



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, June 10, 1992

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Doug Burnett, Della Burnett, Jean Burnett and others requesting the government consider reviewing the funding of the Brandon General Hospital to avoid layoffs and cutbacks to vital services.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable Leader of the Second Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). It complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned residents of the Province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba announced that it would establish an Office of the Children's Advocate in its most recent throne speech and allocated funds for this Office in its March '92 budget; and

WHEREAS the Kimelman Report (1983), the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry (1991) and the Suche Report (1992) recommended that the province establish such an office reporting directly to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, in a manner similar to that of the Office of the Ombudsman; and

WHEREAS pursuant to the Child and Family Services Act Standards, the agency worker is to be the advocate for a child in care; and

WHEREAS there is a major concern that child welfare workers, due to their vested interest as employees within the service system, cannot perform an independent advocacy role; and

WHEREAS pure advocacy will only be obtained through an independent and external agency; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) has unsatisfactorily dealt with complaints lodged against child welfare agencies; and now

THEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba strongly urge the provincial government to consider establishing an Office of the Children's Advocate which will be independent of cabinet and report directly to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

* * *

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). It complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth that:

The Brandon General Hospital is the major health care institution for southwestern Manitoba; and

The citizens of Brandon and southwestern Manitoba are deeply concerned and disturbed about the downsizing of the hospital and view it as a threat to the quality of health care in the region; and

The Manitoba government has chosen not to review the current budget to ensure that cutbacks to vital services do not occur; and

The administration of the hospital has been forced to take drastic measures including the elimination of the Palliative Care Unit and gynecological wards, along with the layoff of over 30 staff, mainly licensed practical nurses, to cope with a funding shortfall of over \$1.3 million; and

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba consider reviewing the funding of the Brandon General Hospital.

* * *

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). It complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned residents of the province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Manitoba Heritage Federation has received and processed nearly 1,200 grant applications and awarded and monitored almost 700 grants; and

WHEREAS 300 different organizations in 98 different communities representing every region of the province have received grants through the efforts of the Manitoba Heritage Federation; and

WHEREAS the government has taken away the granting authority of the Manitoba Heritage Federation and now plans to control the distribution of heritage grants; and

WHEREAS this action appears to represent the politicization of the heritage granting process; and

WHEREAS it is unclear as to what the government's real commitment is to funding heritage in the province; and

WHEREAS the Board of the Heritage Federation is composed of urban and rural members which represents a wealth of heritage experience from all over the province; and

WHEREAS this move will have a critical impact on the heritage community throughout the province

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba strongly urge the provincial government to reconsider its decision and return the Manitoba Heritage Federation's granting authority.

* (1335)

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), and it complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

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

THAT the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry was launched in April of 1988 to conduct an examination of the relationship between the justice system and aboriginal people; and

The AJI delivered its report in August of 1991 and concluded that the justice system has been a massive failure for aboriginal people; and

The AJI report endorsed the inherent right of aboriginal self-government and the right of aboriginal communities to establish an aboriginal justice system; and

The Canadian Bar Association, The Law Reform Commission of Canada, among many others, also recommend both aboriginal self-government and a separate and parallel justice system; and

On January 28, 1992, five months after releasing the report, the provincial government announced it was not prepared to proceed with the majority of the recommendations; and

Despite the All-Party Task Force Report which endorsed aboriginal self-government, the provincial government now rejects a separate and parallel justice system, an Aboriginal Justice Commission and many other key recommendations which are solely within provincial jurisdiction.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba show a strong commitment to aboriginal self-government by considering reversing its position on the AJI by supporting the recommendations within its jurisdiction and implementing a separate and parallel justice system.

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), and it complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

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

WHEREAS the Dutch elm disease control program is of primary importance to the protection of the city's many elm trees; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Natural Resources himself stated that, "It is vital that we continue our active fight against Dutch elm disease in Manitoba," and

WHEREAS, despite that verbal commitment, the government of Manitoba has cut its funding to the city's DED control program by half of the 1990 level, a move that will jeopardize the survival of Winnipeg's elm trees.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the government of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) to consider restoring the full funding of the Dutch elm disease control program to the previous level of 1990.

As in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

* (1340)

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Jack Penner (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would like to present the Sixth Report of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources presents the following as its Sixth Report.

Your Committee met on Tuesday, June 9, 1992, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred. At that meeting, your Committee elected Mr. Penner as Chairperson.

Your Committee heard representation on Bill 53, The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la manutention et le transport des marchandises dangereuses, as follows:

Mr. Wayne Neily, Manitoba Environmental Council

Mr. and Mrs. Paul and Aileen Bergan, Private Citizens

Mr. Douglas Grantham, Town of Stonewall

Your Committee has considered:

Bill 10, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Hydro-Manitoba

Bill 53, The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la manutention et le transport des marchandises dangereuses

and has agreed to report the same without amendment.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Mr. Penner: I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon from the Southwood School fifty-eight Grade 5 students.

They are under the direction of Mr. Rick Goerzen. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger).

Also this afternoon, from the Garden Grove School, we have seventy-five Grade 5 students. They are under the direction of Mr. Dave Boulton. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Constitutional Proposal Federal Referendum

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

Over the last few weeks and escalating today, the federal government is threatening to "go it alone" in terms of the Constitution of the country. The federal government has indeed passed plebiscite legislation last week in the House of Commons. It is not binding insofar as it is not referendum legislation, but the plebiscite legislation allows the federal government to unilaterally set the question. It has absolutely no spending limits insofar as there are no limits on committees that can be participating in the debate and also allows for unlimited spending and participation of provinces.

My question to the Premier is: Does he have a contingency plan on this possible option of the federal government? Secondly, will he include in any contingency plan on this issue the possibility of having an all-party, nonpartisan approach to any question that would be asked to Manitobans and an all-party approach to having town hall factual meetings on any question that may be put, rather than having a kind of massive advertising campaign and not a lot of factual information to Manitobans?

* (1345)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Well, Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a number of contradictions in the question of the Leader of the Opposition.

Firstly, of course, he knows that the question of a referendum is one that was considered by the all-party Manitoba Legislature task force on the Constitution, and that task force expressed serious and grave concerns about the holding of a referendum, about all of the various things that go into a referendum as to whether or not the question

is one that is clear in the minds of the people who are responding to that referendum, whether or not the matter becomes a question of a vote on the popularity of the government of the day, either federally or provincially, whether or not there is clear and accurate information about the issues that are at stake and all of that.

All of those things say that referenda are probably for a whole host of reasons not a very good way of necessarily achieving major constitutional change that is going to change the way in which this country is organized and ordered on a constitutional basis for a long time in the future.

The referendum question is a difficult one. I know that in the course of even the last 48 hours I have had some discussions with other First Ministers about what position I might take as a Premier with respect to a Constitution, whether or not I believed it was appropriate for First Ministers to go out and campaign for or against. Of course, the difficulty with it is that one does not know what the nature of the question might be. One does not know what the nature of the proposition might be.

I do say this, that I think that it would be important for a referendum to be done on a nonpartisan basis, that as much as possible I would hope that if there were a referendum, that people would be given as accurate information as possible, and we would try and keep politics out of it, that if the intention is truly to consult the people, that we would do everything possible to make that consultation a fair, honest and open consultation.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I would again offer to the Premier our participation in a nonpartisan approach to any federal plebiscite that may be developed, to help to take an all-party, nonpartisan approach to factual information, rather than the massive advertising that we may have to contemplate in the federal government's so-called strategy.

In the federal legislation that was passed last week in the House of Commons, there is absolutely no requirement that the federal government release results by province. In other words, they may say to Canadians, it is 60 percent this way and 40 percent that way, which may cause great difficulty for the smaller provinces, Manitoba being one of them, in terms of what are the specific results in our province based on the specific merit of any question that may or may not be asked.

I would ask the Premier, in his consultations with other Premiers over the last 48 hours, have they

discussed that inadequacy of the federal legislation, and have they proposed anything to the Prime Minister, or has the Premier talked to the Prime Minister about at least allowing people in each province to have the results of the plebiscite, so that we could have a nonmanipulative result in terms of the public knowing exactly how each of us may or may not have voted across the country?

Mr. Filmon: Firstly, I have not talked to the Prime Minister about it.

But again, all the Leader of the Opposition is doing is pointing out all the reasons why a referendum is not a very exact science and not a very fair and adequate way of people making decisions.

Obviously, if no information was made available as to what the views were of the people of this particular province, then we as a Legislature ultimately have to vote upon and decide upon any proposition with respect to a constitutional amendment after our own series of public consultations and discussions. We would not be able to take any information of value out of that referendum.

There are many, many difficulties with that prospective answer, and I just say that at this point, I would hope that it does not come to a national referendum, that whatever matters are going to be decided upon will be decided upon by virtue of the ongoing consultations that would lead eventually to a process that we have set forward in the rules of our Legislature.

Timetable

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): The Premier has indicated that his first option is to get a proposal that would be put forward in a way that is consistent with the rules of this Legislature.

I would ask the Premier, we have talked before about this issue, but certainly it has been a concern of Manitobans that we not have a fast pace in any discussions. If there is a proposal that comes forward—and we hope there is; we hope there is a consensus; I know the Premier and I have talked about this issue before—would he publicly agree that it would not be a quick, fast pace into this Legislature, but rather a pace that takes into consideration the timing of most Manitobans' holidays, which is July, so that they will be able to look at the merit of this proposal in, again, a very, very dispassionate and nonquick way?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I think this government has demonstrated, Mr. Speaker, that when we have a requirement for proper and thorough analysis and scrutiny, public consultation and so on—we talked about it in another form yesterday with respect to the Clean Environment Commission review of Conawapa and the transmission lines—we are not going to ramrod something through. That is our bottom line.

We believe that consultation is there for the purpose of ensuring that the public is consulted and that they are given adequate time and proper circumstances under which to make their views known.

* (1350)

School Boards Cabinet Interference

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education.

On numerous occasions, Mr. Speaker, this minister has said that school boards are independent bodies and that she is not prepared to influence decisions which fall under their jurisdiction.

I want to ask the minister: Does she feel that these same guidelines apply to her cabinet colleagues and that they should not try to influence the decision making of school boards?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): The member really has not been very specific in her question, and in fact the position remains, as I have stated in this House, school boards do have elected officials. They are responsible for their decision making, and I do not see any change.

School Boards Cabinet Interference

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): My supplementary is to the Premier.

Does the Premier feel it is appropriate that the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) has contacted the chairman of the Pelly Trail School Division and attempted to influence budgetary and staffing decisions?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will not accept the preamble of the member's question without further clarification. Obviously, we have

had some experience in this House with people alleging certain things from the opposition benches. I will certainly just take her question as advice.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious matter, and I want to ask the Premier if he will investigate this matter, and if he finds that the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) has interfered in the board's decision and has applied pressure to the board, will he ask for the minister's resignation?

Mr. Filmon: I make it a practice, even with my friends in the media, not to answer hypothetical questions. I certainly would not answer a hypothetical question from a member of the Legislature who, from time to time, has not gotten her facts straight.

Independent Living Program Statistics

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, today, we learned about the inappropriate placement of a teenager in an independent living situation, a placement that has become all too common for many youngsters in the province of Manitoba.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services if he can tell this House today how many youngsters under the age of 18 are in independent living environment situations, and what is the youngest age of anyone being placed in that kind of a living arrangement in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I do not have that kind of information with me in the House today, but I would be pleased to ask departmental staff to be in touch with agencies to compile that sort of information.

I would just remind the honourable member that the agencies throughout the province are responsible for the placing of young people in foster situations. In some cases, with older teenagers, there are a few independent living situations.

I would also caution the member to accept as fact some of the information which she reads in the newspaper. I think it is important that perhaps a little more research is done with some of the information the agency is able to provide. With the limited information in the paper today, all I would say is that there is further information which sometimes puts a better light on the situation.

Cost Effectiveness

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): What is very clear from our research is that there are some youngsters who have been in stable foster families who, when they turn the age of 16, are told by the agencies they must leave those foster families and move into independent living arrangements because it is cost effective for the Province of Manitoba.

Will the Minister of Family Services tell this House why the interests of the child come second to budgetary considerations of this department?

* (1355)

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Agencies are given the authority by government to offer child and family services in the community. We have a variety of agencies across the province doing that with boards, executive directors and senior staff who make decisions.

In all of my discussions with any of the agencies, the prime concern is the best interests of the child. Historically, there have been different arrangements made with young people who come into care, depending on the geographical area where the child is located; also, on the experience of that particular agency.

I am confident in the deliberations by the board and the carrying out of policy by the very dedicated staff we have in those agencies, that they have the best interests of the child in mind.

Mrs. Carstairs: But most of the independent living arrangements are in the city of Winnipeg, and this particular minister made sure there were not independent boards making those decisions in the city of Winnipeg.

This has become a departmental matter. This is a departmental decision-making matter. Can the minister explain to the House why it is departmental rules that state that there is not funding for 16-year-olds within foster family situations and that some of them have been approached on their 16th birthday to move out of the foster parent situation and into an independent living situation?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Those decisions are made by the agencies which are involved with those children. Obviously, the long-term goal in any situation with children is to have them living within their own family.

In other cases, they are placed in suitable foster homes, and we have a few cases where children are in independent living situations where that decision has been made by the professional staff of the agency.

Workers Compensation Board Family Entitlements

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): With the tragic and preventable event that occurred on April 23, 1992, a family lost a husband, a father and a provider. This family has endured many hardships in the over four-and-a-half-year struggle with the Workers Compensation Board.

My question is for the minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board.

Will the minister indicate for the benefit of the family what the policy is that will provide for this family's financial security in the future?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for and charged with the administration of The Workers Compensation Act): As the member may be aware, the particular claimant involved is a claimant who is on the old system of benefits, not under the new system which was put into place by this administration effective January 1 of 1992.

I hear members opposite talk about reduction. I would point out that the benefit package for claimants, some of the problems that were in the old package, this government fixed and improved without the support of members opposite.

I would indicate very clearly, depending on the results of the Coroner's inquest and determinations of cause related to this particular incident, that the family involved has the ability to file an appropriate claim with the WCB which I understand has not been done to date, and it will have to work itself through the system.

Mr. Reid: It has been six weeks since the event occurred, and this family has obviously endured many hardships, including the financial situation.

When will the family be notified—because I think it is appropriate—that they will be receiving some financial security entitlement, or that they are entitled to that from the minister's department?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite should do a little work on how the system works because first of all, it is not the department. It is an independent agency. That is No. 1.

Secondly, as I just clearly indicated, the widow of the individual involved has not filed a claim. She has been in touch with staff of the WCB who I understand made her aware of that option, and she has not yet chosen to file. If the member is advising that individual or assisting them, then I would hope that he would have her pursue that matter rather than raising it in the House as if it is someone else's responsibility. She is aware. It is her choice as to whether or not she files a claim.

I would hope the member would do a little work and investigate what options are available and advise the person appropriately.

* (1400)

Mr. Reid: The minister should be aware that the system is not working, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the same minister. Why should this family have to apply? Why is it not automatic? Why has there been a delay in notifying the family of any decision or any benefit entitlement?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I can tell the member that the original claim was for an injury. The benefit entitlements have to do with a fatality under which the family would be able to apply. The staff from the Compensation Board were in touch with the family shortly after the incident. The people from the family, the widow involved, are aware that she has to file a claim for fatality benefits. That claim will have to be adjudicated on the facts.

I am sure the member opposite is not suggesting to this House that the Workers Compensation Board or any other agency can issue benefits, pay benefits, without a proper application made for those benefits or a proper adjudication. That is the kind of attitude that got the Workers Compensation Board into the deep trouble it was in over the years, and it is the kind of problem that Ontario is now facing and why they are in such a mess.

Multicultural Legislation Consultations

Ms. Marianne Cerlill (Radlsson): Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Intercultural Council is intended to be a community-based, democratically elected body representative of our multicultural make-up. They have the legislative mandate to advise government on policy issues. One would think it would be the government's link to the community when developing legislation like the multicultural act.

I want to ask the Minister responsible for Multiculturalism to give us some assurance that they were properly consulted and how this could be so when they were still being questioned on their recommendations on May 30. It was reported on June 5, and we know that at that time, the act was already printed.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for Multiculturalism): Mr. Speaker, in fact, it was my first consultation meeting as a result of the whole process that was with the Manitoba Intercultural Council on determining what should be put in the legislation. I met with all of the other umbrella organizations within the community and indeed with other members, individuals from many of the ethnic communities.

As a result of those consultations, I know the whole community and even members opposite knew that our commitment was to introduce a piece of legislation this session. So I fully expect that all members of the community, including the Manitoba Intercultural Council, were aware that there would be legislation brought in.

Manitoba Intercultural Council Review

Ms. Marianne Cerlill (Radlsson): What is interesting, Mr. Speaker, is that a number of the recommendations are not found in the act.

My question for the same minister: Why is the Intercultural Council being reviewed at this time? Why were they only informed of this review as the minister was announcing the act?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for Multiculturalism): Mr. Speaker, as a result of the extensive consultation process that we did and that I did, as minister, before the act was introduced—and as we went around the table with all members of the Manitoba Intercultural Council and I asked them what amendments they would like to see to MIC's act, I got a different opinion from each and every one of those members around the table.

Mr. Speaker, I also got varied opinions from many, many members of the community with no consensus whatsoever on what amendments should be made to The Manitoba Intercultural Council Act.

