

In addition to contributing nothing to federal tax revenues, the following companies received tax credits in 1988. So not only are there companies that are not paying any taxes, but there are companies which are actually getting a credit from the federal government, and I have a number of those examples as well. For example, Central Guaranty Trustco, profits of \$75 million, received a tax credit of \$2.86 million and paid no taxes and donated to the Conservative Party \$30,934. Hemlo Gold Mine, profits \$43 million. What does the Government of Canada do? They give a tax credit to a gold mine. How much? \$2.73 million. Unfortunately I do not have their contribution to the Conservative Party available.

Magna International, profits, \$19 million, \$8.2 million tax credit, \$2,983 donated to the Conservative Party. Power Corporation, profits \$214 million, tax credit \$2.12 million, donated to the Conservative Party \$72,143. One more example, Ranger Oil, profits \$15 million, tax credit \$4.07 million, donated to the Conservative Party \$36,000.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear. Is that the provincial party?

* (2025)

Mr. Martindale: I suspect that is the federal Conservative Party.

But do we hear the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) for Manitoba suggesting to his finance minister colleague in Ottawa that they pay taxes? No. -(interjection)- I do my own research. I have never heard the Minister of Finance suggesting that corporations in Canada should be paying taxes or that some of their tax loopholes should be eliminated. I have never heard him commenting on these tax loopholes. For example, the top five right now: capital gains, lifetime exemption and preferred rates, \$2.8 billion; business and entertainment tax deduction, \$1.1 billion; dividend tax credit, \$1 billion; manufacturing and processing tax credit, \$1 billion; interest deductibility rule, \$.8 billion. The total of these five loopholes, \$6.7 billion. But do we hear the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) suggesting that corporations should pay their fair share? No.

I am skipping about eight pages in the throne speech because there is nothing to comment on. I am moving on now to page 13, Social Services and

Community Protection. The government says that they desire to make our province a place of harmony, security and promise for all residents, but government cutbacks are working in the opposite direction. This is one area that I would like to use some examples of individuals and how the government's policy of cutbacks and especially reducing the size of the Civil Service causes great anguish to individuals.

For example, one of my constituents contacted me because he was in a department, I believe Natural Resources, that was cutting back on staff, but it seems that there was a lot of turmoil in how they went about doing it. They could not do it in a way that was humane and fair to this individual and the individual came to me and explained how that was affecting him personally. I thought it was a sad story because the result was that the intended marriage of this individual was cancelled because this person was on such a roller coaster about being laid off and being rehired and being laid off and rehired. So that was one example of how individuals' lives were being greatly affected by, in this case, last year's budget and Civil Service cutbacks.

I have had numerous phone calls from staff in Manitoba Housing who right now are in great turmoil because of the reorganization, and they do not know if they are going to have jobs after the reorganization. The staff in the public housing authorities do not know if they are going to have unions to protect them, or in fact which union will protect them, because there has been a referral to the Labour Board, but they do not know the results of that yet and they are very concerned that they might lose things like seniority in their union, that they might lose successive rights. Those members of the public housing authorities have been calling me and expressing their concerns.

I do not believe that the government can achieve its goal of harmony and security and promise for all residents if they do not consult people. We have numerous examples of how they do not consult people. Probably one of the most recent ones is the change in the delivery of the tax rebate to families on social assistance. Yet we know that when the government wants to delay something, then there are all kinds of consultation, but when they want to go ahead and do something like reorganization, all the public housing authorities, they do it without consulting anybody and just announcing it as a fait accompli.

* (2030)

I commend the government for joining in the national campaign to end violence against women. As I think we are all aware, this is a very serious problem in our society. It is good that the government says that they are going to provide leadership on this issue, but we will be watching and watching very carefully as will many people in Manitoba to see if the government implements the recommendations of the reports that they have already received and future recommendations from the new committee that they have set up.

In the throne speech the government announced amendments to The Social Allowances Act and The Municipal Act to regulate municipal social assistance rates. This is something that is long overdue and there are good reasons why this should be done. Recently, we were out in Beausejour and we met with the volunteer, a lawyer from the community who was one of the key people in establishing the food bank in Beausejour. He mentioned that this food bank, in the constituency of the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), they had experienced as to why people were coming for food to the food bank. They were quite aware of some of the problems of the individuals coming and seeking food because they interview people and they keep records. One of the examples that he gave of a practice that he found very disturbing was individuals having to go before the town council in Beausejour to justify why they should be on social assistance.

Just on Saturday at the annual legislative open house, I talked to a councillor from the rural area who said that they had a request from a family in their rural municipality, I believe in the municipality of Arthur, but I am not sure, a letter from a constituent applying for social assistance and this family actually had no food in the house and he said that listening to that letter was so sad that he could have cried.

One of the problems in the past is that the councillors were the ones who controlled the social assistance and people had to often appeal directly to council in order to get approval in order to get municipal assistance. That kind of system led to all kinds of problems. One is that people who were not trained in social work were making the decisions. In many cases it was a very public process, and I have given two examples of those: one from Beausejour and one from another part of rural Manitoba.

Another problem, a very serious problem, is and was, that the municipalities had different rates for social assistance and that those rates varied greatly throughout Manitoba.

We hope that by these amendments to the two acts that the rates will be made uniform and that they will be raised considerably where they need to be raised so that people can live in some kind of decency regardless of where they are in Manitoba, and that the difference in municipal rates in rural Manitoba will not result in people making a decision to migrate to Winnipeg because it seems that in the past some municipalities almost made that a policy whereby their welfare consisted of a one-way bus ticket to Winnipeg.

The government has identified five areas for priority action in the health care field. One of those is action on substance abuse. Well, if the government is serious about this, and I hope they are, then one of the things that they could do is to proclaim the anti-sniff bill which was introduced and passed, I believe, almost two years ago by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis). As far as we can tell, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) seems to be stalling this bill, and we are still waiting for it to be proclaimed so that a handle can be had on this problem. This is something that I have been actively involved in the past, as at one time president or chairperson of the anti-sniff coalition of Winnipeg. This is an issue that affects our community and affects many communities in Manitoba. We are waiting for the government to proclaim the anti-sniff bill and thereby show us that they are serious about doing something about substance abuse in many communities in Manitoba.

The government promises to take action to ensure that economic development activities do not leave a legacy of pollution and environmental degradation. We believe that there needs to be fundamental change in society, that in the past when companies and corporations polluted, the costs of that pollution were borne by society, and that is mainly by governments. The fundamental change that is needed is that we must change to a principle of making the polluter pay and making the polluter clean up and making the corporations and companies responsible for making sure that pollution does not happen in the first place. That is a fundamental change and one that I do not think will come easily. So we will be watching for the Minister of Environment's (Mr. Cummings)

legislation and we will be expecting that it will be tough legislation and that it will have regulations that will have teeth in it. If it does not, we will be very critical and very disappointed.

There is a long way to go in Manitoba because we are light years behind other provinces and other jurisdictions in Canada. For example, in -(interjection)- Well, I am on page 16. The government promises to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the amount of solid waste generated by the year 2000. The government is light years behind in a number of things. I just happen to be referring to recycling and solid waste reduction. In November, I was in Toronto and one of the things that they are doing in Toronto in a big way is recycling all leaves. In the municipality of Ajax, they have passed bylaws which require construction companies to take waste and rubble to waste sites where the materials can be disposed of safely or recycled or re-used.

Yet in Winnipeg what we have are only private companies involved in the city picking up curbside recycling products. It is not good enough. What we need is a government initiative to make sure that every household in Winnipeg has the opportunity and perhaps even the privilege or the right to be able to recycle all the materials that can be recycled. Instead what we see is an abdication of responsibility and a reliance on the private sector. The result is that the private sector goes where people have money and where people are willing to pay to have their recyclables picked up at the curb side.

In other areas where the companies do not want to go or where people cannot afford or people do not have the education, there is no opportunity for recycling and so it is a hit-and-miss system, mostly misses. We will be looking for leadership by the government to ensure that they achieve their goals and give all Manitobans the opportunity to recycle and re-use.

My final few comments are directed at the last couple of pages of this document, especially the topic of aboriginal self-government. I recently met a constituent, an aboriginal person, who described the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report as "my bible." He said, "This is my bible."

I think that was a rather appropriate thing for an aboriginal person to say, because for one thing there are a lot of legal recommendations in it and in our Bible, whether it is the Hebrew Bible or the

Judeo-Christian Bible, there are a lot of legal recommendations and legal obligations that some people feel obliged to follow.

This document, the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report, is a benchmark. It is a study by which—and the recommendations are a benchmark—this government will be judged by people in the community, not just aboriginal people but our whole society. When it was released, I predicted it would be on the course of study in the law faculty and in Native studies and Canadian history. I believe it will be used in many, many faculties and university and in social studies courses in high schools. It is going to get very wide circulation and very wide discussion.

* (2040)

Unfortunately, the government says that they intend to address concerns and a range of issues, and I do not think that that is good enough. They said they will look at things that have an impact on provincial policies. Well, what does this mean? I think it means the government has no major policy pronouncement on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report in their throne speech.

In fact, an editorial in the Free Press on October 20, 1991, is titled Aboriginal in Action. Mr. Keeper recommended a plan for implementation of the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. I think many, many groups in our society, not just aboriginal people and Native organizations and our political party, but churches, for example. Many, many people in our society are saying this is a good report. Let us have a plan to implement the recommendations, but we do not see a plan of action yet. What we see is inaction as the Free Press editorial points out.

The last paragraph of this editorial concludes: Benefit may be drawn from the AJI report if police officers, Crown attorneys and others who operate the system are encouraged to read and discuss what it says.

Mr. McCrae adopted a different approach, leaving the report in the hands of a high-level interdepartmental committee. That method seems so far to be delaying reform, not helping it. That is what I am saying, that I am agreeing with this editorial, that we have this opportunity for reforms and instead of the government showing some political leadership, they have civil servants studying it, and they are indeed delaying reform.

The government talks about treaty land entitlement, and the opportunity is there for the government to show some leadership on treaty land entitlement. In fact, in Ontario, treaty land entitlement is moving forward very quickly, and according to an article I read this week, the reasons given for that were that the Oka crisis last summer precipitated some of that urgency, but also the change in government to an NDP government in Ontario meant that at long last treaty land entitlement was being given some action and some initiative by the federal and provincial governments. We expect to see the same here.

We have had lots of studies. We have had lots of recommendations going back several years now, and we have had an agreement with the treaty entitlement chiefs but it seems that the federal government in particular is dragging its feet. I think that this government has an obligation to get to work on land entitlement and achieve some progress.

Finally, I would like to talk about my constituents and what they have been telling me as I knock on doors. Their No. 1 concern is unemployment, and you know, they say interesting things when you knock on doors.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

They say, you know, the minority government seemed to be a reasonable government, but we do not trust these Tories in majority government. It kind of reflects the Free Press headline of Friday, July 26, 1991: So it's Bye, Bye, Mr. Nice Guys, Majority rule PCs take on tougher tack. Man in canoe dons Tory blues as scandals rock government. That just about sums it up, because that is what my constituents are telling me too. They say, get rid of the Conservative majority government. They say, I voted NDP and I will vote NDP again. We have got to get rid of these Tories. That is what they are telling me at the doorstep, and they are not talking about high taxes.

They are not talking about the deficit. They are talking about this right-wing Conservative government and the need to get rid of them. They are talking about the Mulroney Tories and the Filmon Tories in the same breath and putting them together. Their No. 1 one concern is unemployment, and this document proves that this government has no coherent economic strategy to attack the problem of unemployment that affects so many of my constituents and so many Manitobans.

The second concern which is a local concern is the child care subsidy change in the formulas. The result is that child care centres that have never had vacancies and have always had waiting lists now have vacancies in Burrows constituency and I know the same is true in other places.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to once again be back in the House and see your smiling countenance as you dispense with an even hand the necessary admonitions and justice that is required in this House in order for all of us to carry out our duties with respect to the public of Manitoba. So I am pleased to see your smiling countenance once again.

November 7, 1973, marked my first venture into the political process into public office, and now as we approach 1992, it is the start of 19 years of public service in Winnipeg and in Manitoba.

Each time I pass that anniversary date, and again this year, it brings to mind as we debate the throne speech just how fortunate we are to have the opportunity of freedom of speech, of democratic government, of the opportunity to be able to participate in a process like this. I think from time to time of those people in other parts of this world who do not have those freedoms, and who in fact are shedding blood, their own blood, citizen against citizen with respect to trying to achieve those freedoms that we so much enjoy.

It always brings home to me, I think, when we embark upon a new session in the Manitoba Legislature, that we ought to give great thanks, and we ought to stop for a moment, and not bash each other as we do in this House from time to time, but stop and think about the kind of opportunities we have, the kind of freedoms that we enjoy here without having had to spill one drop of blood, the odd broken ankle, but not one drop of blood.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to make a few comments about my colleague and my bench mate Harold Neufeld, the member for Rossmere. My colleague and my friend last Friday indicated his intention to retire from cabinet, that he had made a personal decision that because of his age and his status in life and the fact that his -(interjection)- regardless of what the number is, we all have an age, and my friend the member for Rossmere has decided that for personal reasons he wishes now to

spend more time with his family, with his grandchildren, with his wife of many years, and yes, perhaps even with his golf clubs, and one cannot blame him for that. Having served this community for a great many years, both practising as a chartered accountant and in public office, he is entitled to make that choice, and unfortunately the government will be poorer for it.

Now, we have had, and he has had, criticism from time to time over statements that he has made, views that he has professed. From time to time, he has spoken his own true feelings with regard to issues, but none of us can judge him for that. He has the opportunity, and in fact, Mr. Speaker, if many of us took the kind of—

An Honourable Member: It sounds like a eulogy.

Mr. Ernst: Well, it is a kind of eulogy, because I think the government and the Legislature of Manitoba has lost or will lose in due course, as he carries out his retirement plans, that we will lose something, something I think that is very valuable, because it keeps all of us back on the path, shall we say, from time to time, when we seem to stray one way or another. So I think all of us will lose something with respect to that.