Therefore, as a result of that, we have announced that an impartial and very unbiased nonpartisan consultant in fact would interview members of the

community, including MIC, to determine what amendments we could bring in next session.

Multicultural Legislation Justification

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, the report from MIC here is dated June 5. Why are you bringing in the multicultural act before the review of MIC, and how can you explain that the recommendations should not be included in the act?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for Multiculturalism): Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Intercultural Council already has a piece of legislation. The community has been waiting since the NDP were in government for a piece of legislation and a multicultural policy.

Mr. Speaker, we have lived up to those commitments, and the community is waiting for a piece of legislation that will confirm this government's commitment to multiculturalism. I am pleased and proud that we were able to introduce that, and I would encourage members opposite to support that legislation and ensure that the community is getting the treatment that it deserves.

Manitoba Intercultural Council Government's Intention

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, the minister, on a number of occasions, told myself, as the critic for Multiculturalism, that the act of MIC was being looked at and in fact indicated to myself when I brought forward amendments that she was looking at incorporating MIC into the multicultural act. The minister has not included MIC which is the greatest flaw that this piece of legislation has.

The minister says that she is going to be consulting to find out what is going to be happening with MIC. Why has the minister included the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council in the act when she currently has a consultant examining the role of MIC which could recommend that MIC have its funding authority returned?

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, it is my intention to call this bill for second reading, and it anticipates a debate. The question is out of order.

I am serving notice, Mr. Speaker, that the bill will be called today, and therefore the question is out of order.

Mr. Lamoureux: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, we in opposition have no idea what the government is going to be calling, and because they feel—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I had called the honourable member for Inkster to order, and I would like to remind the honourable member for Inkster, when the Speaker is standing and when he does call order, that the member should take his place.

Now, the honourable member for Inkster, all your remarks that were said after I had called order are entirely off the record.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, Beauchesne is fairly clear in terms of questions not anticipating debates scheduled for the day. There is a different set of rules in terms of the House of Commons from our current rules.

We do not know when the debate is scheduled on that bill. I would suggest for that reason, while the government House leader has a point in terms of the general rule, this does not apply in this particular case, and questions on the multiculturalism act would be in order.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I had no knowledge at the time that the honourable member for Inkster did put his question that he was anticipating a debate.

Now we have been informed by the honourable government House leader that this matter will be before the House this afternoon. Therefore, the honourable member's question is anticipating a debate and, therefore, is out of order.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Inkster, if you would like to rephrase your question, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, four questions have been asked. The minister—[interjection] three times. The first three questions of the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is the honourable member for Inkster challenging my ruling? I have advised the honourable member for Inkster that he could rephrase his question.

The honourable member for Inkster, if you would like to rephrase your question.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Multiculturalism is: What is the government's intention with the Manitoba Intercultural Council? What is the future for MIC?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for Multiculturalism): I think our intentions are quite clear, and they have been through our term in office in government. We have made many positive moves on multiculturalism, in the area of multiculturalism. I could list many that have happened with the introduction of Manitoba's first-ever policy for a multicultural society that we introduced, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and I introduced. As a result of that policy, we made four commitments.

With the introduction of the multicultural act, Mr. Speaker, we have lived up to those four commitments over the last four years.

* (1410)

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am only aware of negative things that this minister has done to the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I do not know what she is talking about.

My question to the minister specifically is: What positive thing has she done to MIC?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, there was an article in the paper just last week or so. I think the Leader of the official opposition's picture was at the top of the article. In fact, it was an article dealing with combatting racism. There was a direct quote from Sam Koshy who is the executive director of MIC, and I will share it with the members opposite because it says that this government is a government that has done more for multiculturalism than any other government.

Mr. Lamoureux: The minister makes reference to racism. I ask the minister: How can she make that statement when in fact when it came to combatting racism, as MIC has said, she has failed—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, if the member for Inkster could remain a little calm instead of getting quite so hysterical when he asks his questions, I could indicate to him that it was not me, as minister, who was saying that. It was a direct quote from the executive director of the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

I will share that information with the member for Inkster and with all members of the Legislature so, in fact, they can see and read first-hand what the community is saying about the commitment of this government.

Independent Living Program Accommodation Selection

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, as stated by the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) today, we were all shocked yesterday—or today, actually—to read about the conditions of a young man who was in an independent living program of a Winnipeg Child & Family Services agency. He was forced to live in a filthy two-room apartment in conditions that no one of us would like to see anyone we knew live in.

Today, we learn that while social workers usually search for accommodations with clients and that often a place is found with funds available, just as often, these vulnerable young people, who are attempting to work out their lives, are forced to live in these dreadful surroundings.

My question to the Minister of Family Services is: Why are social workers and public health officials not obligated to go with the young person when they are searching for accommodation, who are attempting to live independently and are attempting to—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put her question.

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): I, too, had an opportunity to read the article that the member is referring to. I note that the executive director of Winnipeg Child & Family Services has indicated that he is going to review the situation of the independent living arrangement for this particular child and review it with the social workers involved.

Case Review

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Family Services undertake to ensure, in the absence of an independent reporting-to-the-Legislature Children's Advocate, that the executive director of Child & Family Services not look only at this single incident, which is not an isolated incident, but that the director of Child & Family Services looks at the entire policy and in particular—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put her question.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): I would offer the honourable member the same caution I offered the Leader of the Second Opposition party (Mrs. Carstairs), that the article in the paper does not contain all of the detail that relates to this case, and there are other circumstances that the member would be well apprised to make herself aware of before she draws those conclusions.

I am glad the member raised the question of the Child Advocate piece of legislation that is currently before the House.

I would remind her again that we are consistent with Manitoba policy in the manner in which that bill has been drawn, that where servants of the House or officials have responsibility across a number of departments, like the Ombudsman or like the Provincial Auditor, they report to the House.

Where the official is particularly responsible to a certain department, and I would reference again the Chief Medical Examiner, the Public Trustee, the Public Utilities Board, that agency or that individual reports to that department and to that minister.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Family Services please share with the House or explain to the House what possible extenuating circumstances could lead any young person to be forced to live in a facility that has a washroom down the hall that is so smelly he cannot stand to live in it, that there is no security, broken windows and in a situation where the people who are living around him, from whom he is supposed to take his independent living models, are people who are forced to live there because there is no—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put her question. I would like to remind the honourable member for Wellington that once the Speaker has called "order" that the honourable member would take her place.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, the legislation that we work under in this province dealing with social services prohibits us from talking about individual cases. I would say to the member that there is enough evidence in the media in recent times that members should not accept the information that they receive at first blush without doing a little more investigation.

I would say to the member that in some circumstances, maybe she would be wise to find out what kind of circumstances existed when the decisions were made by an agency and what sort of circumstances exist sometime later. There are very definite changes that take place from time to time, and I would urge the member to talk to the staff who are in charge.

Constitutional Proposal Devolution of Cultural Programs

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

Recent accounts of constitutional discussions suggest that the negotiators are discussing devolution of culture to the provinces. Would the minister explain to the House what the position of her department and her government is, what position they are taking at the constitutional table on this issue?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, in fact, we have discussed that issue and at the last Conference of Ministers of Culture and Heritage, it was an issue that I brought forward as one of great concern to Manitoba, wondering whether in fact if culture was devolved to the provinces, whether that would create or cause a feeding frenzy where everyone would want to be there and be the first in to obtain the most money possible for their individual provinces.

So it was a concern that I did express at the time. I think in negotiations, there has been some talk of some devolution but also in maintaining our major cultural institutions with a strong central government.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, what steps has the minister taken to ensure that the regional services of national institutions, such as the National Film Board and the CBC, will not be cut and that in fact there will be federal support for Manitoba's cultural institutions, cultural industries, archives, museums and galleries?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, the National Film Board, Telefilm and Canada Council are in fact national institutions, and there is no talk of devolution of any of the national institutions.

I know there will be a follow-up Deputy Ministers of Culture meeting in the near future to discuss the

issues interprovincially, but we know that the national institutions will remain intact.

* (1420)

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, if I could underline to the minister that my concern is for the regional institutions of those federal offices.

Would the minister table the studies that she must have commissioned to examine the impact on Manitoba's cultural institutions of this dramatic change in federal-provincial relations?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, I know that Manitoba does receive, in fact, its fair share or more money from the federal government in regard to culture, and we will ensure that this is maintained. As I indicated earlier, the national institutions are not a part of any talks for devolution.

Youth Unemployment Rate Government Initiatives

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, this is a tough summer for Manitoba students. You can see it in the words of a student letter that I received just recently talking about how she has spent more than a month trying to get a job, unable to do so. You can see it in terms of talking to an individual who, in a remote northern community, has one job in the community for students and has to decide which of 10 students will get it and the 10 students saying they would almost be better off if there were no jobs, that someone would not have to make that kind of a decision.

It is being made worse by the government's decision in a number of areas not to provide the kind of funding that is needed, full funding in the case of CareerStart to groups and communities that do not have their own funds to be able to put into job creation.

My question to the Premier is simple. Will he recognize that it is a tough year for Manitoba students, and will he now revise some of his programs to make sure there are more jobs for Manitoba students this summer?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we have put in place a number of programs, including funding in the CareerStart Program and other vehicles, Partners with Youth through Rural Development, and many other new areas that have not been there before.

The reality is, yes, it is a difficult year, but, yes, many students are finding work, and the major

origins of the work that is available obviously are within the private sector. It is in those areas in which jobs have been created in the past, opportunities for youth, and opportunities for youth will continue to be provided. These are areas that we believe are appropriate.

The fact of the matter is, the government does not provide all of the job opportunities for youth. It should not be expected to under any circumstances. We are doing what we believe is reasonable under the circumstances. We are providing more money for those job opportunities for youth than we did in the previous budget, and we believe that this is an appropriate response to the circumstances that are there.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, the government used to provide full funding to community groups and to remote northern communities.

Will this government reinstate the full funding so communities that have no resources, organizations that have no resources can put some of these students out to work so they can continue their education, so they can get into the work force?

Will this government recognize the mistake of their cutbacks previously to these community groups and reinstate that funding?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, what the member for Thompson is saying is that these organizations are happy to have the employment and the opportunity for people to work but are not willing to put any of their own money in it. That says to me that there is not a responsibility on their part to make priority choices.

If he is saying give people the money and they will create jobs, that is the old NDP way of make-work jobs. Nobody is willing to put forward their own funding to employ people, but they say, sure, if somebody else gives us the money, then we will find ways of creating all sorts of jobs. Those are the kinds of things that are not fair to the taxpayer. They say to the taxpayer, we will throw the money away, because it is somebody else's money, but it is everybody's money. It is every taxpayer's money.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, we object strenuously to New Democrats who will spend wantonly people's money because they are prepared to raise their taxes. People in this province have had enough of higher taxes, and they reject New Democratic ways of spending money and raising taxes.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Committee Changes

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections be amended as follows: Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) for St. James (Mr. Edwards). [Agreed]

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: The member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) for the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings); the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) for the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey); the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) for the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections be amended as follows: The member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) for the member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Derkach); the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) for the member for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger); the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) for the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau); the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) for the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae); the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) for the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh). [Agreed]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you call second readings Bills 94, 95 and then 98. After that time, we will go into adjourned debate on second readings.

Mr. Speaker: In the order listed?

Mr. Manness: No.

Mr. Speaker: Okay.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 94—The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act 1992

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of

Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 94, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1992 (Loi de 1992 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Manness: Bill 94 implements the taxation measures announced in the 1992 Manitoba Budget Address on March 11. The budget froze Manitoba's major taxes for the fifth consecutive year and introduced selective reduction incentives to preserve and enhance the competitive gains made over the previous four years.

The bill is long and fairly complex. For simplicity, I have regrouped my discussion of the amendments under five headings. I believe, also, that my staff member did distribute a copy of the detail associated with a very complex bill this time around. Those five headings are: Enhancing Economic Development Opportunities; Environment Protection Measures; Tightening Tax Enforcement; Cross-Border Shopping; and Housekeeping Changes.

The bill implements a new 10 percent Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit. Corporations which invest in new manufacturing buildings and equipment in Manitoba after March 11, 1992, and before July 1, 1993, qualify for the credit against Manitoba income taxes. The Manitoba Research and Development Tax Credit will encourage Manitoba businesses to increase their research and development efforts. The credit is 15 percent of eligible expenditures. It reduces Manitoba income tax otherwise payable. Both this credit and the Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit will be administered on Manitoba's behalf by Revenue Canada.

Bill 94 also introduces amendments to The Corporation Capital Tax Act, which will remove capitalized exploration expenditures from the tax base of exploration companies. The bill also provides for incentives to encourage the search for new ore bodies and for the development of those discoveries into new mines, new processing facilities and new jobs. A new mine tax holiday and the enhancement of exploration expenditures will encourage new investment by the mining industry without reducing tax revenue from current mines.

Amendments to the motive fuel and gasoline tax reduce the tax on railway diesel fuel from 13.6 cents to 12.6 cents per litre, and aviation fuel from 5.8

cents to 5.0 cents per litre respectively. The Retail Sales Tax Act will be amended to provide an exemption for toll charges associated with a 1-800 telephone service. These measures should help strengthen Manitoba's competitiveness and its attractiveness as a place to invest and expand.

In the Budget Address, I noted that work was proceeding on the extension of environmental protection taxes to tires and disposable diapers. Mr. Speaker, I will be making an announcement with respect to greater detail on this issue in some short period of time. I might note that it is the government's intention to replace the tire charge under the sales tax with a similar charge under The Waste Reduction and Prevention Act by July 1993. Any revenues that will come in from the imposition of this tax will be attributed to the environmental protection tax account and will assist in funding new measures for environmental preservation and improvement in Manitoba.

* (1430)

Bill 94 includes general antiavoidance provisions under The Corporation Capital Tax Act, The Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax Levy Act and The Retail Sales Tax Act. The rules under The Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax Levy Act have been tightened to prevent abuse.

The bill also sets out procedure for filing appeals to the independent Tax Appeals Commission established by separate legislation presently before the Assembly, and I will read second reading of that bill next, Mr. Speaker.

Amendments to The Gasoline Tax Act, The Motive Fuel Tax Act, The Tobacco Tax Act, The Revenue Act and The Retail Sales Tax Act ensure that directors of corporations are accountable for remitting taxes collected from Manitobans.

Amendments to the new Manitoba Small Business Tax Reduction are designed to ensure that the reduction benefits are targeted to genuinely new enterprises in the intended sectors. These amendments are intended to reduce opportunities for tax avoidance and to ensure that Manitoba taxes are applied and administered fairly.

Beginning August 1, 1992, the insurance corporations tax will apply to premium income earned by the United Health corporation, that is, Blue Cross. This will ensure all providers of insurance services will pay the same tax on

premium income. The change will align Manitoba's tax treatment with that of most other provinces.

The 1992 Budget Address announced Manitoba's acceptance of the federal government's offer to collect provincial alcohol and tobacco taxes at border crossing points. Bill 94 includes amendments to The Tobacco Tax Act and The Liquor Control Act, enabling federal customs officers to collect the applicable taxes and charges effective July 1, 1992.

The bill also includes legislation enabling Revenue Canada to provide retail sales tax and GST rebates to out-of-country visitors using a common application. Federal administration of Manitoba sales tax rebates to foreign tourists will commence July 1, 1992.

Finally, Bill 94 also includes provisions that will enable the province and the federal government to enter similar agreements for the collection of retail sales taxes at the border. These are important steps towards levelling the playing field for competitive competition for cross-border shopping.

Finally, the bill also includes a number of technical and housekeeping provisions, which are required to ensure that Manitoba's taxing statutes are applied in an appropriate and even-handed manner. These include: measures that will identify taxable and nontaxable cigarettes by special marking similar to cigarette marking programs in other jurisdictions; measures to avoid double taxation on income earned in mutual fund trusts; extending the 1.5 percent special refundable mining tax on mining profits; and changing the basis on which railway fuel is collected from purchases to use or consumption.

Mr. Speaker, the bill represents a substantial improvement in Manitoba's taxation regime. I commend it to all members and to Manitobans. Thank you.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 95—The Tax Appeals Commission Act

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 95 (The Tax Appeals Commission Act; Loi

sur la Commission d'appel des impôts et des taxes), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, Bill 95 implements improvement in taxpayers' relationships with our government. It provides for an independent review of contested corporations capital tax, retail sales tax or payroll tax assessments, to facilitate a fairer and impartial resolution of the taxpayers concerned. The process is similar but less formal than the notice of objection procedures of The Income Tax Act.

Taxpayers will not be required to hire a lawyer or an accountant to represent their concerns. The Tax Appeals Commissioner may require information from the taxpayer or from employees of the Taxation Division in order to properly respond to the taxpayer's appeal. The taxpayer as well as the Taxation Division could appeal the decision received from the Tax Appeals Commissioner to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). If not satisfied with the Minister of Finance's decision, a further appeal could be made by the taxpayer to the Court of Queen's Bench.

This Tax Appeals Commission reflects our government's commitment to fairness and to reduce red tape and to develop better processes to serve the taxpayers of the province. The bill represents a substantial improvement in Manitoba's taxation regime and, again, Mr. Speaker, I commend it to all members and to all Manitobans.

Thank you.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 98—The Manitoba Multiculturalism Act

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 98, The Manitoba Multiculturalism Act (Loi sur le multiculturalisme au Manitoba) be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour and a privilege for me to rise to speak on the Manitoba Multiculturalism Act.