* (2050)

Mr. Speaker, this throne speech referred to the Grey Cup. It referred to the world curling events of last March and early April, and it referred to the Brandon baseball world championships that were held in that community during July. Members of the Opposition are making light of these activities and suggesting that we ought not to discuss sporting events, but those events instilled a pride in Manitobans we have not seen for a very, very long time, because the NDP never would even support one of those kinds of events. They refused to deal with it. For almost 20 years the province went without those kinds of events, because those members thought, no, community pride is not something they want to instil in people. Community pride is not something that is good for people. They should be under the thumb of the socialists, under the thumb of the NDP and government will do everything for them, because that is their philosophy.

I think we have seen by world events that that is wrong, that Big Brother government keeping their thumb on the people of a country or a province—that

is wrong, and that has been proven wrong all across the world.

Mr. Speaker, when we have events like this I think it is important that we remind our citizens once again that community pride is important, that sense of achievement is important. It is something that every single person who volunteered, who participated, each of them has an opportunity to feel proud that Manitoba did provide the best Grey Cup that was ever held in Canada, that it provided for the second time the best World Curling Championships that had ever been held in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure, but it is very likely that the people of Brandon put on the best World Junior Baseball Championships that were ever held. It is important that we dwell for a moment as we did in the throne speech on the fact that community pride, community sense of spirit, that kind of thing is important for all of us, particularly in these times, harsh economic times.

I also want to make comment on the fact that the people of Ukraine have voted now for an independent state, that they have decided after many, many years, that they have had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, and they did not have that opportunity for a great many years, to be able to vote for an independent state, to break away from former ties with the Soviet Union and the eastern bloc and to be able to chart their own destiny. People here in Manitoba of Ukrainian descent, many amongst our caucus and members opposite, have great joy in their hearts as a result of that decision to break away, so I congratulate them.

The road they embark upon will not be an easy road. The road they embark upon will have many, many pitfalls as they proceed toward a market economy, toward democratic independence. Mr. Speaker, I wish them well, and I am sure all of us in this House do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I want to comment today about an issue that has arisen that unfortunately saddens me greatly. That is the decision of the Rotary Club of Assiniboia to withdraw their application for funding for the Rotary Pines project and to decide that they will not proceed with this project.

Mr. Speaker, it troubles me greatly, the kind of media attention, the kind of criticism and statements that have been made by members of the opposition in particular with respect to this project and with

respect to the volunteers who worked so hard toward seeing this project come to fruition.

Mr. Speaker, I find it abhorrent quite frankly that the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), for instance, as a man of the cloth, would have made some of the statements that he did.

Point of Order

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Speaker, I never once criticized the volunteers involved in Rotary Pines, and I would like to make that—

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

* * *

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, when the chairman of the Rotary Club Building Committee is accused of some dastardly deed, when he is a volunteer giving freely of his time and his effort in order to see a project for senior citizens in his community come to fruition and is condemned for that, that is wrong. That is not something that should ever happen in this House or should ever happen outside of this House.

Mr. Speaker, today we now have 125 or so senior citizens who will not have a place of residence that they had anticipated, who will not have the opportunity to come together as a sense of community, who will not have their home that they had anticipated, and that they were prepared to pay for. They did not ask. They were prepared to pay for the right to have that community, and they had formed a sense of community over the past while and advised that some 90 percent of the units in that project had in fact been sold, that people had actually put up the money necessary to meet the requirements of the program in order to have that project proceeded.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my honourable friends opposite in making their statements of condemnation of this project and the filing of the petitions that happened day after day, I am sure the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) thought this was funny, that he could file petitions day after day, but there will not be 100 construction jobs in Winnipeg this winter—badly needed construction jobs—because of those actions. There will not be those 100 construction jobs; there will not be 20 jobs in the construction supply field this winter because of those actions. They will not have the ripple effect

through the economy that some \$8 million of construction would have done for this community. It will not be there, but the real tragedy associated with this is the fact that we have had a number of volunteers who have been dragged through the mud.

We have had a number of volunteers, people who have dedicated hundreds of thousands of hours to their community, who have had their names besmirched somehow because of the attack on this particular project. That is the true tragedy, because those volunteers will not ever volunteer again. They have told me. They said, I will not ever volunteer another hour in this community because of the kinds of actions that have taken place and the fact that my name has been dragged through the mud, my name has been besmirched, my name has been held up to ridicule by people, particularly members of the opposition. They have said, I will not volunteer again. The city of Winnipeg will be poorer for that, because they will not have that opportunity.

We see the petitions that are filed in here every day by my honourable friend and the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes), petitions that are filed that lead off, the one today, with Mitch Podolak. Mr. Speaker, does he live in St. James? I doubt it very much if he lives in St. James, but he is certainly well known to members of the NDP, and he is well known to government because he has had his hands in the pot to run his operations here for a very long time.

When you look at some of those other petitions and you see people there who are not from Winnipeg, but they are from outside of Winnipeg. In fact, a couple of them even had people from outside of Manitoba who signed the petition "Stop the Pines"—outside of Manitoba. A couple of those petitions, if you read them, reads the "who's who" of the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

Last summer, when they were all here protesting Bill 70, the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), I am sure, circulated the petition and of course it was Bernie Christophe who signed, Susan Hart-Kulbaba who signed, Hilliard who signed, and on and on and on. Bruno Zimmer signed, Bernie Christophe signed, on and on and on—a "who's who" of the Federation of Labour. Most of them I am sure did not know one end of the Rotary Pines from another.

Mr. Speaker, those are the kinds of frivolous petitions that have been presented by the member for Burrows with respect—those who do not even

understand, do not even know, have no idea about where it is or what—I am sure the member has not even been out there to have a look to see where it is.

That kind of hypocrisy that comes from the NDP is something we have learned to have to accept because it happens day after day after day after day. The hypocrisy of that member who so strongly supports Seniors RentalStart projects in other parts of Manitoba, in fact, congratulated the government last year in budget debate for cancelling the program. There is another example. The member referred to it earlier this evening, the fact that he got caught, he said, that somehow they had used it against him. Well, if he believes it, then he said it. If he does not believe it, then do not say it. Do not suggest for a minute that he got caught or that somebody used it against him. Mr. Speaker, heavens.

* (2100)

Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer to the throne speech if I may and read just one paragraph: "The only true generators of wealth in our economy are Manitobans themselves. My government believes that using Manitobans' own ideas for local, regional or provincial growth is the best way to build a strong economy. Manitobans have proven that they are capable of competing successfully in the national and international marketplaces. My ministers are confident that by working together, Manitobans can turn the tremendous potential of our province into real opportunities and real jobs."

I wholeheartedly subscribe to that statement. All of my colleagues here subscribe to that statement, because that is the essence of what an economy is going to do, will do, to form a strong base and a strong future for Manitoba, because it will not happen by the Jobs Fund, it will not happen by the government pouring \$500 million into make-work projects that are gone within a year and the debts left for the people of Manitoba to shoulder. We have seen that and it has not worked. It did not work, and I do not think that the members opposite should be trying to suggest that we do it again. Mr. Speaker, Manitobans cannot afford to do it again. We cannot afford to do it again.

What Manitobans do need is confidence to invest in our province. Manitobans need the confidence to proceed to go ahead to put their hard earned monies, to take risks, to create jobs, to create

industries, to be able to compete in a world where others seek to compete, and they need the support of community leaders. They do not need the constant doom and gloom from across the way. They need to have some support from the people in this Legislature, from their community leaders, from their politicians, to be able to say and to encourage them, please go out and invest; please push your ideas to work; please take those risks; please create those jobs, because that is the kind of thing we need in this province, and that is not the kind of message that is coming out of this Legislature, particularly from the other side of the House. We do not need the messages of the doom-and-gloom merchants across the way.

As I said before, the Grey Cup, the World Curling, they instilled community confidence in people. People were proud to be Winnipeggers, proud to be Manitobans, proud that they were able to accomplish something that no one else in the country had accomplished, and we need to capitalize on that feeling, that inner feeling of well-being, that they can really do something, that they can compete with the rest of Canada. We can compete with the Dome in Toronto. We showed we could. We need now to transfer that confidence into risk taking, into capital investment, into job creation, so that Manitobans can have the opportunities to work, can have the opportunities, God forbid, to make a profit, because that is not a dirty word.

Without profits, Mr. Speaker, we will not have taxes; without profits, we will not have jobs, because people are not going to invest their hard earned capital, they are not going to take a risk, if they do not have a reward, and that reward is profit. It is not something that is bad, and for too long, that has been the product of statements from members opposite, that somehow it is wrong, somehow we should never make a profit, somehow it is wrong to be successful. We found out what the alternative is and how well it worked. We found out the bread lines in the Soviet Union with the totalitarian system that created an economy where nothing worked, the product of true socialism, we found that does not work. We also know, Mr. Speaker, imperfect as it is, that the free market economy that we enjoy in North America does work.

We also know that interventionist governments like the Pawley administration who put in \$500 million into a Jobs Fund and then left us with the debt when the jobs were gone. We found that

interventionist activities such as that do not work. So let us get on and encourage the people of Manitoba, to give them some confidence, to build on the confidence that they have experienced of recent time, to take a risk, to invest their money.

We had an example of that today, that the people of Morden are prepared to risk and invest their money for the betterment of their community. That is the kind of thing we want to see more of in this province, not just through the rural bond program, but in Winnipeg and in the North and everywhere else in Manitoba, we need to see that confidence and that risk taking in order to see jobs come for Manitobans. Quite frankly, to be a little selfish in the matter, to see tax revenues again roll into the government, because if we do not have those revenues, we cannot carry out the programs that are so necessary and vital for which the members across the way scream, day after day, spend more. Without those revenues, we will not have the wherewithal to carry out those vital programs for our community of health care, education and family services.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday last we remembered the victims of Ecole polytechnique in Montreal and all others who have died as a result of violence, the women of this country, the women of this province, the women of this city who have experienced violence of one kind or another. That is a horrendous black cloud that hangs over Canadian society like it has never hung over here before.

It is something that I think all of us are very concerned about, not just the question of comment, not just a question of remembrance, but of genuine, real concern that this kind of escalation in our society, this kind of loss of control, if you will, is somehow burgeoning and all of us seek a way to stop, but I am not sure we know really how to do it. How do you stop someone who loses control of their emotions and commits an act that we all find abhorrent? We can recognize that fact; we can remember those who have died; we can hold vigils; we can build monuments. We can do an awful lot of things, but we have to get down to the root cause. We have to get hold of why it is happening, and why people are letting their emotions run wild and that the victims, particularly women and children, in our society are somehow at risk on a constant basis. We have much to do.

Actions are required. We cannot, we must not allow this to continue unbridled.

Mr. Speaker, some actions have been taken by the government. Since 1988, we have opened four new shelters in Manitoba, shelters for abused women and children, in Winnipeg, in Thompson and in Brandon, with some total of 115 beds. It is a sad state of affairs when you have to open more homes for abused women and children.

We have a new Domestic Violence Court that the Attorney General has been working very, very hard to see implemented in this province to get the perpetrators of those foul deeds before the courts quickly to have them dealt with. We need to do that; we need to do more of it; we need to show that it will not be tolerated in our society even after the fact, but it is before the fact that we really need to work.

We have, Mr. Speaker, another two shelters at present under construction with another 32 beds being brought on stream; and again, while they are necessary and needed, and God knows we want to provide facilities for those people so that they can get out of their abusive situation, at the same time, we have to ask ourselves, why do we need shelters at all? Why do we have violence at all? Why do we not have the kind of family togetherness that has been, I think, an indication of what we had in the past. Why is it now changing? Why are we faced with these kinds of problems here in Manitoba and in Canada?

* (2110)

We must give it a high priority. We must work very hard toward solving this very, very critical problem, and I look forward to working with all members of the House to try and find a solution, to try and find a way to stop this horror that visits our province on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, on a different note, we had comments by my colleague, the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), during his motion with respect to the Speech from the Throne, and he referred to Ontario. I asked the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) just a few moments ago if he subscribed, and if they, the NDP in Manitoba, were like the NDP in Ontario, and he said, emphatically, yes. Yes, he said, Mr. Speaker. Not perhaps or maybe or some we do and some we do not, but he said yes—uncategorically, yes. They were like the NDP in Ontario. Premier Bob, the peoples' favourite Premier Bob in Ontario. He is their favourite, until they get their tax bill. Then he will not be very much of a favourite then.

Premier Bob always talks about his partnership, the partnership agenda of Ontario. The government and big labour—that is the partnership, Mr. Speaker, not government and the people or government and the workers, but it is the government and big unions. That is the partnership in Ontario.

He does not even include the workers. Workers are kind of left off at the sides. As a matter of fact, I have to tell you that one day when I was in opposition, a few years ago, I heard—in fact, when final offer selection was introduced, I spoke to the then Minister of Labour, and do you know what he said? He said there are three parties to an agreement, three parties: the company, the union, and the workers.

Mr. Speaker, I always thought the workers were the union. I always thought that somehow these people working together, bonding together for the common good of everyone, was the union, but I was told no. The Minister of Labour of the day, the member then from St. James, told me. He said, no, there are three parties to the agreement. There is the union; there is the company; and there are the workers. Somehow the workers kind of get left off at the side, and it is really the company and the union. When he referred to the union, there is only one conclusion I can draw from that, and that is the fact that the union or the union bosses, those highly paid, perk-laden union bosses who all reside in that magnificent tower down there on Broadway—we have to understand that union bosses run, finance, and direct most of the policy that comes out of the Ontario government.

Mr. Speaker, it happens here, too. My honourable friends opposite and my friend, the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), read out the other day comments with regard to what kind of contributions were made to the New Democratic Party by big unions, and they were contributions made in the province of Manitoba. The ones that my honourable friend for Burrows read out today were contributions made in the country of Canada, not in Manitoba. Those numbers, in fact—it almost borders on misleading the House.