This legislation is the culmination of two years of dedicated effort by many individuals. On May 15 of 1990, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and I announced Manitoba's policy for a multicultural society. The policy includes four initiatives designed to address the opportunities and challenges of a multicultural society in all of the activities and operations of government and for government to engage in more effective partnership with all parts of a diverse cultural community.

Mr. Speaker, with this legislation, we have fulfilled all four important initiatives. The first was the designation of a Minister responsible for Multiculturalism. I had the distinct privilege of being designated as that minister on May 15 of 1990, and I am proud to continue doing so. This has afforded me the opportunity to introduce many positive new initiatives over the past few years which have found favour and support amongst Manitobans.

Reflecting that multiculturalism is the responsibility of all departments of government, I am to act as an advocate within government to ensure that policies and programs throughout government reflect our multiculturalism policy. This co-operative, collaborative approach to implementation of the multicultural policy was seen in two recent announcements. In February, my colleague the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) and I announced a unique awareness program launched by the Employment Standards branch in partnership with the Multiculturalism Secretariat to better inform ethnocultural communities about employment standard laws in Manitoba. Volunteers from ethnocultural communities are trained by the Employment Standards branch to set up information sessions, forums, and workshops in the community on workplace rights and responsibilities.

It gives employers and employees the tools they need to uphold their rights and responsibilities under the law. On May 11, my colleague the Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey) unveiled the multicultural Education policy. It reflects our recognition of the fact that understanding, accepting and building on our cultural and racial diversity is crucial to our economic, social and community success. This policy will help us meet the educational needs of all students. It is essential that our educational system be responsive to the cultural and linguistic diversity within our schools and post-secondary institutions.

The second undertaking was the establishment of a Multiculturalism Secretariat. This originally found its basis in the report of the Manitoba task force on multiculturalism and it was called "Multiculturalism is for All Manitobans: Towards a Horizontal Mosaic." This report was completed in August 1988. The task force felt that one single individual, a multicultural co-ordinator could not perform the function of co-ordinating the implementation of a multicultural policy. It was proposed that an administrative infrastructure was required to advise me, the Multicultural Affairs Committee of Cabinet and to co-ordinate the implementation of government policies, among other functions.

The Multiculturalism Secretariat was officially opened on August 20, 1990, and is responsible for working throughout government to identify, prioritize, and implement actions to contribute to the achievement of the multicultural ideal. The secretariat works with the community at large to develop and enhance partnerships between communities and with government.

In the bill before us, Mr. Speaker, there is specific reference to the secretariat working with the business community, labour organizations, voluntary and other private organizations to promote respect and appreciation for our cultural diversity, to encourage full participation by all Manitobans in all aspects of Manitoba's society and to recognize the benefits of a multilingual, multicultural society.

Again, multiculturalism is one of our great strengths as a province, and we must strive to ensure the realization of the full economic potential that this asset can bring to Manitoba for all Manitobans to make Manitoba stronger.

The third initiative was the opening of an outreach office. I was pleased to officially open the Community Access Office on May 14 of this year. This is an easily accessible storefront office which provides practical assistance to groups and individuals in dealing with departments and agencies of government.

* (1440)

Mr. Speaker, The Manitoba Multiculturalism Act before us today is the fourth initiative we announced just two years ago. The Manitoba Multiculturalism Act is, and I know all members of the House are aware, a very important piece of legislation. Through consultations held with the multicultural umbrella organizations and various individuals, I

heard time and time again that it was most timely and necessary to introduce legislation that addressed multiculturalism and that the legislation should formally establish and enshrine our multicultural structures, the Multiculturalism Grants Advisory Council, the Multiculturalism Secretariat and the Community Access Office, in a legislative framework.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, much was said about the Manitoba Intercultural Council and its legislation. A strong consensus emerged that the MIC needed to be carefully and fully examined as to its role, mandate and structure. It was also clear, however, that there was no one answer to these issues, and many suggested that we engage an external, independent consultant to conduct such a review and report back.

I was pleased, Mr. Speaker, to meet with the executive of the Manitoba Intercultural Council on Monday of this week, and subsequently with those whom I had consulted with, to advise them that we have listened to what was being said, and have appointed a consultant who is mandated to conduct research and consultations to assess the role, mandate and structure of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and make recommendations thereon to me as the minister, including any necessary amendments to The Manitoba Intercultural Council Act. The final report is due by October 15 of this year.

Through the work of the consultant, Mr. J. Don Blair, I look forward to hearing the thoughts and views of a broad cross section of Manitobans, and to consider such advice and make any necessary amendments to The MIC Act prior to its next biennial assembly in 1993.

Mr. Speaker, the consultations I held on The Multiculturalism Act afforded the opportunity to develop consensus on several issues:

To state the recognition of the multicultural reality of Manitoba, that "multicultural" is an all-inclusive term. That we in Manitoba are able to, and should be encouraged to celebrate our cultures. That there should be clear recognition of the importance of encouraging the use of heritage languages. That we should enshrine the multicultural structures—that is, the Multiculturalism Secretariat, the Community Access Office, and the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council in the legislation. That education in the broad sense is essential.

We must promote the benefits of our cultural diversity and ensure that all Manitobans become cognizant of the fact that multiculturalism is all-inclusive and a source of strength and pride. That we need to strive to ensure that there is respect for our cultural diversity, respect for ethnocultural communities and respect for each and every individual regardless of cultural background. That it was essential that the minister be required to table an annual report with respect to the administration of the act and the activities of the Multiculturalism Secretariat.

That we should set as a clear focus the importance of encouraging and fostering partnership and co-operation between communities. That we need to promote our similarities, not dwell on our differences, and to acknowledge that we do have shared values and aspirations.

Mr. Speaker, the thoughts, ideas and suggestions expressed concerning this act are reflected in this bill. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who took the time to meet with me, to share their views and their suggestions with me. These are individuals who devote their time so freely to their own community and to the community at large, to contribute what they can through their dedication and commitment to multiculturalism and who recognize how their efforts contribute so much to our quality of life in Manitoba and Canada. I know that they will continue to provide constructive comment over the weeks, months and years ahead.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is a multicultural society. The word "multicultural" is used to reflect our make-up historically, presently and into the future. It is intended as an all-inclusive term including every person of every cultural background. I believe it is essential we continue to be cognizant of this and ensure that it is clear to all of those around us. Many misconceptions exist. Many people think multiculturalism is only for those who are recent immigrants or only for those who are visible minorities or for those who are not aboriginal, French or British. Again, it includes each and every one of us.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, The Multiculturalism Act before this House begins with the statement and I quote: "Whereas Manitoba has been a multicultural society from the time of its original population, the Aboriginal peoples." Multiculturalism is part of our identity. It helps to find

who we are. It is a fundamental characteristic of Manitoba and Canada, and that is why there have been proposals for a Canada clause to be incorporated into the Canadian Constitution, and that Canada clause I know was supported by an all-party task force committee.

That is where the second statement of the act before this House is, and I quote: "And whereas the diversity of Manitobans as regards to culture, religion and racial background is a fundamental characteristic of Manitoban society which benefits all Manitobans, economically, socially and culturally."

I believe that if we look to a common identity, if we can define our society, our province and our country in an all-inclusive way, we can do much for Canadian unity. We have shared values, shared aspirations and shared dreams. Within the broad concept of multiculturalism, there are, of course, specific policies and programs that have been introduced and will continue to be developed.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) and I announced Manitoba's policy for a multicultural society on May 15 of 1990. In that policy, our view of the multicultural ideal was set forth. This has been restated in the preamble to The Multiculturalism Act with one important addition, that being a reference to shared values, and I quote: "And whereas the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba believes that Manitoba's multicultural society is not a collection of many separate societies, divided by language and culture, but is a single society united by shared laws, values, aspirations and responsibilities within which persons of various backgrounds have: the freedom and opportunity to express and foster their cultural heritage; the freedom and opportunity to participate in the broader life of society; and the responsibility to abide by and contribute to the laws and aspirations that unite society."

This ideal of a multicultural society affects all parts of the community and speaks directly to our collective determination to meet the challenges of living together in harmony and equality.

* (1450)

As I have stated, Mr. Speaker, a consistent message was conveyed through our meetings that we need to encourage recognition and understanding that multiculturalism is for all of us and that we should promote our similarities. I believe that our statement of the multicultural ideal captures these themes and truly reflects the positive

view of our strengths as a society that is assured by the vast majority of people.

We, regardless of our cultural background, have shared dreams, aspirations and values, and we realize we have shared laws and responsibilities which serve to further unite us.

As members of this House are also well aware, Manitoba's policy for a multicultural society set forth three fundamental principles: pride, equality and partnership. We have restated these principles in this legislation, and I would like to quote: "It is hereby declared to be the policy of the government of Manitoba to (a) recognize and promote understanding that the cultural diversity of Manitoba is a strength and a source of pride to Manitobans; . . ."

This principle embodies the aspects of cultural retention, promotion and development and the benefits of sharing one's culture with others. Two particular areas that would fall within this principle are encouragement for retention of heritage languages and the development of folk, ethnocultural, artistic activities.

Language is a cornerstone of a culture. The preservation of one's heritage language is essential in many ways to the retention of one's culture. As we become a more global society, the ability of Canadians to speak the languages of the world and to know and understand the cultures of the world will certainly enhance our position as a nation in every conceivable way.

In recognition of the great importance of heritage languages to cultural retention and what we see as a tremendous potential which we should strive to realize, we have made specific reference to the importance of encouraging the use of such languages in the preamble to The Multiculturalism Act.

Artistic activities are part of our quality of life. We are fortunate in Manitoba to have such a rich and diverse artistic community. We are privileged to have a strong and vibrant folk, ethnocultural arts community that is able to share its artistry with the community at large. I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, that we are able to, just recently, act on recommendations that were made by the folk arts community in terms of funding by the province.

The Manitoba Arts Policy Review recommended that, for the purposes of funding, all arts activity be evaluated in terms of its artistic merit and not on the basis of its cultural origin. This recommendation

was supported by the folk arts community and was reflected in a task force report of the Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg. The folk or ethnocultural arts community sought to be supported on this basis of being artists, funded as art, and not being supported by virtue of being multicultural.

Mr. Speaker, art is art. I am pleased that we have now established an arts branch within my department, designed to fund all community-based arts, including the folk, ethnocultural arts.

It is also declared in this act: to be the policy of the government of Manitoba to recognize and promote the right of all Manitobans regardless of culture, religion or racial background to equal access to opportunities to participate in all aspects of society and to respect the cultural values.

The equality aspect is what could be described as the human rights or social justice arm of multiculturalism. Each of us has the freedom and opportunity to express and foster all aspects of our own cultural heritage, our own language, customs and traditions, and we recognize the right of our neighbours to do just the same. This openness and acceptance is fundamental to promoting understanding, mutual respect and harmony among all ethnocultural communities. Obviously there are many aspects of equality, many issues that need to be dealt with to ensure that every individual has the freedom and opportunity to participate equally.

A major issue which has had much needed focus and attention over the recent past is racism. We have seen all too clearly that racism exists and how it works. It divides communities and denies equality to individuals.

It is imperative that we work together as a united community with one voice to speak out on this issue and to accept responsibility for developing strategies to stop it. We must without exception or condition make it clear that racism has no place in our society. Refusing to take a stand against racism is accepting it, and we are not prepared to do that.

On March 20 of this year, I announced the appointment of an anti-racism co-ordinator within the Citizenship division of my department. This position is responsible for implementation and co-ordination of anti-racism initiatives. Recognizing that changes must begin within, the Citizenship division, in co-operation with the Civil Service Commission, implemented a pilot anti-racism training program within my department. It examines barriers, practices and procedures which are or may

be perceived as being discriminatory, with the goal of developing strategies for change.

Due to the great success of this pilot project, the Civil Service Commission is making it available to other departments of government. In December, I announced a new grant program, the Bridging Cultures Program. Several applications from community organizations for innovative anti-racism projects have since been approved for funding.

In March, I released the report of the working group on Immigrant Credentials and announced steps to implement its recommendations. In particular, the labour market in Immigrant Credentials Branch of the Citizenship Division was established as of April 1 to, among other things, deal with this vital area. We must reduce and eliminate barriers our new immigrants face in recognition of their off-shore credentials, for these barriers rob them of access to a better future and deprive the community of the potential benefits of their contributions.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, through the consultations, I heard time and time again that we need to strive to ensure that there is respect for our cultural diversity, respect for ethnocultural communities and respect for each and every individual regardless of cultural background. Respect is integral to the attainment of our multicultural ideal, for it is only when we come to truly respect one another that we come to fully accept each and everyone's right to equal access to opportunity and participation in all aspects of society. That is why we have clearly and specifically stated that it is the policy of government to recognize and promote the right of all Manitobans, regardless of culture, religion, or racial background, to respect for their cultural values.

It is also declared to be the policy of the government of Manitoba to enhance the opportunities of Manitoba's multicultural society by acting in partnership with cultural communities and by encouraging co-operation and partnerships between cultural communities. This principle recognizes that it is essential that we all work together to achieve the multicultural ideal and to ensure that programs and policies are meeting the needs of the community.

It reflects the necessity of ethnocultural communities working together, within an ethnocultural community, in partnership with other ethnocultural communities and with government.

We must all share responsibility for solving problems that confront us. We must work in partnership if we are to succeed.

Each of us has something to contribute. Multiculturalism embodies a commitment to work together in an atmosphere of equality and respect within government, within our own ethnocultural communities and within the entire community, to confront common concerns and shape a common future.

I look forward to continuing to work with all Manitobans to meet the challenge of living together in harmony and equality and to achieve the ideal of a multicultural society based on the principles of pride, equality and partnership.

I sincerely appreciate, this afternoon, the opportunity to express and share my thoughts with the Legislature and with our Manitoba community. I look forward to the support of all members of this House for this long-awaited piece of legislation and this first Manitoba Multiculturalism Act.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Committee Change

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Rendar), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey) for the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns). [Agreed]

* * *

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): I rise to speak on this bill. I think you have been notified earlier that I have passed my Leader's designation on to the critic for Culture, Heritage and Recreation, so I will be speaking for only 40 minutes on this particular piece of legislation.

I rise to speak on this bill, which is an important piece of legislation and one which we have been awaiting for a large number of years. Long before this government, we had hoped that we would have one from the New Democratic Party when they were the government of the day, and so we welcome the act.

Unfortunately, we do not welcome the spirit of the act, because we see so much of what has happened to the multicultural community, not be treated with the very words that the minister has addressed so eloquently in her earlier remarks.

* (1500)

She talks about respect; she talks about the need for equal access to opportunity, and yet that is not what has been the chapter and verse of multiculturalism under the administration of this minister.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address firstly the actions of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) earlier this afternoon which I found quite remarkable, that after four questions were asked on an act he rose in this House on a point of order. Obviously feeling that the minister was in some kind of difficulty, he wished to persuade her, in a way, that he would provide her with a little breathing space, so she would be under less difficulty.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, for you to undertake a review of the rules of this particular Chamber, that if, indeed, the Minister of Finance as the House leader is going to be given the opportunity to limit Question Period on bill days, then surely it is essential as a rule change in this Chamber to inform members of the opposition what bills are going to be debated on those particular days, because we come into this Chamber prepared to ask our questions without any knowledge of what is going to be on the Order Paper. We had no prior notification that the minister was going to introduce this bill on second reading, and I quite frankly find it a lack of respect for my rights as a member of this Chamber to then be told that is off limits as far as the government House leader is concerned on any given day.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to undertake a review of the rules of this Chamber, so that if we are going to be limited in the kinds of questions we can ask on Wednesdays and Fridays then we should at the same time be afforded information from the government House leader as to what he is going to be raising later on in those periods of time.

As to the multicultural act itself, first of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with the reality of why we need a multicultural act in this province similar in some respects to the multicultural act available in the country. I would like to begin by discussing with the members the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which was the first representation in Canada of a recognition that we were, in fact, a multicultural society.

Section 15 of the Charter says: Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination, and in particular without

discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

Subsection 1 does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its objective amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

Section 27 of the same Charter goes on to talk about, and I quote, This charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians. The multicultural heritage of Canadians and therefore by definition of Manitobans.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we tend to think of this country so often as a bilingual country because that is what it is in law, and there is the sense that somehow or other Canada is dominated by people of British and French origin. Well, that is not true and has not been true for a very long time in our nation. In the 1986 census, for example, there were only 6.3 million people of British origin. There were only 6 million people of French origin. In other words, of the 26 million people who lived in this country, only 12 million of them could in fact trace their heritage to either French or English in their ethnic origin. [interjection]

The member has asked, how many there were of Mennonite origin? Well, in fact, they do not break down Mennonite origin but they do indicate German origin, and for the member's benefit there were in the 1986 census some 897,000 people who listed their ancestry as being German, and we know full well that the vast majority of those were in fact Mennonites.

Mr. Speaker, so we are in fact no longer a British and French people. We are a multiethnic people with many languages coming from many groups. The German people, for example, are the third largest group in Canada, followed by the Italian, followed by the Ukrainian, followed by the Chinese, and on and on we go into large numbers of people that have just recently come to our great country.

So multiculturalism is not something that we can accept as a concept without doing something about it within our society, and that is exactly what the Charter tried to recognize in 1982 by saying that this is a part of the dynamic that is Canada today. That is why the original task force on Meech Lake and

later the task force on the Constitution put forward the suggestion that in Manitoba at least we would work and strive towards the formulation in the Constitution of a Canada clause, and that Canada clause would not only recognize the French and English heritage of Canadian people but would also recognize our First Peoples, the aboriginal peoples, and would recognize also the multicultural nature of Canada.