It almost borders on misleading the House by suggesting somehow that the contributions that he read out and the profits that he read out were somehow all profits generated in Manitoba, tax paid or not paid in Manitoba, and contributions made or not made to this political party. That comes very, very close to misleading us into thinking that

somehow all of that would apply to Manitoba. When my friend from Niakwa made his comments, they were all directly related to Manitoba. They were not related somewhere else.

Who in Manitoba is stamped from the union mold? Who in this House is stamped from the union mold? Who has his roots sunk deep into the union movement, Mr. Speaker? Who? Who jumped into politics from the leadership of Manitoba's biggest union? Who supports the union movement in this province, and who jumps every time they say something? Who responds to their kind of tactics? Who would that person be?

Well, Mr. Speaker, if you want to refer back for a moment to those petitions that were tabled in the House, we could find out in part who those people are. It was Susan Hart-Kulbaba, and it was Bernie Christophe, and Bruno Zimmer and Rob Hilliard and Mike McIsaac and all of those wonderful folks down at the Union Centre, those wonderful folks who gave you the bail-out-Bernie bill. But who is this person? It is the member for Concordia, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), the biggest union boss of them all—union made, stamped from the union mold.

My time is drawing to a close. I have just one comment. Property ownership in this country has been sacrosanct as the first settlers came here 300 years ago. They are the people who came here because they did not have the opportunity in the old world to own land, to own their own piece of land, to have their own farm, to have the opportunity to own their own property. They did not have that in the Old World, so they emigrated. They left everything. They gave up an entire history, an entire culture, an entire way of life to strike out in a foreign land where they did not know what was going to happen. They had no infrastructure. They came here on the promise and the expectation that they would have an opportunity to own land. The NDP in Ontario, who resemble exactly, according to the member for Dauphin—

An Honourable Member: Precisely.

Mr. Ernst: Precisely, according to the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), the NDP in Manitoba, are about to take all that away. They are about to take away 300 years of progress. They are going to snatch the land, that effort that was put in by all of those people for many generations. They are going to take it away from the people of Ontario because

they think it is wrong. They do not believe that people should own anything because the government should own it and then the government could control it, and if they are in the government, they can control everybody. They control their housing, they control just about everything that they do eventually. That is the philosophy of my friends opposite, and that is something else that we have to be very cautious of.

So, Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on and on, but I think I should give my honourable friend from Dauphin an opportunity to speak.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. This is truly a great audience that is gathered here tonight to listen to my speech. I do not know how much a plate they paid tonight, but it is really nice to have all of you here -(interjection)- Oh, they are breaking my heart already, several of them. I am speaking to the unconverted here, to their faces. I am not worried about the people behind me. I am speaking to the unconverted, and I think it is important that we do that. I was going to start with some other comments, but the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) brought forward a number of points that I think are worth responding to. I hope that the members who are now making their way to their busy offices and to other demands that they have on their time will stay a while to hear perhaps some of my responses to the Minister of Urban Affairs.

* (2120)

The Minister of Urban Affairs provided us, with the support of the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh), with a very heart-wrenching story about the failure of the Rotary Pines and what happened today, and he blamed it all on the opposition. He never for a moment thought to look, as Tories typically do, at himself and look at his government and how they handled this project right from the beginning.

It was fraught with errors and underhanded dealings, and the program was secretly put together and retained for this group. The opposition responded to that, to the way it was handled by this government from the beginning. The opposition—my colleagues, the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale)—was not against any of the senior citizens as he would like to make out, or as the member for Assiniboia would like to leave the impression, against their having the housing that

they need in this province. There are many other ways to deliver it.

We were not against the senior citizens. We were not against the Rotary Pines. It was where it was located and how it was handled by this government right from the beginning. That is why, and he should not try and rewrite history here and misrepresent the facts in this case to try and make his colleagues and the opposition feel that somehow things were wrong with the way we handled it in opposition. We did what was right. We pointed out that the minister was not aboveboard in the way he handled this project, and we pointed out that the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) had a legitimate case that he put forward that was ignored by the Premier and by this minister and by his colleagues with regard to the future of the Winnipeg International Airport.

It is because of that attitude that Manitoba is losing day by day, insofar as its role as a transportation centre in this country, because they do not have a commitment to transportation, to the future role of that airport and the hub that it could be in this country. That typifies as much as anything the attitude, and why the Minister of Highways and Transportation is fighting a losing battle day by day. I do not even know if he is still kicking and screaming anymore, if he has any energy left. A losing battle with CN—if indeed he is battling with his colleagues because it is falling on deaf ears—a losing battle with regard to Churchill, a losing battle on the airport, a losing battle with regard to transportation jobs in this province, jobs moving to other areas of this country, slipping away right under their noses here.

The Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) says that he recognizes that this is happening, but he is powerless to do anything. He is no longer, if ever he was, even a consequence in that whole scheme of things; he does not play a part, a major role any longer like the Minister of Highways and Transportation has done in the past. They ignore him. They go ahead and do what they want. I think the reason they ignore him is that he has not been able to swing any of his positions in cabinet, and therefore they say he has not any power in cabinet, we do not have to listen to him. So they ignore him.

Now I want to respond to a couple of other things that the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) talked about. He talked about the fact that the opposition is always criticizing the government. He said that we

talk about doom and gloom all the time and that we should be proud to be Manitobans—as if we are not—and that what we have here is a crisis of confidence in Manitoba, and that is the fault of the opposition and the NDP.

The crisis of confidence—is it because of this government's policies? When the New Democratic Party was in government in this province, we had the highest confidence by private investors. We know that, because private investment was leading the nation in this province when we were in government in this province. They cannot say there was no confidence. How is it that as soon as the NDP government is no longer in government in this province that somehow the residual effects of the NDP government is the reason for the whole lack of confidence and the recession that we have? That is totally ridiculous.

During the time that we were in government, there was investment leading the nation in this country, unemployment rates that were among the lowest in the country, housing starts that led the nation in this province. Those kinds of statistics are undeniable and indisputable, and they were a fact when the New Democratic government was in power in this province.

Let not this government now somehow blame the NDP and the opposition for the lack of confidence that private investors have in this province. It is precisely because of their policies, the same policies that resulted in Sterling Lyon serving only four years in this province, being the first one-term government in the history of this province, because he put in place acute protracted restraint policies that the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) clearly remembers when he was in for that short interval in government at that particular time.

He undoubtedly argued against those programs and those policies of acute protracted restraint because he knew that was going to spell disaster for that government and for the province and, in fact, it did. It led Manitoba into a recession ahead of the rest of the country at that time, and that is something that the New Democratic government inherited in 1981. Through the ingenious policies that were put in place in programs after 1981, we moved this province out of the recession faster than any other province in this country.

Let the minister for cultural affairs talk about multiculturalism and so on, talk about into debt. She

only has to look at the Province of Saskatchewan, her brothers and sisters in the Conservative Party, and what they did to Saskatchewan, how they destroyed Saskatchewan's economy in two terms of government. God only knows what would have happened if they would have been allowed to go on with that nonsense. A deficit of nearly a billion dollars this year when they projected \$200 million so they could spend on Special Warrant. That is the integrity of Conservative governments. We saw that in Saskatchewan, we saw that in Alberta in this country, and we see it at the national level under Mulroney. Let them not talk or give a lesson about how to spend money. This government here is made of the same mold as the federal Conservatives and those in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Let me say one thing. When the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) talks about the donations to the Tory party, he is illustrating a very important principle. That is those corporations do not pay any taxes because of that link-up with the Tory party and those big donations, because it is the Tory and Liberal parties' policies that have been put in place over the last number of years, over the history of this country, that have allowed loopholes for corporations to allow them not to pay any taxes.

That is a marriage of convenience between the two. Their money ensures that the Tories and Liberals get elected, and the Tories and Liberals, on the other hand, of course, support those who help them get elected. They provide loopholes for those corporations so that it is the average people, the middle-income people in this country, who are facing the full burden of taxation, of paying for the programs because the corporate sector is not paying its share.

That point that the member for Burrows was making was extremely important and it did not border on the misleading as the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) said—not at all. It was a very important principle that he was illustrating in this House—very important. When the Minister of Urban Affairs talks about Soviet bread lines, he should look at his own bread lines and soup kitchens that are having to be put in place in this province under a Tory administration. In rural areas, unprecedented, we are now having soup kitchens in rural communities because people do not even have enough food to feed themselves during this crisis.

An Honourable Member: Where?

Mr. Plohman: Beausejour is one example. Let them laugh. Look, they laugh about this, and in Winnipeg the lines are growing. They are calling people for donations because they have to feed the hungry lines that are coming. They are growing; the lines are growing under the Tory government. The poor are getting poorer under the Tory government, and let them not deny. They are sensitive about this. It hurts a little bit, because they like to pride themselves once in a while as being the big brothers and sisters who look after other people, but they are not doing it. They are failing. They are leaving them to fend for themselves as they have always done, typically, Tory governments.

Now, when this Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) talks about the Ontario NDP, and they want to control everything, he says, and that we said that the Manitoba NDP is precisely the same, let him not forget that it is the New Democratic Party over the years that has put in place social programs to help those who need most in society, to support those who need most in society, who cannot fend for themselves. Let the member know that for 46 years, the Conservatives were in government in Ontario, and if there is any legacy left in terms of a mess, they have to look back to that, and they have to look to this Liberal government that was in place just a few short years ago that left the deficit and the decline of the economy in Ontario.

So let them not point at Bob Rae's New Democrats at this particular time. Bob Rae has inherited a mess that he has to deal with, a decline, a recession in the most populous province in this country. That is a difficult thing to deal with when he came into government, and he is, and he will bring it out of that recession in an unprecedented way because he believes in a partnership between government and the private sector, working together in partnership. That is something that this government does not believe in here in this province. They just say, hands off, no partnership, no room for the public sector. It is up to the corporate sector to do it all, and they do not do it. They fail miserably every time.

* (2130)

Mr. Speaker, I want to leave the Minister of Urban Affairs' (Mr. Ernst) speech and move to some other important issues. My colleague, the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), talked about the terrible situation in the economy in Manitoba. He went through the statistical information that showed that,

at this particular time, Manitoba's economy is in decline, that the situation is getting worse in terms of employment, in terms of investment, in terms of housing starts. I will not go into all those figures again, but what I want to deal with is one aspect of that economy, and that is the rural economy. In the throne speech, I was taken by the fact that this government has put in place a throne speech that seems to deal with platitudes for most sectors of the economy, of good words, of confidence in the people, and so on, but no action by this government in many, many areas.

They talk about the throne speech delivering a plan for a stronger Manitoba. There is no plan. There are only platitudes, there are only words. You can look through the throne speech, and we look at—for example, on page 6, and there are many other references, they talk about the farmers in Manitoba: "Only through hard work and grim determination have many been able to survive." That is right, not because of this government's policies. "My government has supported Manitoba's farm families in their struggle to keep their way of life viable. My ministers admire their courage and applaud their resourcefulness." Is that not something? Admiring and applauding, standing back admiring and applauding, that is the role.

I said to the minister today, well, he has reduced his role to being little more than a cheerleader. He promptly listed off a litany of programs. He said, of all the problems solved in Manitoba, there is nothing left to do. It has all been done. Then why do we have a crisis in agriculture, if it has all been done? Why were there nearly 10,000 Manitoba farmers in front of the Legislature, if it has all been done? How can this minister keep his head in the sand and believe that everything is fine, that the Mediation Board has not got more applications, therefore everything is okay. Therefore, everything is fine in this province.

He does not have to do anything more, and we saw that he actually believes that because the throne speech contained nothing, nothing to deal with those who are hardest hit, those in crisis, those young farmers who are in crisis who may not make it through the coming year. Where is the plan of action by this minister for those farmers? Where is it?

He came out with an announcement on NISA because he was so concerned that if he went to Ottawa he would be embarrassed without having joined NISA. So he announced NISA, but did NISA

deal with help for those farmers who are at the bottom of society? Are those going to help? Is that program going to help those farmers? We are supposed to need those younger farmers who carry the highest burden of debt, those 30 percent of the farmers who carry 70 percent of the debt, Mr. Speaker. No, NISA will not do that, it is not a targeted program. It is not targeted to help those most in need. It helps those who have the money to match the federal contribution, it does not help those who are at the bottom of the pole here. -(interjection)- Yes. The minister says, well, no, this is going to help those farmers most in need. I want him to lay those facts on the table in this House to show how those farmers who are threatened with losing their farms, who cannot make a go of it, who will not even be able to get their crop in the ground, how this is going to turn things around for them.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, over the course of 1991, and it is appropriate when we get to the end of the year, as we are now, to reflect on what has happened over the past year. A year ago we were talking about some type of safety net program that the ministers were supposedly negotiating at that time. It trickled out in January of 1991, just 11 months ago, that the government was going to be putting in a program that would have a 15-year moving average for GRIP, would have no relationship to the cost of production, but what the prices were over the last 15 years. We said on January 10, 1991, that the 15-year average for determining insurance levels under GRIP is inadequate and should be replaced with a realistic cost-of-production formula similar to that used for supply-managed products. That is what we said on January 10, 1991, dealing with cost of production at that time.

The minister ignored that at that time, he said everything is fine. He said the farmers are designing this program. He says we got 11 farmers from western Canada, three from Manitoba. The farmers are putting this program together and he knew, even as he was saying it, that it was not the farmers who were putting this program together, that it was the bureaucrats in Ottawa who designed this program and they put it forward and the farmers were cornered, co-opted, they had no other choice, those few reps who were on there, but to accept it.

There was very little consultation with the farmers of Manitoba. So when we go out to meetings to meet with farmers, we find they did not know what was in

that program. They did not have a say in it. It was not what they wanted and the minister defended it every time he had the opportunity in this House. I know he is going to live to regret that unqualified defence of that program because I believe he already is regretting it because the farmers told him so at the rallies this year, that it is an unmitigated disaster and it has to be totally revamped. The minister now is just finding that out.