I have been successively dismayed at wording that leaks out into newspaper stories and certainly was apparent in the Dobbie-Beaudoin report that they would like to water down, they would somehow like to see the word "multicultural" disappear, that we would be a society of many cultures. Somehow "multiculturalism" had become some word that people no longer wanted to use, and I congratulate the minister for having the courage of using it boldly in this particular act because I think it reflects what is Canada today.

We have in this act, the minister says, a bill which denotes and has respect for people and provides for them equal access opportunities. Mr. Speaker, let us look at what the minister has done as specific actions while she pretends to say she believes in respect, which means equal access and opportunity for all people. Well, first and foremost, one of her first actions is to take an organization called the Manitoba Intercultural Council, which represents on a numbers basis one at least per community, but more for some communities because there are more members of that community living within Manitoba, and she takes an organization which used to have funding authority and she removes that funding authority from them. Unilaterally, without discussions, without debate, she takes the funding authority from them. I think there are many in the Manitoba Intercultural Council who would say very clearly that the minister showed no respect for them, no respect for what they had done in the past, and no respect for their future work on behalf of the multicultural community in the province of Manitoba.

The minister then went on to say that she was showing her respect by the establishment of a Multiculturalism Grants Advisory Council. Well, of course, the Manitoba Grants Advisory Council now has the funding authority that used to be held by MIC. MIC represented not government but the ethnic communities themselves. We have now taken that granting authority and we have given it to an advisory council, and who appoints the advisory

council? Well, of course, the minister appoints through Order-in-Council the advisory council, and so the advisory council is not responsible to the multicultural community, the advisory council is responsible to the minister of the Crown. That is the way this minister has shown respect for the multicultural community and the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

* (1510)

The minister then establishes with some fanfare a Multiculturalism Secretariat. This is going to be an organization, she says in her legislation, which shall act under the direction of the minister, and it shall work with officials of other departments and agencies and work with the community at large and foster and enhance relationships and work with the business community—all laudable goals. Nobody can argue with the goals whatsoever. What does she do? Does she show respect for the multicultural community by saying, well, we will throw this out by public competition so we can get the most knowledgeable, the most respected member of the multicultural community to head the Multiculturalism Secretariat. No, of course she does not. What she does is she appoints the Tory candidate for the constituency of Kildonan whom the people of the constituency of Kildonan indicate they do not want to have represent them in the Legislature, because they vote for the New Democratic member in that particular riding. So she says, well, Mr. Langtry, because you have lost out on this particular Chamber, we will reward you by making you the head of the secretariat.

In terms of Mr. Langtry. Mr. Langtry had been a former president of the Folk Arts Council. He had done very valuable work within the multicultural community, and I suspect that if he had submitted his name and had in fact gone through an interviewing process he may well have been given the job. But then he would have been given the job with respect. It would have been recognized that he was the best person for that particular job, that he was recognized by those who worked in the multicultural community as being an individual who would represent their interests well within this newly formed secretariat.

No, she did not have respect for, I would suggest, either this position or indeed the talents of Mr. Langtry, but she chose instead to politicize the process and once again did not provide the very

equal opportunity access that she talks about as being so important for the multicultural community.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it did not stop there. The Multiculturalism Secretariat is in place and the Multiculturalism Secretariat requires a policy analyst.

Well, does Mr. Langtry have an open competition to choose somebody to be the policy analyst? No. The newly-appointed head of the secretariat, who just happens to be the Tory candidate in the previous election for the constituency of Kildonan, reaches into his campaign workers and appoints his campaign chair, one Miss Alice Kirkland to be the policy analyst, again without any competition, again without any understanding whether she is the best qualified individual for this particular position.

Again we see no respect, no equal access opportunity because there are literally hundreds of people who have devoted countless hours to the multicultural communities in this province, hundreds of individuals who would be delighted to have had the opportunity to apply for this position, hundreds of individuals who would have had the qualifications to have served this position well. Is Miss Kirkland not qualified? I have no idea. She may be eminently qualified in order to fulfill this position, but the problem is that we will never know whether she was more qualified than any other applicant because they did not allow any other applicant to apply.

The minister refused to show the very respect for equal access to opportunities that she talks about in her piece of legislation. That, unfortunately, is what causes those of us who would have liked to have participated in this debate without any partisanship to not to be able to do so, because it has been so politicized by the ministry that we have no choice but to point out the omissions and offences of the minister herself and her staff for the very piece of legislation that she is introducing today.

Mr. Speaker, it does not stop there. The minister talks about the importance of heritage languages. Well, yes, heritage languages are extremely important. One of the best books that I have read in many years that will give us all some understanding of what this country is truly all about is a book called "The Canadian Family Tree, Canada's Peoples."

Unfortunately, it was published then by the multiculturalism directorate in 1982, and from what I have been able to discover it has not entered into

a subsequent printing, but it is a book that I think should be in every public library and in every school and every classroom across the nation, because it gives everyone the opportunity to learn in some detail about individual communities as they have settled in this nation and in this province.

For example, to pick a group that is well known in this particular province, it talks about the Icelandic people, and it talks about the history of Iceland as one of colonization. They talked about the celebration of its nation of 1,100 years of history. Far longer, certainly than Canada. It talks about their settlement in Canada beginning in 1872, in Ontario. It talks about its settlement in Manitoba, more specifically in the 1880s, and it tells us that by 1971 there were 13,000 Icelandic Canadians. It goes on to show where they live, primarily, of course, as I indicated before, in the province of Manitoba.

It goes through all the ethnocultural communities. Well, each one of these included in this group has their own language. They bring that language with them to this country. Then they are faced with a dilemma. They are faced with a dilemma that has been faced by immigrant families for generations.

(Madam Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

The first generation, of course, has to struggle to learn either of Canada's two official languages, either English or French. They then have to try at the same time to preserve within their own family structure the language that they brought with them. Some communities have been more successful, and that often depends on the number of other people in the community who speak that heritage language.

So, for example, if there are large numbers of German people living in a small community, then it is relatively easy to preserve the German language as a language of daily life. If, however, you come from Ethiopia to Manitoba, and there are very few Ethiopians who live within our dynamic, then it is very difficult for them to preserve their Ethiopian language.

But what we see from this minister while she talks about the preservation of heritage language, we have also seen that there is a lack of understanding of the need for those very same people, while preserving their own language, to also learn the language that is spoken in this nation. That is why, with some dismay, we have watched this

government cut English as a Second Language program initiatives.

They used to exist at Red River Community College. They no longer exist there. Those who were asked to move from Red River Community College cannot find the same amount of language training within the Winnipeg School Division because there were only a certain number of positions.

So, while we have one part of the equation being spoken of by the minister today and the need to preserve heritage languages, we do not see the same kind of support for the other side of the equation, which is providing these individuals with the very skills that they require in order to exist in our country, and one of those very fundamental skills is the ability to speak either English or French, depending on where you live in this nation.

The minister spent some time in her speech today talking about the need to combat racism, and yet, Madam Deputy Speaker, we see no real initiatives being taken to deal with racism, which is a factor in our society and one that the minister agrees with. I was dismayed just some weeks ago to meet with some young people who had been working that very afternoon in an antiracism day in the Winnipeg School Division No. 1.

* (1520)

In meeting with these students who attended Kelvin High School, they indicated that in their meetings with other students from other schools they were dismayed at the number of incidents youngsters were reporting of racist attitudes; everything from an example of a phys ed teacher who told a couple of black children to stand under the basketball hoop because the black mats that were normally there were not available, and because of their colour they could represent the mats for that particular phys ed period. That is a blatant form of racism. When we talk to black children, Chinese children, aboriginal children, we find over and over and over again that they can report incidents of racism where they have been discriminated against.

I have, in my own experience as a teacher, watched fellow teachers pass out books of less than decent quality to aboriginal children with the excuse that they would only throw them around anyway. Well, I can assure, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I have seen children of all races, creeds, colours and religions throw textbooks around with impunity,

tragically, and that it has nothing whatsoever to do with their race.

I have watched children expelled, put outside classes, because the teacher found an excuse to have a reason to expel that particular child from a class. But, of course, frequently, it was a child of a visible minority who found their way sitting outside the door. It was never that blue-eyed, white, blond-haired child who found themselves expelled from the teaching situation at that particular time.

Racism is very much alive and well. One of the reasons for racism is that there is not sufficient direction coming from the top. We have asked the minister consistently to provide within this Chamber a cross-cultural awareness day for members of the Legislature. I found it interesting that they did not seem to have any difficulty doing a gender-language day—in fact, several days, giving us options as to when we would like to attend—last year. But they seem to find themselves mired in concrete and unable to provide a cross-cultural day on the issue of racism.

Yet the minister addresses this as a critical issue in order for our multicultural community to feel completely at home within our Canadian dynamic. Well, if she wants them to feel at home, then I would suggest to her, one way that she can do that is to make sure that we begin that education process with legislators in this Chamber and we work its way down.

I have made the suggestion to the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) that each and every teacher who graduates, henceforth, should have at least one course in cross-cultural education so that teacher does not go into the classroom with some stereotypical views of what some children can accomplish and what other children cannot. It is amazing to me that there seems to be, in the general public, a perception that Chinese children are going to do very well in school. There seems to be an equal perception that black children are not going to do very well in school.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I can point, in my own teaching experience, to Chinese children who did very well; I can also point to Chinese children who did not do particularly well. I can turn to black children who did very poorly, but I also can turn to black children with extremely high levels of academic achievement, and I think we have to rid potential teachers of any kind of stereotypical

knowledge about what those children will bring with them on their pack as they enter into classrooms.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, there is a very simple way of addressing this issue. Teachers cannot be certified in the province of Manitoba without approval by the Department of Education. By a simple Order-in-Council, the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) can change the procedure of certification. She can say by a simple Order-in-Council no teacher will be certified in the province of Manitoba without a course in cross-cultural education.

It takes a very, very short act on the part of the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) to ensure that within our school complexes we have teachers who are trained cross-culturally, who can begin to put into place the anti-racism modality that we all recognize is so very important within our society.

I would like to congratulate the Manitoba Federation of Labour for the excellent work that they have been doing in the workplace with regard to a fight racism campaign. They have taken a very solid leadership in this area, but we do not see the same kind of leadership coming from this government in other workplaces, even within the Civil Service itself, even within this Legislature, so that we can combat the very racism that the minister addresses, it being such an important part of multiculturalism and understanding that the multicultural dynamic is now part and parcel of the Canadian dynamic.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think it is important that we point out how we would like to see this act different than the act that exists at the present time. We would like to see within this act a secretariat in which it is clearly indicated: Each and every position of the Multiculturalism Secretariat will be appointed by the Civil Service Commission and by an open competition, so that there will be no direct appointments anywhere in this secretariat by the minister responsible, whether it is this minister or the minister in any other political party in and of the future.

We would like to see the Multiculturalism Grants Advisory Council eliminated. We have made no doubt about that. We think that Grants Advisory Council responsibility belongs with the Manitoba Intercultural Council. It has always belonged with the Manitoba Intercultural Council. The minister used an excuse of a lack of appropriate auditing of that department to drag and curtail its granting

authority and to basically take it from them unilaterally.

Well, nobody questioned that their auditing practices had to be corrected, but if we looked at the Auditor's statements yearly, many departments of this government would not have any authority to spend any money. Almost every single one of them gets a complaint somewhere in the Auditor's report about something they would like to see cleaned up. That is exactly as it should be.

The Provincial Auditor should be there yearly, looking at every single department, finding ways to strengthen auditing principles, making sure that those auditing principles are 100 percent up to date. That is as it should be, and that is exactly what the Auditor said about MIC. They said there were sloppy auditing practices, but when sloppy auditing practices exist you straighten up, you tighten up those auditing practices. You do not unilaterally remove the granting authority as was done by this minister.

We are also dismayed that in this act, contrary to the words which they had given to our critic, the minister had indicated that within this act there would be the mention and incorporation of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. Well, there is no mention of the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

The minister says, they have their own act. Yes, they do have their own act, but in essence she has superseded their act by this act. All they have left under this minister's administration is an advisory role to the minister. She has taken every other function from them, and yet even in that advisory role she continues the farce that she has to appoint their chairperson.

The Manitoba Intercultural Council belongs in the Manitoba Multiculturalism Act as much as the secretariat, as much as the access office, because then it will be clearly defined as important to this minister as her own arm, which according to this act she will still have fully within her disposal to control and appoint her choice of individuals, whether or not they are qualified and whether or not their qualifications have been appropriately evaluated.

* (1530)

She goes on to say, well, the Manitoba Intercultural Council is being investigated or reviewed. She has hired an independent consultant that will provide that review. She mentions Mr. Don Blair, who, of course, has been,

at least to my knowledge, given an untendered contract to do this particular investigation, and so we have the circle complete.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have David Langtry, who is the chair of the secretariat, who was appointed by the minister and of course was the candidate in Kildonan, who appoints Alice Kirkland, who was his campaign chair in that particular community, and who then appoints Don Blair, who just happened to be the executive director of the Folk Arts Council when the same David Langtry was the president of the Folk Arts Council.

It is a very cozy group that is running this secretariat and, of course, within this cozy group we have not had the very concept outlined over and over, and she mentioned it I think at least 10 times in her speech—10 times in her speech and I quote: Respect means equal access opportunity.

There was no access for anybody else to be the chair of the secretariat except David Langtry; there was no access for anybody else to be the policy analyst except Alice Kirkland; there was no access for anybody else in the multicultural community to do this review except for Don Blair. We have no idea whether these people would have been the best qualified. They may have been, and let me say that again, they may well have been the very best qualified for these three functions. We will never know that, because the minister did not have the courage to practise what she preaches in her bill, which is that she will show respect and that her definition of respect is equal access opportunity.

Her concept of equal access opportunity is: I will appoint my friends, preferably if they have been Tory candidates or Tory workers, but I will not allow anybody else to apply for the position, because I do not have the courage of my convictions. I do not have the courage to throw it open to free and open competition to ensure that I get the very best qualified candidates for this job.

The thing that really angers me the most, the thing that I find most offensive, is that one of the very characteristics of new ethnocultural communities is their fear of the political process. They fear it, because they frequently came from countries where they were intimidated. They came from countries where they were told what to do by government officials. They had no choice in the matter.

Yet what are we teaching them here in this province? Are we teaching them that they are to be respected, that their talents will be considered, that

they will have equal opportunity? No, not through this minister. Through this minister we are told: If you join the Conservative Party, if you work as a campaign manager, if you run as a candidate, then you may have equal access opportunity but only then will you have equal access opportunity. [Interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker, the minister would say, practise what you preach. Well, some day we will be given the opportunity to practise what we preach. That is why we fight legislation that is like this, because what all too frequently happens is that a government will introduce legislation for their own narrow political purposes. The government that replaces them, and all governments are eventually defeated, quickly latches on and says, aha, now I can use that for my narrow political purposes, and then the next government gets elected, and they say, I will use this for my narrow political purposes.

The tragedy is that nothing ever changes. The only way we can change things is to ensure that when new legislation is introduced, when new ideas are put forward, that we fight the politicization of this kind of function within our society.

Madam Deputy Speaker, could you let me know how much time I have left, please? Thank you.

We have the narrow political interests of politicians and political parties put before the broad public interests of the multicultural community, and that is what is so very sad about this piece of legislation. This piece of legislation should have come into this Chamber with fanfare, with universal support, with no amendments. It should have been one of those pieces of legislation that every individual could have stood in this House and said, is this not wonderful; we are finally getting a multicultural act. It is going to depoliticize the process. It is going to recognize that too many people in the multicultural community have not been given equal opportunity in the past. It would enshrine the principles of equal opportunity.

Every single thing that this minister has done in her tenure of her ministry has acted against that. Everything that she has put in this act still permits her to politicize as much as she wants the entire process of multiculturalism in the province. So the Multiculturalism Secretariat will still be politicized. The ACCESS office will still be politicized. The Grants Advisory Council will still be politicized, and the tragedy is that the multicultural community looking to us as legislators to do it differently than

those countries of their origin did will learn to their sadness that we are not going to do it any differently unless some day there is a Liberal government.

When that happens, let me commit myself right now, Madam Deputy Speaker, that one of the first acts of this government will be to amend this act in such a way that it will depoliticize the process. It will depoliticize the ethnocultural communities. It will indeed provide respect. It will indeed show respect for the ethnocultural communities. [interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) chirping in his seat. Well, you know, I cannot be held responsible for the actions of others. I can only be held responsible for my own actions—

An Honourable Member: And your caucus?

Mrs. Carstairs: —and the individuals who sit in my caucus. Yes, I can do that. In my caucus and in my leadership we will depoliticize these institutions, and if we do not depoliticize these institutions under my leadership then I will tender my resignation as their Leader, because unless somebody in this country and in this province is prepared to treat multicultural communities with respect, then we are going to continue to do ad nauseam what we have been doing to them for generations in this country, and it is wrong, Madam Deputy Speaker.

* (1540)

Madam Deputy Speaker: The Chair has been advised that the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) will be the designated speaker on Bill 98 and has unlimited speaking time.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Deputy Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to stand here today and speak on this bill. I must first start off by thanking my Leader for giving me the opportunity to be able to speak on this bill through her designated spot, because as you could tell from the speech that she has given, I would suggest to you that she would have loved dearly to have been able to continue her remarks because everyone was listening so attentively to the words that the Leader of the Liberal Party was putting on.

I found it most interesting towards the end of her comments that the NDP and the Conservatives were trying to justify the politicization of the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council, the politicization of other offices as right. As the Leader of the Liberal Party said in very clear language, it is wrong. It does not matter what this government

does to try to justify their actions, it cannot be justified.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are a number of issues that I was wanting to address in this very important bill. I was going to make reference to issues that have come before me in the last couple of years. I know that it really has been a privilege for me to have been appointed as the multicultural critic for our party, because I would suggest to you that being the critic in the opposition's case, or being the Minister responsible for Multiculturalism is, in fact, one of the best positions that one can be assigned to. I say that because as the critics and the minister we are given the opportunity to go out and speak to and listen to so many different ethnic organizations.

There are literally hundreds in the province of Manitoba, and I know that I have had an opportunity to meet with a good number. I do not think I have quite met half of them yet sheerly because of the numbers of different organizations that are out there. But I have met with a good number, and I have had dialogue with virtually all of the organizations that are out there that I am aware of. That dialogue has occurred over the last year, year and a half. I know the last general mailing that I had to the different cultural organizations was in dealing with an amendment that I brought forward in Budget Debate last year in which—a bit later in my speech no doubt I will have an opportunity to talk at length in terms of what actually occurred there.

Suffice it to say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I treat the appointment as the multicultural critic of our party very seriously because of the educational experience it has been for me personally, because I have been able to get such a better understanding, such a better appreciation of the different ethnic groups that are out there, of our society, or in speaking in terms of what makes us Canadians.

I must say from the onset that if at any point in time the minister would like for me to sit down, what I would classify, prematurely, I would suggest to her that in fact I would on her request if she accepted a couple of friendly amendments.

We will be proposing amendments to the multicultural act. One of the amendments will be with respect to MIC. MIC should be in this act, and I am going to talk at length about MIC and the reasons why it should be in this particular act.

There are other concerns that I have that no doubt are shared with the member for Rossmere (Mr.

Neufeld). We are going to be proposing amendments, and I hope that the member for Rossmere, in particular, will be voting with his conscience on this particular amendment that we are thinking of proposing. Because even though he might vote for it for another reason than I would vote for it personally, or we would vote for it as a caucus, I am sure that he could not live with his conscience knowing full well that in fact he voted for that amendment.

So, at any point in time that the minister indicates to me that she would be receptive and follow up on amendments, I would be more than happy to be very specific with her in my debate, and if she accepts those amendments, I would love to see this bill then go into the committee stage where we can have input from all members of the Chamber and, most importantly, from all of the different Manitobans that have an impact, and that is every Manitoban who has an interest and would like to come forward and make a presentation.

Again, I have to say from the onset that the bill itself, and I have asked questions during Question Period on a number of occasions as to is this government going to be bringing forward legislation dealing with the multicultural act as promised in the throne speech? The government's only response was, soon. Well, I give the government credit for introducing the bill and keeping their promise because we in the Liberal Party wanted the bill. So I give them credit for fulfilling that commitment from the throne speech, and I can say from the onset again that we will be voting for this bill.

We are going to be making amendments, as I say, in hopes that the government will be supporting those amendments because as we feel that the bill itself goes a long way in making things good in Manitoba. With a few amendments, we will find that this could be even a better bill. In fact, all Manitobans, I believe, would concur with the type of amendments that we are going to be bringing forward.

So what I plan to do is to talk at length about the Manitoba Intercultural Council because that is going to be the major amendment, so that everyone inside the Chamber will have some sort of a background as to what it is that this particular minister is doing to the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

I intend to talk at length in regards to the other amendments that we believe are necessary, so once again that it is not just the minister who is

steering this bill past her caucus colleagues without them knowing that there is a better way, that there are things that we can do to make this a better piece of legislation, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Well, I wanted to comment on the beginning of what I thought was going to be my speech, but after hearing what the remarks from the NDP and the Conservatives were regarding my Leader, I got a bit off my track. I wanted to talk in terms about what I did last night.

Last night I participated over in Tyndall Park School in a heritage celebration. As we all know the Filipino community is celebrating their 94th independence proclamation of the Philippines, and through the week they have planned a full agenda on their heritage. They have made it open to all of us, to all of the public so that individuals are able to attend, to participate and get a better understanding of the heritage of that one particular community.

* (1550)

The Tyndall Park School was the host of one of those evenings. We got to see last night, children who were participating, and they are primarily from the Tyndall Park School in that heritage week celebration. I saw the folk dances, some other entertainment, got to partake in some of the cuisine. Even though I am talking about this particular evening, I have to qualify it by saying right at the onset that multiculturalism is a lot more than food and dance. Again, I will discuss that a bit later.

In respect to this particular evening last, it was most interesting to see one new instrument that most people have not seen. It is called the ang klung. I hope Hansard does not ask me to spell it because I do not know how to spell it. Basically, it is a bamboo instrument in which each instrument plays a note. I believe it was the music teacher that was assigned from the school that was assigned the responsibility to have some sort of a song with this particular instrument, and it was the first time that this particular instructor had ever seen the instrument and was so intrigued about it, was more than happy to take on the challenge of trying to learn how that instrument worked.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, we were pleased to hear not one but two demonstrations of this particular instrument. It was not the first time I personally got to hear it, but I had talked to a number of individuals in the audience that heard it, and there was a consensus that this is just a wonderful

instrument and where has it been, that this is an instrument that we should be hearing more of.

The reason why I bring that up is, a bit later after that instrument demonstration, the school choir was brought in, and the school choir had more than just the one instrument. What came across my mind is that there are so many musical instruments that are out there that everyone knows about. You know, we all hear the guitar, the piano and the organ and so forth. But there are instruments out there that we do not, or most do not know anything about.

This is where I bring in the whole question of the educational component, and what something as symbolic as this particular instrument did. It gave an appreciation of one very small but important aspect of some other ethnic group's heritage. As I say, if you went across the group that gathered to be there for the celebration, I am sure you would find a general consensus that this is an instrument that we should be seeing in our schools.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I have been asked on many occasions what it is to be a Canadian. That is not a simple question and can be somewhat complicated to give a one-sentence answer. But what I found quite interesting was a while back I had the opportunity to meet over at the Portuguese centre an ethnic group, the Guyanese community.

At the beginning of their performance what they did is they posed the same question, in that it was what it was but in a different sense. They had asked what it was to be Guyanese. Well, they attempted to answer that question. I was very pleased with what I saw.

What happened was we saw individuals of different ethnic groups come up on to the stage, all that represent different areas of the world. [interjection] To the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), I know he wants to see this bill go to committee, and the bill will go to committee. Our intent is not to prevent the bill from going to committee. My intent, Madam Deputy Speaker, is to assist in educating the government in particular as to the need to improve this bill.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Health I hope to personally be able to convince that these amendments are good amendments, and that in fact, he will support. But I digress and I trust that in the future I will not be digressing because of heckles from the government benches, but I will not discourage it. If it means that I can pick up on a point that I know that they might have possibly missed, I

will take that opportunity, because I know that they are sincere in wanting to find out what it is that would make this bill better.

Anyway, Madam Deputy Speaker, I was very pleased with what I saw, and I cannot recall offhand if there were representatives from the other parties from this Chamber, but I would suggest that if everyone from this Chamber was, in fact, at that particular event, they too, like I, no doubt, would have felt that this is something that is most appropriate to start off an event such as the one that they had.

Then, just the other day I was reading, or was actually given, a clipping from the Policy Options in regard to multiculturalism and immigration and key issues that are out there. I wanted to quote from that, and that was from the November '91, Policy Options, which again attempts at answering the question, what it is to be a Canadian. I quote from it, there are three small points: a Canadianism that is inclusive of all of us; a Canadianism that finds its roots in the diversity of its people and not in the institutions of two former colonial powers; a Canadianism that, while given equality of opportunity to all, both respects and values the unique contributions we bring to the nation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that too, I thought, was something that was very appropriate to comment. There is no doubt in my mind that, if you ask that question, what it is to be a Canadian, to every citizen, you will find that the answers vary from every region of the country, you will find that everyone has a definition as to what they believe a Canadian is.

* (1600)

I looked at the debate that we had in regards to the whole question about the Constitution, and I know the minister had made reference to the Canada clause. Well, the Canada clause was an issue that has been there for a number of years. The first time that I heard that particular clause brought on the political scene was in fact from one of my former colleagues, the former member for Crescentwood.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we had, like no doubt all the other caucuses while we were in a minority government, ample debate within caucus regarding the Meech Lake and the constitutional affairs of the Province of Manitoba. You will find that one of the biggest concerns that we had in relation to the distinct society clause that was being promoted from the province of Quebec, one of the biggest and

single largest concerns that we had with respect to the distinct society was that we are all distinct. You will find that every region, every province, in fact every community in the city of Winnipeg and the province of Manitoba has some distinct characteristics. We talked about, well, what is it that we can do to try to reflect that?

One of the suggestions that came out—and as I say, it originally from the political side came from the former member for Crescentwood, Mr. Carr, when he talked about the concept of having a Canada clause in the Constitution. I think that Mr. Carr has done a big service, a significant service not only to the city of Winnipeg but to Canada, because this is an issue that he himself pushed very hard for, not only from within our caucus, because the caucus actually, after the idea came up, was quick to say this is the way that we need to go, but took the cause into the debate with the government and the New Democratic Party.

In fact, we saw the task force report with respect to Meech Lake suggest that what is in fact needed is a Canada clause, a Canada clause that would recognize our multicultural diversity throughout the country in all regions; that, yes, Quebec has some distinct characteristics that other provinces do not have, but, like Quebec, Manitoba has some distinct characteristics that other provinces do not have, Madam Deputy Speaker, and we felt that the Canada clause went a long way in addressing the needs of the multicultural mosaic that in fact we live in. We feel very strongly on the Canada clause. We have continued to fight for it and we will not lie down and allow our Constitution to pass without a fight for having the Canada clause being a part of it, because it is what reflects the population of Canada itself.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, multiculturalism is a word that is used time after time after time, and I know when I go out to different organizations and I talk about multiculturalism, many of them suggest that the terminology of multiculturalism is used far too often to try to justify what is going on in the real world, and try to make life easy in the sense that if a controversial issue comes up, far too often the platitudes of saying, well, we are a multicultural society and we will do what we can and so forth far too often are used. In fact, far too often when people think in terms of multiculturalism they think about the song and dance. You know, I participate in Folklorama, as no doubt many members of this

Chamber participate in, and we appreciate and we learn a lot about other cultures and the heritage that they bring here that make up Canada, but that is only one aspect of multiculturalism. There are many other aspects.

To say the least, we are talking about political, we are talking about social, we are talking about economical integration and, Madam Deputy Speaker, we are a long way from that. Governments at all levels need to put more emphasis on ensuring that the efforts are sincere and that we are doing what we can to advance what multiculturalism really is all about. No doubt all three political parties have adopted multicultural policies, and I plan to make reference, I know, to the government's in ours, but the government is in the fortunate situation in which it can actually implement the policy of their party. Unfortunately, far too often we have seen the implementation of their party policy as being wrong. The government has to go back to the grassroots of its party and come back with policy that is more in tune with the times. People do not want multiculturalism used in order to buy votes, in order to manipulate multicultural groups. I am going to point out in a very clear fashion how the government—government's policy in particular, but I assume that it is the Conservative Party's policy because that is what they are implementing—is wrong. There are, in fact, major flaws—[interjection]

As the government suggests that it should go to committee, the bill will go to committee. The bill will go to committee unless the government wishes to withdraw the bill, and I hope they do not withdraw it now that they have had the courage to implement it. Madam Deputy Speaker, it will go, but it will not go until after we have had an opportunity to express our concerns on this bill. I am going to go through our concerns for the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay).

* (1610)

You cannot expect a bill that came in for second reading on Day 83, when there are discussions about concluding the session 10 days later or 12 days later, to pass, Madam Deputy Speaker. If this government would have brought in this bill Day 25 or Day 30 of a session—they have had four years—no doubt the bill would have been in committee and likely would have received Royal Assent. But, I guess, to some degree it does not fit their political agenda.

I am pleased that we did not allow this government to procrastinate any longer on the multicultural bill. I think, had it not been for the Liberal Party's persistence, this government was hoping to bring forward this bill as it gets a bit closer to an election. I like to think that we had some influence in having this bill that we have here today here because of the pressure of the Liberal Party. That is why I do not give up hope. I believe, if we can drum up enough pressure on the government on making this legislation better legislation, Madam Deputy Speaker, we will see this government accept the amendments and it can be passed and we can all be happy with what the direction that multiculturalism is going in the province of Manitoba, but until we get some sort of an indication, this bill will continue to go through the process. It will continue to be debated.

I know that the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) was wanting to be able to speak to this bill. In fact, I know that he was working on a flow chart in terms of what this government has done. I had asked him if I would be able to use the flow chart, and towards the end of my speech I likely will be making reference to that flow chart.

The concerns that we have regarding this bill are, in fact, sincere. That is why, contrary to what the government wants, the bill should be debated. It deserves to be debated before it goes to committee. [interjection] Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, and to the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), I do call it debate. What are some of the real issues? [interjection] As much as I would love to take on the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) on this particular bill, I would be more than happy, if he has a question, to allow him leave to ask a question, as long as I did not lose my spot, or he can wait until I am done speaking, and I would be happy to answer any questions that the minister has.

Well, the minister from his seat, Madam Deputy Speaker, talks but he does not want—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Deputy Speaker, because my honourable friend has unlimited time, I know that he would permit a question, because it will not take away from his unlimited time. So would he allow a question?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Will the honourable member for Inkster allow the honourable Minister of Health to pose a question?

Mr. Lamoureux: I would be more than happy to, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, my question simply to my honourable friend who has unlimited time in this debate is: Why is he afraid to let this bill go to committee to have the people of Manitoba speak to concerns that he perceives, that I submit he does not perceive accurately? He is afraid to let this bill go to committee and let the people have their say. Why is the Liberal Party afraid to have this legislation go to committee?

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am going to have to digress again from my speech, but I will answer the question and I will answer it so that the Minister of Health himself will understand it.

We believe that this bill is flawed. It has a major flaw in the bill. The government wants us to pass this bill on the day that it receives second reading into committee, a major bill of this nature. How irresponsible does he think we are? He might be able to pass that on the NDP, but he is not going to get it by the real opposition in this Chamber. We have a right to debate this issue, and we will debate the issue—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I stood in my place to adjourn debate on this bill so that we could speak on it, because we think it is an important bill as well, contrary to what the member for Inkster says.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Burrows does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Lamoureux: Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, now the NDP agree with me. I am pleased to hear that, and I hope they, too, will be responsible and stand up and speak on this bill too, because it is important that their positions are clear, and that is another reason as to why it is important that I speak on the bill before it goes to committee, because there are amendments that I am going to go into in detail that we would like to see, and before it goes

into committee, because I do not believe that the minister responsible—

Point of Order

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for Inkster, who has the floor, has indicated that he is going to go into amendments and discussions of amendments. If my understanding of the rules is correct, second reading is the opportunity to debate the bill in principle and not to discuss amendments which come at committee. So I would suggest that he be advised of that, since he does not seem to be familiar with that rule.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind all honourable members that debate on second reading of the bill is to be explicitly relevant to the principles of the bill.

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Deputy Speaker, I understand that the Deputy House Leader (Mr. Praznik) does not necessarily know what it is that he talks. In fact, I am pointing out major flaws in the legislation. If the government would allow me the opportunity to continue so that people who might want to read what the minister said and the Leader of the Liberal Party said prior to myself so that the speech will be somewhat intact.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

So getting back, Mr. Speaker, to the bill itself in the sense that there are a number of real issues that need to be addressed, issues in which this government has not been addressing. So when they talk about multiculturalism, they talk about the wonderful things that they are doing. They create new offices; they create new funding agencies; they brought forward a policy, what I would classify as a Conservative Party policy, which we too even have a policy. But, as I pointed out, the government has the opportunity to bring in government policy.

Mr. Speaker, there are aspects of this particular bill that we support, and that is why, as I said at the very beginning of my comments, I said that we were going to be supporting this bill, but want to see those amendments. This is one area we believe that we can ensure that the minister does the responsible thing, that we have some sort of influence on, because if we take a look at the real issues of multiculturalism, we can see how the government has failed.

Mr. Speaker, I would go to one of those issues being racism, Time after time.

* (1620)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I also—

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order?

Ms. Barrett: No, I would like to ask the member for Inkster if he would answer a question from myself, as he did for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)?

Mr. Speaker: Will the honourable member for Inkster allow the honourable member for Wellington a question?

Mr. Lamoureux: As long as it is clear, Mr. Speaker, that when I sit down I will be more than happy to answer any questions of any members at any time, as long as it is well known that I am not giving up my right to speak.

Ms. Barrett: I will not take much time at all from the member for Inkster. I would like to ask the member for Inkster, why, if he has stated that his party is prepared to support this bill with amendments, he does not put his party's position on the record expeditiously so that the legislation can go to committee in due course so that the public has an access to that?

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I will answer the question specifically, but prior to doing that I will suggest to all members, as I suggested, I will be more than happy to answer any questions you might have, but try to get them dealing with the bill itself so that I can at least attempt at convincing you why it is you should be supporting what it is that we are doing. But, now, having said that, I want to answer the specific question.