Why is he just finding that out? Did he think we were just trying to make political points last year? Did he not believe that we were listening to the farmers and that we were trying to point out weaknesses in the program because we seriously and genuinely desired that it be improved so that it could meet the needs of farm families in this province? No, he ignored it, he said they do not know what they are talking about, even when we had farmers from southwestern Manitoba who came in—the member for Arthur's (Mr. Downey) constituency—and said they will not listen to us, they will not meet with us. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) will not meet with us; the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), our MLA, will not meet with us; the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) will not meet with us. They do not want to listen to us.

That was true up to that point, but when they came in and met with the New Democrats, then all of a sudden the Minister of Agriculture had time for a meeting and the MLA had time for a meeting and they were going to listen.

You know they listened but they did not act. They did not respond with one bit of action to help those farmers and we go back there this fall to a meeting in Tilstion—which nearly a hundred people came to that meeting and those farmers there—the member for Arthur's constituents said that GRIP was still an unmitigated disaster and it had to be completely scrapped and changed or revamped. That is what they said.

* (2140)

A year later, this minister cannot say that he listened to them, because any farmer who has costs well over \$130 per acre to put his crop in, is only guaranteed \$96, cannot make a living on that kind of a program. He is guaranteed to lose money in this minister's program and yet this minister forced them into signing the program along with the federal minister. Forced them and gave them no alternative in many cases to sign up with the program, even

though they were going to lose money because they were told they would not get any other assistance. That program has hurt many farmers and now they have five years that they are signed up in that program.

A five-year period, and we hear from the general manager of the Crop Insurance Corporation. I believe that is not the minister's brother who is head of the Crop Insurance Corporation but Henry Nelson—Hank, as he is called—general manager of the Crop Insurance Corporation of Manitoba. He was speaking on November 18, 1991 to the Union of Manitoba Municipalities in Brandon. At that time, he pointed out that this program was designed to help those most in need. He said it was targeted for those most in need and that it should be easy to explain. That is what it was designed for initially when they started with this whole safety net program.

They wanted it to be easy to explain; they wanted it to be targeted to those most in need; it was supposed to be financially self-sustaining, and so on and so forth. Well, they failed in many of their objectives. The minister should have realized this, caught this along the way and said hold it to the committee, stop it. Stop it because you are not meeting the objectives of this program right from the beginning.

It may eventually be financially self-sustaining. I have my doubts about that, but it certainly was not easy to explain and it certainly was not targeted to those most in need because it did not reflect natural disasters. It did not reflect the problems such as in the southwest corner of this province. The minister did not see to it that that program was tailored with minimum coverage to assist those farmers most in need, those farmers who had been hurt by natural disasters, those who had poorer records in crop insurance. The fact is he never even saw to it that those farmers who were not in crop insurance were treated equitably with those who were in crop insurance, and that is one of the greatest failures of this program.

It was an inequitable treatment between farmers, among farmers, the farmers across the road from each other, farmers from region to region. I think that the minister will realize that he has to take a great part of the blame for this because he stood up and espoused this program continuously in the House and outside, saying it was the best thing that ever happened to the farmers in this province. In fact, it

has not done that. It has not been that kind of a program.

What we have said, Mr. Speaker, right from the beginning was that a deficiency payment was needed. We said that on January 10—a major deficiency payment; we said it in March. This minister did not stand up and say "deficiency payment." He said: GRIP, NISA, lots of things going on, Western Grain Stabilization. He never once stated that a major deficiency payment was needed last winter, last spring for the 1990 crop year when the crop was going in.

So, as farmers struggled through to get their crop in last spring and all through the summer, where was this minister? Where was he after Charlie Mayer, the federal minister, with regard to a major deficiency payment? Nothing, until the farmers started uniting in rallies, then suddenly "me too." He was on the roll with those farmers: Yup, we have to go after the feds; we have to go after the feds to get that deficiency payment.

Yes, the minister says that is interesting because there are some stories to tell about those apolitical concerned farmers and their organization as well. I found it very interesting, as a matter of fact, when the Premier of Saskatchewan, Mr. Romanow, was travelling to Ottawa to organize the farm lobby which was an election commitment that he made, and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) was not going to have anything to do with this, because he was not going to be part of an NDP road show. He decided that he would call in the concerned farmers, the apolitical concerned farmers—there are a number of them from Dauphin—who were involved in the organization.

There is Don Dewar—yes, who is on the Farm Mediation Board for the minister, a political appointment; there is Ernie Sirski, who is on the Farm Debt Review Board for the federal government, another political appointment. There was even Leann Knutson, who is now on the Crop Insurance Review Committee for the minister.

All these "apolitical" people that he brought into his office. I do not know what Rob Wiebe is doing for the government at this time and Allan Clark. What about Bill Chappelle? You know, there are a number of these fellows.

He called them in; he had a meeting with them. He says: We have to discredit this thing. We have to put a stop to it. We have to somehow get out there

and say that Romanow is just politicizing the whole thing, that it is a political road show by Roy Romanow, and that is all that is going on here. We have to tell them that we are not going to be part of this, that we are not going to have anything to do with this thing. It is just political grandstanding.

I found that very interesting, but the farmers of Manitoba would not put up with that stance, and the minister found that out. He thought that would work, that strategy, that the farmers would say, well, you know, the leaders, the concerned farmers, are saying this is just politicking by Roy Romanow, I guess we should not bother with this thing.

The farmers realized they needed this funding, and they still do desperately, this cash, to get through this winter. They realized that. They saw somebody taking an initiative, not sitting back, and they said, no, we are not going to just dismiss this as political grandstanding, we want to be a part of it, we want to add credence to it, we want to support it because we want to make the loudest noise in Ottawa, we want to bring the strongest message to Ottawa that has ever been taken there, and the farmers rang the hooks off, those concerned farmers that made those public statements, all the same, almost identical. I would not be surprised if the minister wrote the statements for those concerned farmers. They all came out exactly the same. -(interjection)- The Romanow road show, well, I have to say that there were some meetings that went on, and yes, they may have written them themselves, but the minister certainly—

An Honourable Member: Be careful, because I will play it back at you.

Mr. Plohman: Well, the minister knows that this was orchestrated, and the minister knows that it did not work because the farmers would not put up with it, and so they came. Finally, the minister decided, no, I am going to have to join this lobby because in fact it is legitimate, and the farmers will not put up with it, they will not forgive me if I do not become part of it.

I was pleased that the minister did that. I think he found out, much even to his own surprise, that things worked out much better in Ottawa than he had ever hoped, that he had in fact made a stronger message to Ottawa than was ever possible by dividing the groups and so on, by sticking together as one voice, that it was a strong message. I think that it was an excellent initiative overall that took place.

Now, we do not have the additional cash yet. I hope we still do. I think it went a long way to bringing that message to all the politicians in Ottawa, but I thought it was just too bad that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) would not be a part of that situation, would not be a part of that great lobby. The Premier would not be a part of that lobby. Why not?

Then we look at Alberta, and we know that the Conservative government from Alberta suffered. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) knows very well he made the right decision in going after he saw what happened with the Alberta delegation, when he saw what happened in Ottawa with regard to the Getty government by not even participating in this.