I would suggest to the member for Wellington that what she do, she should sit down with the member for Thompson, her House leader (Mr. Ashton) and possibly her deputy House leader (Mr. Martindale) and maybe she will get a better understanding as to why it is not absolutely essential that we speak to a bill and then allow it to pass the same day it is introduced for second reading. On the previous point of order from the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), he stood up to adjourn debate. That would have not allowed the bill to go to committee.

Now, "expeditiously" in whose mind? If the member for Wellington is saying that expeditiously means that bills that they agree with and that they

do not have amendments to should be passed right away and go through the system, "just put your comments on the record" is fine, well, I disagree with that, and I disagreed with that when the NDP stood up on final offer selection or when they voted in favour of a budget.

Again, I do not mind being interrupted in my speech. It might make it very tough for individuals to read, but I would ask that those questions deal specifically with the amendments that I am asking or just to clarify some of the comments that I put onto the record.

I am going to revert back to the speech, and we are dealing with an issue that this government, when it comes to multiculturalism, has not been able to deal with. That issue is something that was submitted from MIC. The minister, I think, knows full well what it is that I might be referring to. That is the report that was given to the minister that has combatting racism in Manitoba that was produced by the Manitoba Intercultural Council. Well, this minister has had this report since October of 1990. One of the simplest recommendations that is in this report, I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, something that should have been implemented long, long ago, at the very latest, the spring of 1991, and that is, and I quote from the report that MIC recommends with respect to cross-cultural awareness programs: That within the coming year the government of Manitoba provide a one-day cross-cultural consensus evaluation workshop to all members of the Legislature of the province of Manitoba, school trustees, and city councillors.

This was within one year. Well, if the minister had it since October of 1990, that would have meant October of 1991. Well, Mr. Speaker, MIC has given up hope on this government when it comes to that cross-cultural awareness program. In fact, they invited members from this Chamber to attend a day in which they provided that particular—or a course that would no doubt somewhat resemble what it is that the MIC had suggested that this government provide for us.

Mr. Speaker, that is just one of the recommendations that is here that the minister has absolutely no excuse as to why this government did not implement that recommendation. You look in terms of dealing with racial incidents, and again, I quote from the report: that the Attorney General of the government of Manitoba provide additional staffing and other resources to the Manitoba Human

Rights Commission in order to deal with the unacceptable backlog of complaints dealing with racism and assist the commission in providing more effective ongoing public education.

Well, Mr. Speaker, last time I checked, that in fact was not being done. The list could go on. How long did we have to wait in order for the Ku Klux Klan line to be cut off? What type of action did we see from this government on that?

Racism is a real issue, an issue that this government has not been addressing. Mr. Speaker, we talk about the recognition of foreign credentials. The government has brought forward a report in respect to the recognition of foreign credentials. I notice that one of the major thrusts of that particular report is suggesting something that we have proposed in this Chamber as a resolution: the formation of a data bank. A data bank would go a long way in resolving at least part of the problem with the whole question of foreign credentials.

There are systemic barriers that are out there that governments need to address. I am not aware of any of those systemic barriers that, in fact, this government is taking any sort of action on. In fact, during the Civil Service Estimates, we had one group, Mr. Speaker, actually see a decline in the make-up of our Civil Service.

Mr. Speaker, ESL, we had an opportunity here to expand, to make, to bring forward a program that would allow for individuals who have not only recently come to Canada, but individuals who have been here for years, for decades, an opportunity to be able to learn the language. Well, the list goes on, and I am going to make reference a bit later as to some more of the details. [interjection] To the Minister of Agriculture: I am not afraid of any questions. I told him what he can do if he so chooses if he has any questions. But I wanted to go with what happened today in Question Period with respect to this bill.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Intercultural Council is and was expecting to see some sort of support from this government. Today, after three questions from the member for Rossmere—not Rossmere, I am sorry—the NDP multicultural critic, from Radisson, stood up and asked questions of the minister, and then I had the opportunity to follow with a question. At that point in time the government House leader stood in his place to tell us that he is going to be calling that bill.

* (1630)

I guess he was somewhat sensitive because it was kind of a break in procedure. You do not generally see government House leaders stand up in Question Period to say that they are going to be calling a bill for debate, but we welcome that debate. I would like to think, Mr. Speaker, that we might have even got the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) to stand in his place and by asking the question get Bill 98 onto the agenda.

At that point, Mr. Speaker, the break with tradition, if you like, I was not able to ask the questions in relation to the bill itself. But there is a reason why I wanted to ask that question, and that question was in regard to what I made reference to as a fundamental flaw, as something that the minister has failed to recognize, and that was the importance of a Manitoba Intercultural Council.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to go over why we feel that it is so very important that the Manitoba Intercultural Council be a part of this legislation. The bottom line for this is that we believe that the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship responsible for Multiculturalism (Mrs. Mitchelson) does not see the Manitoba Intercultural Council as having any future in the province of Manitoba. Her actions demonstrate that very clearly.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to start off by saying that it was one of the good things that the New Democratic Party did while they were in government by bringing forward the act known as The Manitoba Intercultural Council Act. It was done a number of years ago. We find that particular act had some flaws in itself that we wanted to see amended. I give the then-government credit for recognizing, at that time, the importance of having an organization such as the Manitoba Intercultural Council. The reason why I give them that credit is because I would refer you to many of the comments that I made at the beginning of my speech, when I talked about what is being a Canadian, when I expressed some of the things that I have been able to see as the Multiculturalism critic for the Liberal Party.

I believe that the NDP, at that time, was trying to do a service by bringing forward a piece of legislation of this nature. I found it very interesting to find out that the opposition at that time did not support MIC getting together. The reason why they did not support it is because they felt that all the NDP were trying to do was to politicize the multicultural community. That is the primary concern that they had when they were in opposition, that they felt that

the New Democratic Party was trying to politicize the multicultural community.

Mr. Speaker, this government has gone one big step in that direction, and I guess, given the time that it was introduced, the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and the things that were being said at the time, I can understand to a certain degree why it is that they might have been of that opinion.

I had talked to individuals that were there since the creation of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and they told me some of the inner politics as to why the Conservative Party then opposed the Manitoba Intercultural Council. Unfortunately, I do not think their attitude has changed since then. They opposed it then and they oppose it now. In the long term, they want to get rid of the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

Well, I would suggest to you that what this government is doing in Bill 98, the multicultural act—even if I were to use their arguments—is a lot more political now than the government, through their eyes, was being back when the Manitoba Intercultural Council was being introduced.

I want to tell you why I believe that. I polled the Manitoba Intercultural Council to talk about what it is that The Manitoba Intercultural Council Act really is, so that hopefully the government, in particular, will compare the two, compare what was then brought in, something that I would argue was not political. It had a couple of flaws in the legislation, which I will point out as I go through the act, that we felt would have made The Manitoba Intercultural Council Act even better, but I do not believe that the intent of the government at that time was as bad as the then-Conservative opposition made it out to be.

There might have been some attempt, from the then minister that introduced the MIC, to have some influence with the Manitoba Intercultural Council. That is the reason why we, as the then official opposition and now the real opposition, brought forward amendments to the multicultural act. I want to go through, as I say, what it is that the Manitoba Intercultural Council is.

It makes reference in Clause 4(1)—and this is not the multicultural act; this is The Manitoba Intercultural Act—and that was that a council should be set up and that it should have or it should be made up of at least: (a) "one member elected by each registered ethnocultural group; (b) one member elected by the registered associations of ethnocultural groups in each of the Southeast,

Interlake, North Central, South Central, Southwest, Parklands and North regions as those regions are defined by the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics; (c) one member elected by registered organizations composed of and serving several ethnocultural groups." Finally—and I think this is where the government felt that they were being political; if they felt at that time that they were being political, they really have to think about what they are doing—and that was Section 4(1)(d): "one member appointed by the minister for each two members elected under clauses (a), (b) and (c)."

Mr. Speaker, that provided the government the opportunity to be able to have some input, some direct communication from within MIC. That is something that we believed was absolutely essential. The primary reason why we felt that it was better that MIC have the granting authority, not MGAC, the Manitoba Grants Advisory Council, that was created from this particular minister, that is fully appointed, politically appointed from this minister, which now allows the government of the day to politicize culture or multicultural grants. They took away from an organization that was handing out the grants, that was apolitical, and decided to politicize it.

* (1640)

Then the act goes on. I am only going to make reference to three parts of the MIC Act. In the last two parts are some things which we believed were flawed. The reason why we believe that they are flawed is here, it is that we believe that if the minister, if the government, buys into what we are saying in terms of the importance of the MIC and decides to incorporate the act—that the minister or the government does not include the Manitoba Intercultural Council Act without amendments, because the Manitoba Intercultural Council Act itself needs amendments.

The act has that "The minister in consultation with the council executive shall designate from among the members of the council a presiding member and the members of the council shall elect a deputy presiding member."

Well, Mr. Speaker, if the government decides to accept our amendments to allow MIC to be in the act, we would suggest that the government has recognized—and I give the minister a gold star for recognizing this—the minister has recognized that this is one of the flaws of the Manitoba Intercultural

Act, that MIC should be able to elect its presiding officer. So the minister and I agree on this.

I guess we currently disagree with having the MIC in the multicultural act, but I am an optimistic person, and hopefully after she hears everything I have to say about the importance of MIC, she will consider that a policy change is needed and that this is something that the minister herself might want to consider.

The final aspect that I wanted to refer to in terms of the Manitoba intercultural act was the executive secretary. That was that "The day to day business of the council shall be administered by an executive secretary appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council following consultation by the minister with the council executive."

Well, Mr. Speaker, again, the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) gets a gold star. She agrees with us that, in fact, the NDP were wrong in the minister appointing that particular position, that, in fact, it should be the responsibility of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I was very pleased to hear the minister responsible tell me that, to tell me that she supports two of three aspects of a private member's bill that I had introduced, on behalf of the Liberal Party, to this Chamber.

In fact, this was a bill that was introduced more than once into this Chamber, because it was introduced by the former member for Selkirk, the former member for Seven Oaks. It dealt with those two issues in addition to the funding issue. I felt that I had made major grounds. Let me tell you why I felt that I had made major grounds on the bill that I had introduced, Bill 9. The minister spoke to it on November 6, 1990. I am sure that you will be very impressed with what the minister had to say about the bill introduced from the Liberal Party then. This is what she said, and I quote from Hansard:

"Mr. Speaker, we also have committed to a multicultural Act for the Province of Manitoba. Within the context of that Act we will be addressing some of the issues that have been raised by the Liberal Opposition about how the Act that incorporates the Manitoba Intercultural Council will fit into the overall picture of a multicultural piece of legislation for the Province of Manitoba."

This is what the minister said then. I am getting the feeling that she is starting to change her mind on it, Mr. Speaker. But I am hoping she just forgot that she made these comments, and in fact after me reminding her that she made that particular

comment—and I have one more—that she will reconsider and agree with me once again, or to confirm her agreement with me, as it says in Hansard.

I go on, Mr. Speaker. "In that context we will deal with some of the issues that were raised, but we are not about to, as a Government, take an ad hoc approach to amending legislation, rather than taking a look at the whole overall picture and doing all of the right things for all of the right reasons at the right time. That will be coming forward and we will be addressing any changes to deal with the Manitoba Intercultural Council in context when the Act is introduced."

Mr. Speaker, that is 100 percent flip-flop from the Minister of Culture and Heritage. She made a commitment to me in private members' hour on November 6, 1990, that she was going to be dealing with the concerns that I raised in a multicultural act.

The last sentence is: "That will be coming forward and we will be addressing any changes to deal with the Manitoba Intercultural Council in context when the Act is introduced."

Well, Mr. Speaker, you cannot get any clearer than that. She made a commitment and she failed to live up to that commitment. The minister told me something in which I had taken her at face value. As a direct result of what the minister told me, in the next session, even though we introduced the MIC amendment bill for a number of consecutive sessions, based on what the minister told me, I recommended to our caucus, because of the good will demonstrated from the Minister of Culture and Heritage, that we should not introduce The MIC Amendment Act.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I guess I should not have taken the minister at her word. Instead what I did, because the caucus had agreed with me on it, after hearing what the minister in fact said, I decided to introduce a resolution, and that resolution dealt with the funding component. The funding component is something that the minister disagreed with us on. I am going to go in at length as to why this minister had chosen to disagree with us, not only now, but you will find that as I go through my speech I will often make reference to what the minister had in fact done.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk in terms of that failed commitment. She made the commitment. She broke her commitment. On a recommendation from my caucus, our caucus had decided not to

introduce two of the three problems that we saw with the Manitoba Intercultural Council and that was the presiding officer and the executive assistant based on a commitment from this minister, but because we agreed to disagree on the politicization of multicultural grants, the minister wanting to politicize it, the Liberals—and I believe the NDP were with us on that issue—did not want to politicize it.

So what happened is not wanting to let go of that issue, it was suggested that what I do is I bring forward a resolution dealing with it. Being the responsible and persistent opposition party that we are, that is what we did. We brought forward a resolution to continue the debate, to remind the minister time after time what she is doing when it comes to multicultural grants is wrong. Even though, Mr. Speaker—and I know we are going to go into the Estimates, hopefully sometime soon—we are going to talk about it again, it will not be a debate as much as we have the opportunity to ask questions of each other.

I can tell you right now what the minister is going to say and I guess, ultimately, I am going to have to agree to, and that is at the end of the debate the minister will say, well, we have had this debate on many occasions and the member for Inkster, the Liberal critic, should realize that on this particular issue we are going to have to agree to disagree and then leave it at that. In all likelihood, I will add a few words and unfortunately have to agree to disagree.

* (1650)

Two things should be taken into account. Because we agree to disagree does not mean that we as a Liberal caucus are going to let the issue die. We are going to continue to fight that issue, because we believe the government is wrong, the government cannot justify politicizing the multicultural community by deciding who is going to get the grants. It is wrong. That is the other thing, the other second thing that comes out of this, that the minister, even though she says that we are going to have to agree to disagree, because we do that it does not mean, and it should not mean in her mind, that she is right.

Mr. Speaker, I sincerely believe that this is a debate that should occur in the Conservative caucus, because I think that if you put all the facts on the table and you say what is the reason for us being in government? Is the reason for us to manipulate the multicultural community in order so we can get votes in the next provincial election or is

the reason to do what is the proper thing to do in regard to funding of a multicultural community?

I hope the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) will stand and speak on this particular bill, too. [interjection] I will give the member for Rossmere a change; you can bank on it, as soon as I am done, because I have an amendment that I think I am going to get the support from the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld). I am convinced that he is going to support me on this amendment. He might disagree as to why I am putting the amendment forward, but I think he is going to agree to it. I hope he is in the Chamber for all of my speech so that when I eventually get to that area of my debate that I will be interested in hearing what the minister himself has to say about it, because I know I have at least one government member onside on one of the amendments that I am going to be proposing, even though he might be onside for all the wrong reasons. He should be onside, because I know he has a conscience, and he could not at least vote for it. He might not be around for the vote possibly for the amendment. [interjection] The acting government House leader is very sensitive to this. I would ask him to be patient—

An Honourable Member: And well he should be.

Mr. Lamoureux: And well he should be. As I was saying, that the minister by agreeing to disagree with me does not make her right. The caucus needs to discuss that issue from within. They need to revisit and to change. There is something that can happen to the bill. Hopefully, if I get time on Friday, I will be able to talk about what it is that we could actually do to ensure that we can rectify that problem, take it out of the politicization, if you will.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted also to make mention that ever since the Conservatives have taken office, that they have taken actions that have really taken away the powers from MIC. That is why the government has to consider making a commitment to MIC. The way they can make that commitment is by including the Manitoba Intercultural Council in this piece of legislation.

I only made reference to one thing that is being done by this government that is sending the wrong message to the Manitoba Intercultural Council. Another thing that they are doing, Mr. Speaker, is taking away in essence what the legislation itself has asked for it to do. That was to be an advisory board to the minister. I made reference to one of the things that the Manitoba Intercultural Council did

in terms of combatting racism. MIC deals with a number of different issues and brings it to the attention of the minister. I am going to be going through a number of those because, unfortunately, I am going to run out of time today.

Point of Order

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, the member for Inkster—I know has unlimited time—has indicated he was going to run out of opportunity for his remarks. We would wonder if you could canvass the House. This side would be very prepared to give leave to waive private members' hour, so that the member for Inkster can really, if he is sincere about carrying on, can do that, and we would like actually to ask for—I think members of the official opposition may have—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is there leave to waive private members' hour?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Leave is denied.

Point of Order

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I gather that the record will show that it was in fact the member for—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. No, the honourable member does not have a point of order. Leave has been denied.

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: I cannot believe that the government and the NDP want to waive private members' hour—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, given that my honourable friend has unlimited time, I wonder if he might permit another question, a very short one.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, on Friday, first thing, I will. I want to—[interjection] I only want to address what the Deputy Government House Leader (Mr. Praznik) said.

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the Immigrant Credentials Bill, which is also a very important multicultural piece of legislation, should be dealt

with. The minister of immigration, or the minister of citizenship and multiculturalism, should be speaking on that bill. That is a bill that deals with the real issue.

If the minister would recognize the fact that opposition also brings forward good, legitimate debate on issues, Mr. Speaker, we will other legislation that is passed. But this government, time after time, refuses to address the real issues of multiculturalism and does not even speak on private member's bills, in bills that deal with the issue that we are talking about right now, and that is multiculturalism.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to challenge the minister to stand up today and to speak to that bill. If she has any respect for multiculturalism, she will do just that, and I say shame to the NDP party for acknowledging, for trying to say that the private members' hour does not deserve the debate on those issues.

Does that mean the critic for Multiculturalism does not care what is happening to the Immigrant Credentials Bill, or resolutions that are introduced that are dealing with multiculturalism, Mr. Speaker? Shame on the NDPI Shame on the government!

I will be given the opportunity on Friday, Mr. Speaker, to continue my debate, and I will continue my debate in hopes that in fact what we will see is the government re-evaluate and rethink their position and allow for policy changes on this legislation. Because it needs the changes, and I will continue to speak until at least I have expressed all the concerns that I have representing the Liberal caucus, irrelevant of what the New Democratic Party might have in their position on this bill. They might want MIC to go down the tubes, but the Liberal Party does not want MIC to go down the tube, and the Liberal Party will fight for the Manitoba Intercultural—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour.

This matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Point of Order

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, given what just took place, I would ask that if there would be leave to

address the Immigrants Credentials bill, something that no doubt, which deals with multiculturalism, the minister and the NDP would like to debate. If there would be leave to do so?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader): On that particular point, I think the Liberal Party already has expressed its lack of desire to continue to debate this issue by waiving private members' hour.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

An Honourable Member: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We will deal with this one first. Is the honourable member for Inkster asking for leave to bring forward Bill 32, The Immigration Consultants Registry Act? Is that the one?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to bring that forward at this time?

Some Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No.

Point of Order

Mr. Lamoureux: Let it show, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order.

ORDER FOR RETURN, ADDRESS FOR PAPERS REFERRED FOR DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the motion of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. Is there leave? [Agreed]

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be able to put a few thoughts on the record with respect to this particular order for return requested by my colleague the member for St. Johns. I am amazed that—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have recognized the honourable member for Brandon East, and I am sure all honourable members would like to give the

courtesy to the honourable member for Brandon East to put his remarks on the record.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure if honourable members wish to carry on their heated debate, they may do so outside of this Chamber.

I am amazed that the Legislature has to debate this particular request for information, this particular Address for Papers asked for by my colleague the member for St. Johns, because on reading of the Address for Papers, it looks to me that it is a very straightforward request, it is a reasonable request. In fact, in many ways, it is a request that is certainly of a nonpartisan nature and simply asking that we obtain the formal opinion from the Department of Justice on the matter of whether there was anything in this Bill 91 that would interfere with the enforcement of The Public Health Amendment Act, which is Bill 91, known as the antisniff legislation. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that this is a reasonable request which I cannot understand the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) or the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) not wishing to agree with. I do not understand why they would not allow that information to be tabled in the Legislature.

I ask myself what happened to open government. For years, when the Conservative Party was in opposition, they talked and preached about open government; we need freedom of information; we should give documents to the people so the people would be more conversant with the issues of the day. Now that they are in government, we find that they are not ready to give to the public of Manitoba and certainly to the members of this Legislature, a legal opinion on a very important matter, namely Bill 91.

So I ask, Mr. Speaker, what has happened to open government? I say, if anything is undermining democracy in this country of ours, it is the secretiveness of parties in office. The secretiveness of parties in office. The secretiveness that this government is displaying is not to the credit of this government and this issue. There is too much secrecy in government.

While I am not an advocate of an American system of government, I am not an advocate of the congressional system of government, certainly there is far more openness in the United States than there is in Canada in terms of government providing information, providing reports to the public, so that the public can be in a position to judge.

I am sure that it should be understood, I suppose, that if you do not have information then you cannot criticize. So one way to eliminate criticism or to soften criticism is not to give out information. Perhaps this goes for the senior bureaucracy as well as for the ministers of the Crown. But the fact is, in the United States we can get information on the salaries of senior executives in this country that we cannot get through Canadian legislation, through Canadian regulations and procedures. I say, that is to the discredit of the parliamentary system as we know it. I think it is a sad commentary on our process and on this government that we have to debate an Order for Return such as this, a reasonable request, simply asking for a legal opinion. Certainly this should not be a state secret.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, it goes beyond this. I can think of other examples where we should have more information for the public so they can judge what the government of the day is doing. One example, I believe, is operating information on hospitals. The time has come for the people of Manitoba to have more details on the operation of our hospitals, more details on revenues, certainly more details on expenditures, more details on salaries paid to staff, more details on all kinds of expenditures made by major health care institutions which collectively spend hundreds of millions of dollars of the taxpayers' money, and the people of Manitoba cannot even find out just how that money is being spent, even if they wanted to. Even if they wanted to make an effort of research, this information is simply not available.

Now, in this instance, Mr. Speaker, we have a bill, Bill 91, that has its history back in December of 1989 when the first reading took place. On February 1, 1990, we had second reading of Bill 91, and at that time, later that month in February, the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) was assured of support from the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), who, at that time, stated, and I am quoting: As I said, I have been working with the honourable member for St. Johns, who had the foresight to bring this matter forward.

So here is the Minister of Justice seemingly in favour of this legislation.

On March 1, again, in the second reading, the Minister of Justice says, and I quote: We have to have legislation like this. In a matter like this there is all kinds of room for agreement amongst

right-thinking and caring Manitobans which I trust that all members of this House are.

From there it goes to committee stage, March 8. Then March 13 we had five presentations that had been made, all were supportive with the exception of the Manitoba Medical Association. March 13, there is clause-by-clause discussion. All the proposed amendments are approved, and upon adoption of the bill, the Minister of Justice again is very supportive, and I quote: I moved that motion so that the Department of Health and its minister, whom I have not had the opportunity to consult with in recent days, so the Department of Health can do the work necessary to ensure that those who are in the business of distributing these things on a legal basis are made aware of the new rules. I do give commitment to the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) and all honourable members that here again, this is a matter of some importance to us as a government to bring some reasonable level of control with regard to substance abuse.

Then, Mr. Speaker, it goes on to third and final reading. On March 15, it obtains the final reading by the Legislature. Then, following that, some months transpire. The summer goes by; the winter comes, and December 11—of course, this is after the election where this particular government obtained a majority—in the Question Period, nevertheless, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) responds in the affirmative when asked if he will proclaim the antisniff bill.

* (1710)

December 11 also, the Minister of Health states, in the Estimates debate, "We anticipate proclamation in January, and a committee is putting those varied touches to the process of proclamation."

Well, Mr. Speaker, it seems that not only the Minister of Justice but also the Minister of Health himself was supportive of this particular legislation and said he was going to put the finishing touches to proclaim it. He said between the second and the 31st of January was his commitment.

That was back in 1990. Since then nothing, of course, has happened. On February, 1991, the Minister of Health indicated that further study was required and that no date for proclamation had been set. Subsequently in that year, May 1, 1991, the Minister of Health states that amendments may be

necessary now to deal with technical problems with enforcement. Of course, nothing happens.

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Nothing happens for the rest of the year, and by 1992—we are into the year 1992 now—still no enforcement. With the request of my colleague the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) for tabling of the legal opinion, we get the statement from the minister that he refuses to table a legal opinion on enforcement.

Again I say, what has happened to open government? What has happened to freedom of information? What has happened to an openness that members opposite have said that they were in favour of when they were in the opposition? Now the shoe is on the other foot, they are in government, and they do not wish to provide information that should be forthcoming. It is straightforward. It is a legal opinion. True, they are not required to give a legal opinion, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) indicated, but I would have thought that the better part of wisdom and consideration would bring them to the point that they would table that opinion.

Certainly the bill is not perfect. My colleague from St. Johns has said this publicly and has said it in this Legislature. Bill 91 may not be perfect. It may have a lot of limitations, but certainly inaction is inexcusable. If it is not satisfactory, then where are the amendments? Why does the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) not get up and say, well, we want to make some improvements; we have some amendments we think are necessary. As my colleague for St. Johns constituency has said, bring them forward and we will do whatever we can to expedite the process through the House so that we can have an improved Bill 91 if necessary.

By all means, we are open on it, because we have a serious social problem that is affecting the lives of many, many young people throughout Manitoba, particularly in the core area, but it is not confined to the core area. We have examples throughout the province, in the North, some other urban centres, and it is a problem of serious proportion. It has its roots in many areas.

There are many causes. There are diverse causes of this particular problem, not the least of which is poverty, just the abject poverty that people find themselves in causing them to despair, causing them to give up hope. This is a way of escape by this sniffing process, sniffing of whatever it may

be—glue or gasoline or nail polish or Lysol or whatever the substance may be.

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

It may be caused by abuse in the home that may have driven the children to this particular practice, or the home itself may be broken. They may be from broken homes. Whatever the reason, the fact is that this phenomenon is occurring, and it is something that we have to address. It is not a partisan issue. It surely should not be an issue of division between left-wing or right-wing opinion among any of the political parties in this province or in this country. It surely should be a nonpartisan issue. It is a matter of calling for some step forward to deal with an issue that is very difficult and very complex, and no one for one moment has suggested that this bill will resolve all the problems.

This bill will not stop sniffing, but it is a step in the right direction. It will make it much more difficult for this to occur. For us not to act is to fail the community. The community has asked for this type of legislation for some years now. They have asked for legislation. They have gone to the City of Winnipeg. There was some support by the City of Winnipeg, but this was declared *ultra vires* in the courts, I understand. They had some difficulty in the courts. Certainly the Winnipeg police are much in favour of this particular legislation, and I would say generally the members in the community are.

So not to act, Mr. Acting Speaker, is to fail this community. It is certainly to fail the children, the children who are being affected adversely by it, and it is certainly to fail the front-line workers, the social workers, and there are others, people in the churches and community groups that are front-line dealing with these children. I say, inaction is failing these children.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the government does not have to provide the legal opinion—that may be true—but it is time for some openness. It is time to open the books. It is time to put the information on the table, so all of us can read it and bring about some conclusions.

Well, I understand I only have a minute left, but, Mr. Speaker, I just want to put this final thought on the record and that is, the public generally is cynical about politicians in not keeping promises. They become very cynical when they see governments, federal, provincial and indeed at the civic level, when the people are running for office they make

promises or indeed make promises having been elected, and then they turn around and break those promises. The public becomes indeed very, very cynical and very distrustful of the whole process. What they get, therefore, is rhetoric and not action. What we are asking for is action, and what my colleague the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) is calling for is something very reasonable. She wants to get action. She wants Bill 91 to be proclaimed, and if there is any reason why this cannot be proclaimed, she wants to know why. She simply wants to get the legal opinion which the Department of Health has asked of the Department of Justice. It seems to me a reasonable request. An answer should be forthcoming now from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). He should be up on his feet tomorrow, hopefully, and tabling that opinion that has been requested by the member for St. Johns.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik).

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 36—Core Area Initiative III

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) that

WHEREAS economic conditions in Manitoba are dramatically deteriorating; and

WHEREAS the Core Area Initiative Agreements I and II provided major support to vulnerable families and communities during the last ten years; and

WHEREAS federal resources are vital in the renewal of the city of Winnipeg and the redevelopment of our economic base and labour force; and

WHEREAS the city is reviewing Plan Winnipeg, and many of the issues to be addressed will need federal and provincial support through an agreement such as the Core Area Initiative; and

WHEREAS the involvement and participation of aboriginal people must be an integral part of the renegotiation of a new Core Area Initiative Agreement; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Urban Affairs has taken no initiative on this issue, and has failed to convince the federal government of the necessity of

their involvement in the future of Winnipeg's inner city.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier to direct the Minister of Urban Affairs to initiate serious consultations with aboriginal people, the City of Winnipeg and the federal government and to consider the negotiations for a new agreement an urgent priority of this government; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Minister of Urban Affairs to convey to the federal government, in the strongest possible terms, the immediate and urgent need for a renewal of the Core Area Initiative Agreement.

Motion presented.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, what we are asking for in this resolution is that the government consider it a matter of urgent priority that they begin to move in a much more dramatic fashion than they have in the past on a new Core Area Initiative, and, in particular, it addresses the changes to Winnipeg and Manitoba in the year since the last two Core Area Initiatives were negotiated, and that is the increase in the aboriginal population and the needs of that population and the way in which that population can, in fact, become part of the urban community of Winnipeg.

I welcome the opportunity to speak on this, but it is something, Mr. Speaker, which I have spoken on a number of times in the past. I have seen no change in the government position, no change in government action, certainly in this area.

* (1720)

Last year we brought a private members' resolution on exactly this issue. We have spoken of it annually in the Estimates process and listened to the same tired responses of more than one Minister of Urban Affairs. We have also asked in Question Period regularly questions on the conditions of aboriginal people in the city of Winnipeg, the proposals that the government has for an urban aboriginal strategy in Manitoba and Winnipeg and also, specifically, about the various reports that come from Ottawa, from City Hall, from time to time, about the potential, sometimes even the immediate, possibility of a new Core Area Agreement.

But what we see on the other side of the House is, I think, a very disdainful treatment of this particular subject, on the matter of urban aboriginal issues. It gets battered around from the Minister of

Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) to the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) to the minister for community services. In spite of the responsibility allocated to the Minister of Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) for this, there seems to be no willingness on his part to move on the promises that have been made in a number of throne speeches and to develop the policies that have been proposed in a very large number of consultations which were held around the province in previous years on an urban aboriginal strategy.

It seems sometimes as though the government is—well, it is like dealing with a marshmallow. You really do not know where to poke next. But in this Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), we do have a minister who, I will certainly say to his credit, is very frank. He also seems to be at times what you might call in a yes-minister fashion quite courageous.

He went so far in the last Estimates, this week in fact, to suggest that he expects to see a new Core Area Initiative Agreement, perhaps sometime in the fall, a framework agreement, then with some public hearings. I do not think he allocated a time to it, and I do not, in fact, have Hansard in front of me. I do not think it has been written yet for the Urban Estimates. So I do not intend to quote him out of context, but this is what I understood him to say, that he expected a framework agreement in the fall, public hearings, and then, perhaps in the spring, a new initiative agreement.

It seemed to me, at the time, that this was on the part of the federal government, at least if the minister's statements were correct, that this was an even more cynical than usual attempt to manipulate public money, public funds and public programs to the interest of the federal Tory party and that all of this was in fact arranged for the next election strategy, first of all, what the minister expects to see is a framework agreement signed in the fall.

This framework agreement process, whereby Tory ministers trot out the flags and sit behind the green baize tables and announce framework agreements with aboriginal governments or with urban citizens or with provincial governments, it is not something we really saw, perhaps, five or six years ago. It seems to be a new tool of the Tory spin doctors. It gives them the chance to put some agenda on the table and call it a press release. To suggest that progress is being made, when, in fact, all they have done is set the time of a meeting and published an agenda.

So that is what he expects for the fall. In comparison to this, we see that the City of Winnipeg has put \$5 million in a fund ready for a new Core Area Agreement and has signed a pledge that the Urban Futures Group presented it, to committing itself to a new Core Area Agreement.

I do not see in the Estimates of the Department of Urban Affairs a similar kind of commitment, and I did not see in the words of the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) a similar kind of commitment to the urgency of the situation in the city of Winnipeg. He did, second of all, commit to public hearings. Well, as I said, he is a frank minister. I will take him at his word, and I assume that this will happen, but it is something that the previous Minister of Urban Affairs also said he was going to do and he was even more courageous and put some dates on it and said that a year and a half ago in January, February or March we would have public hearings on the Core Area Initiative in the city of Winnipeg. Well, he got shuffled out of the Department of Urban Affairs and we saw no follow-up to that, and it simply became another pawn in the shell game, if I can mix metaphors there, of this government on the conditions in the inner city of Winnipeg.

Well, when the minister is not being courageous he is being hopeful, and I have heard that one more often from this minister than I think from any other minister of any other government. He is hopeful about the federal Tories. He is hopeful about a new Core Area Agreement. He is hopeful that a framework agreement will be signed. He is hopeful that we will have some new public hearings. Well, he is hopeful but I wish he were angry as well.

I wish I could see the commitment and the anger and the frustration of this provincial government about the way in which they argue, and we have to take them at their word that they argue that the federal government is treating the conditions in the city of Winnipeg. So what we expect, if we take again the minister at his word, is a Core Area Initiative Agreement, perhaps signed, perhaps shortly before the next federal election, perhaps sometime in the early spring—hopefully.

Then perhaps the deadline will be set for the money to flow perhaps six months later, a year later, when the government anticipates that in their stand-aside policies the economy will somehow miraculously increase or improve. We wait for those miracles. The minister can be hopeful about miracles, but I think it requires far more action, far

more urgency and far more concern and, yes again, anger on the part of this government about the conditions in the city of Winnipeg.

In fact, what we have seen, as far as the people of the inner city of Winnipeg are concerned, is that for three years there will have been no new monies flowing from the federal government into the city of Winnipeg. For three years this government and the federal government have in fact been prepared to let those programs go; to drop the training programs that were there for the community-based programs in the city of Winnipeg; to let go the very good home improvement programs and the neighbourhood improvement programs that were there for the people in my constituency, for example, in the Spence-Broadway neighbourhood improvement project or that were there in St. Johns and that were there for the people of St. Matthews and for other areas of the city of Winnipeg, and which made considerable improvement in their conditions of life.

This particular motion speaks also to the changes in the city of Winnipeg since the last Core Area Initiative was signed. The changes that have occurred in the city of Winnipeg since the last two Core Area Agreements were signed I think are evident to everyone who lives in Winnipeg, and that is the growth, the increase in the aboriginal population.