We too often in western Canada divide ourselves. We too often do that. We do that with Churchill. We have done that in the past with the CF-18 contract. We do it with farmers. We do with many programs.

I am not ruling out that we also divide, but I want to say that we should have learned a very valuable lesson, and that it is no more political if a New Democrat is at the front of a particular issue than it is if a Conservative is at the front of a particular issue. That is exactly what was the case when the concerned farmers began because I just mentioned a number of the farmers that were political appointees by this government. They are political people, but they were at the front and I was very supportive of what they were doing. Mind you, I asked them several times if they would invite me to speak to the rally in front of the Legislature, but no. They would let the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) speak. Now, that is not politics, is it? That is not politics. Is that politics?

* (2150)

Well, the Minister of Agriculture is not commenting now because he realizes exactly what that was, and so if there is a Conservative leading a particular issue at any particular time, it may not be the minister because he did not lead. He did not take the initiative, Mr. Speaker. He left it to the farmers, but when the Premier of Saskatchewan led the delegation and put forward the delegation, then suddenly it was political grandstanding. That is the two-sided approach by these Conservatives in this province. It is okay if a Conservative is leading but not if a New Democrat is.

That is one thing they are going to have to reassess in their approaches and in particular when it comes to farm issues because it is true that the Conservatives in this province feel very uncomfortable, the Conservative government, when there are New Democrats involved in any solutions with regard to the farm crisis because they are very worried about what is going to happen to that historical base that they have enjoyed, unjustifiably so, over the years in this province.

Mr. Speaker, they have had -(interjection)- Well, that is right. They have had the support, and Nate Nurgitz, the senator who talked about it—and I do not use this very often. I do not like to talk about, you know, politicians as yellow dogs, and that is not appropriate, but the senator said that they could run a yellow dog in many constituencies in southern Manitoba and get him or her elected. -(interjection)- Well, there we hear some barking across the way.

They have enjoyed uninterrupted support over the years in southern Manitoba, but that barrier now is starting to break. There are inroads starting to be made, and there is some concern now and that is why they -(interjection)- Look at them, they are so sensitive when we talk about farmers maybe abandoning the support for the Conservatives, and you know they are abandoning it. It may be in varying numbers. It may be large numbers some days and small numbers on other days, but they are abandoning the Conservatives in southern Manitoba at an unprecedented rate and we know that is happening.

So I think that is why these Conservative MLAs, these ministers and this government, are so sensitive every time we raise these issues. They do not want to see any credibility for the New Democratic Party in southern Manitoba because they know once it starts to go it is gone. Mr. Speaker, they only have to look across the border in Saskatchewan at some of the constituencies in southern Saskatchewan that have gone NDP and that gets the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) extremely worried when he sees that orange right across the way. They are going to find out, gee, they are all not as nasty as we always said they were. You know, they do not want to take over all the farms. Is that not something? They do not want to take up all the land.

The farmers see that the banks and the lending institutions are taking up and kicking them off their land and getting all of the land in their hands, and

they start to look at that, Mr. Speaker, and say, what is worse? Maybe it would not be so bad to have some of these lease programs to allow the young farmers to stay on the land and build up equity over a long period of time so that they could get into a position where they could own this land themselves, such as the NDP has been proposing in some areas.

We even said to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) that he should expand his lease-back provisions through MACC so that equity could be built up over a longer period of time rather than a three-year or five-year period. I believe it is a five-year period, and that he should renew those five-year leases for another five years, so farmers in trouble have a longer period of time to build up equity. I hope the minister is considering that. That kind of approach, a lease-back approach, would indeed give new life to many young farmers who have found themselves caught in a squeeze where they cannot afford to continue the payments on their land and machinery, and continue to operate at the same time, Mr. Speaker.

We have brought forward over the last number of months and years some programs and suggestions for the minister that we think he should have listened to over the last year in this Legislature, that he could have put forward a program at the national level with the national government that would have reflected the true needs of the farm families in this province, something that we are getting now from Saskatchewan for changes to GRIP. I hope the minister will not oppose those changes. I hope that he will support Saskatchewan in their proposed changes, so that indeed the program does not give declining benefits each year but gives benefits that reflect the true costs each year and the increasing costs that are there over a period of time. That is what the minister should do, and he should also look at the principle of capping.

The problem with Conservative programs over the years, there is more money to be targeted where it belongs, Mr. Speaker, at those who need it most, and the minister should understand that principle. Why leave it open ended? Why not put a cap on it so that the maximum benefits for any farm unit are there, maximum benefits, so that he cannot continue to get more, and you can take those additional dollars and channel them back into the base, the 1,000-acre production, for example.

We have looked at some of the numbers, and clearly, with 95 percent of Manitoba's farmers—at

least according to the 1986 census, I do not know if the 1990 as to whether that has changed. I know it has changed, but about 95 percent of the farmers in Manitoba under the 1,000-acre limit, that if you were to cap it at 1,000 acres, for example, there would only be 5 percent of producers in this province who would be upset about it and who would not be getting those additional dollars and would not have access to a bottomless pit. Yet, they are getting 20 percent of the money in the deficiency payments, the acreage payments, for example, 20 percent of the dollars are going to 5 percent of the farmers at the top end. That is ridiculous. Take that 20 percent, channel it back in and increase the base amount so that you would have a declining amount per acre, a declining amount. For the first 1,000 acres it might be \$30 and then for the remaining acres it could be something like 20 or 10 or something like that. Decline it down.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you see the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay)—the NDP philosophy, we would not be dictating by putting in place this kind of policy, the size of a farm. We would not be saying you cannot be bigger. Now, the minister likes to say farmers like the free market system. They would like to compete. Let them compete. They could be as big as they want after that, they could sell it at the world market price. He is afraid of the world market price. You see, he does not want to have to put those huge operations out on their own to market their products at the market price that they can get, what the market will bear. So he wants to support them all the way up.

We are saying no, Mr. Speaker, cap it. Use those dollars wisely. The people of the province, the taxpayers, the consumers would understand that kind of approach. They say that is targeting your money, that is using your money wisely. We did a survey when we had our meetings throughout rural Manitoba. We have a survey where we asked if the farmers felt that capping was something they could support. I explained it as I have here in terms of how we thought it would work and so on. Over 90 percent—and this is something the minister should reflect upon—over 90 percent of those farmers filled out those surveys said: Yes, we can support that. I think that is something that the minister should really seriously think about instead of putting in place his philosophical dogma that says you cannot cap it, that big is better.

Somehow you have to take the dollars that you have, the limited resources available and target them to those who most need it. These people are living, Mr. Speaker, in antiquated times. They do not believe the time has come to do that. They cannot keep throwing money at these situations for any size that large corporate farms can get hundreds of thousands of dollars from these programs. That is

something this minister has to search his conscience about. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it ten o'clock? Agreed.

This matter will remain open. The hour being 10 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Monday, December 9, 1991

CONTENTS

Throne Speech Debate

Vodrey	100
Martindale	101
Ernst	108
Plohman	113