The native population of Winnipeg has increased 70 percent between 1981 and 1986, from 16,000 to more than 27,000, constituting now 4.7 percent—in fact more than that now—of the city's total population.

The representation in the inner city is twice that of the city as a whole. Forty percent of the native population lives in the inner city of Winnipeg where they represented, in 1986, one out of every 10 residents, and I believe that the most recent census will show that in fact those figures have increased as well.

The striking thing about these figures, of course, Mr. Speaker, is that more than half of the native households in Winnipeg live below the poverty line, and again, I am using the figures from 1986.

I do not think it would come as a surprise to any member in this House that in recent years, since 1986 in fact, many of those households have sunk into deeper and deeper poverty.

* (1730)

In the inner city, the increase is from 7 to 10 households for native households who live in

poverty as compared to 4 in 10 non-native households.

The educational statistics are also striking. By 1986, out of the 2,315 natives who had reached university, only 610 or one in four graduated. Again, when you take the area of the inner city of Winnipeg, those statistics and the gap in educational opportunity between non-natives and native peoples is even more striking.

Where, in 1986, a 7.7 percent unemployment rate was there for the general population, native unemployment runs at more than 20 percent. Again, in the years since 1986, with the rapid increase in unemployment in the city of Winnipeg, those figures again have intensified.

There have been a number of studies which have looked at the family composition in the inner city of Winnipeg, and again particularly amongst native families the number of children who are living in poverty, the number of children who are in single-parent families and are suffering the educational and the nutritional and community difficulties that come with that particular situation has also increased.

Yet for three years this government is prepared to see no new programs, no new interest in the city of Winnipeg, no new energy, no new focusing of energies and monies and programs for those people who are clearly the most in need in our city.

In fact, what we have seen and what we are going to see is the capping of social assistance rates. We have seen the loss of parent-child centres which were most important to single-parent families in my riding particularly.

We have seen the growing waiting lists for job training opportunities. We have seen the loss of community-based training opportunities, such as, for example, the one that was conducted at the North End Ministry, training for cashiers, training opportunities where there was a very high proportion of people who were finding employment from those. Yet this government is prepared to let another year slip by before any kind of energy and incentives are offered to people in the inner city of Winnipeg.

I am concerned particularly, Mr. Speaker, because at about the time this hopeful and courageous and frank minister expects to have a federal input into Core Area Initiative, we also see a federal government which is prepared to abandon any constitutional interest or opportunities in urban

affairs. It seems to me that we might be heading for a Catch-22 situation, where a provincial minister says, all right, next year we expect to have a Core Area Initiative, and the federal government will by then have abandoned any interest in housing or urban affairs and will simply be washing its hands of the whole area and saying that is entirely a provincial responsibility.

I brought this to the attention of the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), and he pooh-poohs this as perhaps a hopeful and courageous minister might. But it seems to me a very real possibility, Mr. Speaker, and one which does not bode well for the future of the people of the inner city. I urge the provincial government to take very clear—to accept some very clear responsibilities in this area, because they might indeed have the entire responsibility within the next 12 months.

We are, perhaps in the words of the Minister of Urban Affairs, hopeful for a new Core Area Initiative, Mr. Speaker. All Manitobans are, I will emphasize that. We have seen what the federal contributions have done for the cities of Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver, and we expect nothing less and, in fact, a great deal more for the inner-city residents of Winnipeg for whom the conditions of life are deteriorating so dramatically.

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River): I listened with interest to the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) and some of the comments she put on the record, and I am absolutely convinced that the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) is going to be very impressed with some of the glowing adjectives that she used to describe him. She was very kind.

I think he would be very disappointed, however, with the fact that she indicated that there should be more anger, because I do not think that this particular minister would react with anger. I do want to reiterate, however, what our Minister of Urban Affairs has been doing, and state unequivocally that this government does recognize the significant benefit that both the former two Core Area Initiative Agreements were able to provide to the City of Winnipeg and, in particular, to the high needs and the communities in Winnipeg's inner core.

This government is also aware of the need for intergovernmental co-operation in addressing the urban revitalization and the economic development needs of Winnipeg. I think realistically that no individual government alone can address the

seriousness of the needs, either individually as an initiative in terms of being able to develop an overall plan, and, more importantly, in terms of the financial requirements to address some of the needs of the inner-core area.

It is for that very reason that our Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) has been attempting on an ongoing basis to negotiate a new urban redevelopment agreement with the Honourable Jake Epp and His Worship Mayor Norrie.

I would like to remind the honourable member that conditions have changed and circumstances have changed since the two former Core Area Agreements were signed. The new agreement must be able to respond to the economic, the physical, and the social needs of Winnipeg in the 1990s. As the honourable member has indicated, we too have concerns and we too are very interested in ensuring that the needs of urban natives are recognized in this next new Core Area Initiative.

There is another area that our government feels quite strongly about, and that is the development of the Main Street. We know that Main Street does require greater attention than it received under either of the former Core Area Agreements, and that is a major area under discussion.

There are also economic factors and questions arising from same that are debated in Question Period every day in this House, and that is our unemployment. We have concerns about the employment and the fact that we need training measures that will address and have to be designed to take into account the new profile of those requiring training and the emerging labour-force trends.

* (1740)

Although the aboriginal community, as I indicated earlier, was indeed a beneficiary of the two previous agreements, a new agreement has to continue to target programs and funding to this segment of our population. We also know, as I indicated earlier, that the priorities and the financial circumstances of all three levels of government have changed since the initial agreements were signed, and we are intent on developing an agreement that will maximize the benefits that were derived from the first two agreements and also the benefits that can be derived from intergovernmental co-operation and also co-ordination.

I just want to also put on the record some of the significant impact the former two Core Area Agreements had on conditions in the inner city. Over 2,800 jobs and 7,000 person years of construction work were created under the previous agreements, and we know that employment is the key to addressing many of the negative conditions that affect core area residents. Over 2,100 individuals were trained through the previous agreements, and 80 percent of those individuals became gainfully employed. This training once again was targeted to high-needs inner-city residents, and I specifically, when I served on City of Winnipeg Council, had the privilege of attending many graduation ceremonies from some of those very beneficial educational programs, where I saw the elation amongst the graduates in having accomplished indeed a higher level of education and training.

Additionally, over 400 community and neighbourhood revitalization projects, primarily sponsored by local community groups, were funded. These projects enhanced both the physical resources, and they also provided innovative services to inner-city residents, primarily in the core area.

Over 1,250 units of housing were built and 7,000 units received repairs. This, once again, greatly improved living conditions in the core area. As the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) has indicated, the two initial Core Area Agreements were intended to serve and meet some of the needs of the aboriginal community. This aboriginal community was the beneficiary of the second Core Area Initiative agreement. There were 107 projects primarily targeted to aboriginals under Core II and the total funding that was committed to those programs was \$4.9 million.

As I indicated earlier, both urban and economic redevelopment of Winnipeg remains a priority of our government. We also recognize the benefits that can be accrued and achieved from working co-operatively and from sharing resources and economic funding through intergovernmental initiatives.

I want to remind the honourable member, and I think she is very aware, that indeed the conditions and priorities have changed, not just by one level of government, but by all levels of government. It is taking perhaps a little longer than one would be hopeful of, but we still are hopeful.

I think the honourable member used that term throughout her debate, and I recall specifically that she indicated she too was hopeful that a third Core Area Agreement indeed would be realized.

I read through her resolution and in the second and third "WHEREAS" clauses, they are indicative of the need to have a complete and a thorough discussion by all three levels of government to ensure that a comprehensive Core Area III agreement is realized. I want to reassure the honourable member that negotiations are ongoing.

This province has been in discussion with the City of Winnipeg and the federal government on a new urban redevelopment agreement for Winnipeg. Negotiations are proceeding. Contrary to the honourable member for Wolseley's opinion, there has been progress made, but there still are issues that have to be addressed before the new agreement can be finalized.

Therefore, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner):

THAT the resolution be amended by deleting all the words following the first "WHEREAS" and replacing them with the following:

the Core Area Initiative Agreements I and II provided major support to vulnerable families and communities during the last ten years; and

WHEREAS federal resources are vital in the renewal of the City of Winnipeg and the redevelopment of our economic base and labour force; and

WHEREAS the needs of urban aboriginal people must be addressed in any new tripartite agreement; and

WHEREAS the urban redevelopment and economic renewal of Winnipeg remains a priority of this Manitoba government.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the continuing efforts of the Minister of Urban Affairs and the Manitoba government to obtain a new tripartite agreement to deal with urban inner city needs.

Motion presented.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, and I will just speak a few minutes in order to give the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) an opportunity to respond to one more, rather self-serving amendment by the government on a private member's resolution.

But I do want to say a couple of things about this, because I was around when the first Core was created. I remember some of the discussions that took place as people thought through what we can be doing to build an initiative in the core area of this city that will allow the residents of the core area and the businesses in the core area to take control of their own futures and to build a level of economic development into this obviously difficult and impoverished region of the city.

I think it is to the everlasting credit of Lloyd Axworthy that he had the vision to see the needs and to structure a process and an approach broadly supported by the former government that led to the creation of the original Core Area Agreement. I think at that time both the federal government—or all three, the federal government, the City and the former New Democratic Party government realized that government could not go in and, simply by pouring money into social programs in the core area, solve the problems. That was never the intention of the Core Area Agreement.

The intention was to seed. Because it was a riskier area of the city in which to invest, it was to use the leverage available from government to fund projects and to encourage the private sector to join in with the public sector in the redevelopment of the core area of this city.

At the same time, they realized that there was a need to address some of the fundamental social problems if people were going to be able to take advantage of some of the new economic activities that may be created under the Core. That led to some of the very innovative programs, and the core became a testing place for a variety of very innovative social programs.

That did create problems for the provincial government because, at the end of one, two, two and a half, or three years of funding from the Core, a new idea may have emerged, been tested, been proven to be successful, without sufficient foresight on the part of the provincial government to assume the responsibility for the ongoing operation of the program. There were all sorts of examples of collisions that occurred as these programs ran out of funds.

* (1750)

But I think processes were put in place that began to address that. The thing that surprises me, though, is that we are now more than 10 years past those initial discussions. We have spent a long

time. We have a new government federally, and we have a new government provincially at the controls, if you like, of this particular process.

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

The real question is: What has happened since? Where are their new ideas? Where are their new initiatives? The fact is that there are not any. What is surprising, more than anything else, about the action that has been taken by the current provincial government, and certainly by the federal government, is that the very actions they have taken have been counter to the principles of the Core.

This provincial government is not investing in the city of Winnipeg, in any area of the city of Winnipeg. The federal government is disinvesting in the city of Winnipeg. The federal government is moving resources out of this city, both east and west. Edmonton has grown at our expense. So the very principles of government being used to fix certain resources in place so that the private sector could come in and support those important initiatives, and thus we would have important growth—I mean, I recall the original Core, I believe, a total of \$90 million was the original commitment—\$96 million. It levered—there was an estimate of some \$400 million in total investment over the course of that first Core Area Agreement as the various other players were brought in.

It was an opportunity or an attempt to use that resource strategically. If I have any major criticism of the actions of this government and the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), this cabinet, and then certainly the federal government, it is they seem to have no understanding of how you would use government as an instrument to produce renewal in the core.

I do not think they have to use the Core as the only way to do that. What I would challenge them to do is to come forward with their new ideas. What we are getting is a retreading of an idea that Lloyd Axworthy had over 10 years ago. Maybe it is time for them—if there are changing conditions and financial priorities, as the former speaker pointed out, maybe it is time that we stepped aside from the Core and we saw them put on the table what their real priorities are, because our image of their real priorities is to further the disinvestment in the city of Winnipeg, to reduce the level of investment in the core area of the city despite the fact they give lip service to recognizing the very serious problems that exist there.

I, unfortunately, cannot support the amendment that has been put forward despite the fact that it does speak in its final form of attempting to negotiate a new tripartite agreement, and it does recognize the fact that the needs of urban aboriginal people must be addressed, but I think the original motion is a far stronger motion and a far more accurate reflection of what has and has not taken place. I would urge the House not to support the amendment but to return to the original resolution, which would certainly have my support.

Thank you very much.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to speak on the amendment that the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) has offered.

It was interesting to hear in her speech, in her reply to my original motion, and to note the many areas, in fact, which we do agree on. We agree, I think, upon the impact that the Core Area Initiatives have had upon the city of Winnipeg, that they have made a difference in terms of housing, in terms of training, and they did offer some programs which were oriented to some of the aboriginal population.

We agree, I think, upon the way in which the concentration of finances and energies and policy direction of three levels of government have made an impact in one urban area. We do not yet have a Los Angeles or a St. Louis or a Chicago situation in the city of Winnipeg, because over the last 10 years we have been able to create a situation where people felt there was some hope, where they felt that some training was going to be offered; that some ESL programs would be available to them if they waited long enough; that not all policy and government direction was taking place in the suburbs; that the gap perhaps was not growing between rich and poor and between suburban and core area people as fast as it was in some other areas of North America. So it was interesting to note, I think, the areas in which we did see some agreement that the Core Area Initiatives have had some impact upon the city of Winnipeg.

I agree also with the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock). I think we should recognize that Lloyd Axworthy had a very important initiative when he developed the original ideas for the Core Area initiative, and it has had a substantial impact upon the city of Winnipeg. So there are two areas there for agreement, I think.

But I notice in the member's amendment that, in fact, there are a couple of things which I would have

to disagree with. The first of these is, of course, that the government has chosen to eliminate the section of my motion which indicated the desirability of working with aboriginal people, of consulting with aboriginal people, and bringing them in, one would say in the future, as aboriginal governments, into an agreement of all levels of government for the future of the city of Winnipeg. I think that is a very interesting omission. It seems to indicate to me that the government has not yet accepted the idea of aboriginal governments and that they will be dealing in the very near future with aboriginal governments in Manitoba.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

It seems to me in the very short time that is left of this government, perhaps 18 months, perhaps a year, that they are going to have to come to terms with that issue, and they should begin with the city of Winnipeg where we have an aboriginal leadership trained through ACCESS programs who have become teachers and social workers, an aboriginal leadership, I think, which has won recognition right across this country. It seems to me important, Mr. Speaker, that the government begins to come to terms with that, to accept that that is going to happen, and it will happen here, and they should begin with bringing aboriginal people into the creation of a new Core Area Agreement.

The second part of this resolution, of course which I find difficult, is the suggestion that we support the continuing efforts of the Manitoba government to obtain a new tripartite agreement.

An Honourable Member: What efforts?

Ms. Friesen: Well obviously, what efforts? Is there any money in this year's budget for a new Core Area Agreement? There is not.

What are the dates of the meetings? I have asked the minister that many times in Question Period and again in Estimates this week. What meetings have taken place with the federal government? What was the agenda? Who was at the table? How many times have those meetings occurred over the last year? Is it four times, or three times?—or as I in fact really believe, there has only been one meeting which has ever discussed any indication of a new Core Area Agreement.

How can we support continuing activities of such a limited impact upon the formation of any kind of new agreement? Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing is a change in the conditions of the people of Winnipeg, increasing unemployment, increasing difficulties for families, enormous numbers of children now who are being fed at food banks, children, as we find out today who are being placed in independent living conditions that are absolutely deplorable. It seems to me that here is a government which is proposing and has in fact let conditions deteriorate in the inner city for thousands of people for the last three years. No new monies, no meetings, no indication of any kind of change of policy until perhaps the fall, when there might in fact be a framework agreement which is simply the presentation of some kind of an agenda backed by a lot of flag-waving and some indication that the federal Tories for a change are going to pay some attention—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) will have nine minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House now adjourns and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Wednesday, June 10, 1992

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Presenting Petitions

Brandon General Hospital Funding
L. Evans 4497

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Independent Children's Advocate Office
Carstairs 4497

Brandon General Hospital Funding
L. Evans 4497

Heritage Federation Granting Authority
Lamoureux 4497

Aboriginal Justice Inquiry: Support
for Recommendations
Lathlin 4498

Dutch Elm Disease Funding
Friesen 4498

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Public Utilities and Natural Resources,
6th Report
Penner 4499

Oral Questions

Constitutional Proposal
Doer; Filmon 4499

School Boards
Wowchuk; Vodrey; Filmon 4501

Independent Living Program
Carstairs; Gilleshammer 4501

Workers Compensation Board
Reid; Praznik 4502

Multicultural Legislation
Cerilli; Mitchelson 4503

Manitoba Intercultural Council
Cerilli; Mitchelson 4503

Multicultural Legislation
Cerilli; Mitchelson 4504

Manitoba Intercultural Council
Lamoureux; Mitchelson 4504

Independent Living Program
Barrett; Gilleshammer 4505

Constitutional Proposal
Friesen; Mitchelson 4506

Youth Unemployment Rate
Ashton; Fiimon 4507

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Second Readings

Bill 94, Statute Law Amendment
(Taxation) Act, 1992
Manness 4508

Bill 95, Tax Appeals Commission Act
Manness 4509

Bill 98, Manitoba Multiculturalism Act
Mitchelson 4510
Carstairs 4514
Lamoureux 4521

Private Members' Business

Address for Papers

Enforcement of Antismiff Legislation
L. Evans 4532

Proposed Resolutions

Res. 36, Core Area Initiative III
Friesen 4535

Amendment
Dacquay 4538

Alcock 4540
Friesen 4541