



Fourth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

42 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	Liberal
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	Liberal
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALLOWAY, 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
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	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
<i>Vacant</i>	Rossmere	
<i>Vacant</i>	Rupertsland	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, June 16, 1993

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Bob Rose (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the First Report of the Committee on Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs presents the following as its First Report.

Your committee met on Tuesday, June 15, 1993, at 10 a.m. in Room 254 of the Legislative Building, to consider the 1991-1992 Annual Report of The Forks Renewal Corporation.

Mr. G. Campbell MacLean, Chairperson of the Board; Mr. Nick Diakiw, President; Ms. Marilyn Edmunds, Communications Manager; and Mr. Randy Cameron, General Manager, Forks Market, provided such information as was requested with respect to the annual report and the business of The Forks Renewal Corporation.

Your committee reports that it has considered the 1991-1992 Annual Report of The Forks Renewal Corporation and matters pertaining to The Forks Renewal Corporation.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for Multiculturalism): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report for 1991-92 for the Multiculturalism Secretariat and the Annual Report for 1991-1992 of the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am

pleased to table the 1992 Annual Report of the Public Utilities Board.

* (1335)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 44—The Alcoholism Foundation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Monsieur le président, I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), that Bill 44, The Alcoholism Foundation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Fondation manitobaine de lutte contre l'alcoolisme et apportant des modifications corrélatives à une autre loi, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 45—The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment 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 45, The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les armoiries, les emblèmes et le tartan du Manitoba) be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House. I would like to table that message.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 46—The Criminal Injuries Compensation Amendment Act

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, on behalf of the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 46, The

Criminal Injuries Compensation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'indemnisation des victimes d'actes criminels), be introduced and that the same now be received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of the bill, recommends it to the House, and I would like to table that message.

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 John Henderson Junior High School fifty Grade 9 students under the direction of Ms. Sandra Drzystek. This school is located in the constituency of Rossmere.

Also this afternoon, from the Victoria Albert Elementary School, we have twenty-eight Grade 5 students under the direction of Ms. Karen Boyd. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Immigrant Investor Fund Harbour Village

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

Mr. Speaker, on November 5, 1992, the government stated they were going to investigate all aspects of the Immigrant Investor Fund, including media reports dealing with Mr. Michael Gobuty who had put out proposals to build a resort in Winnipeg Beach, a resort noted in a proposal called Harbour Village resort.

We were very concerned, Mr. Speaker. The Premier was concerned. He asked that his name be withdrawn because he never endorsed this project, and his name showed up on the investor list. We were very concerned that in the first Crewson report and the second Crewson report, there was no indication that there was any investigation, as stated by the minister responsible.

I would like to ask the Premier: Where is that investigation, and what is the status of the

solicitation of investments under the Immigrant Investor Fund or other solicitations? What is the status of that investigation of the provincial government?

* (1340)

Hon. Gary Fillmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, there are a number of different elements to the question.

Firstly, I think the member opposite has a copy of the letter I sent insisting that my name be withdrawn from the list of references in the prospectus that Mr. Gobuty was putting out, and acknowledgement by his solicitor that, indeed, that would take place.

When we expressed our concerns about the Immigrant Investor Funds in a general sense, what was followed up, of course, was the audits of five funds that did produce information that has been publicly aired now for several weeks, that indicated many of our worst fears and concerns were confirmed about the lack of regulations, the lack of protection for the investor in this whole program.

That program, as we have said before, and the lack of scrutiny and the lack of regulations and controls, was as a result of the way in which the fund was set up by the federal government and the government of the day, the New Democratic government, who withdrew the option of having the Manitoba Securities Commission be a part of the scrutiny process.

That is the situation as it exists, and we have no further information to put forth on the matter.

Immigrant Investor Fund Harbour Village

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Premier did not answer the question about Mr. Gobuty, his investments, his proposals and his use of names and not using names. The minister said clearly on the public record they would be investigating the situation.

The investigation did not appear in the first Crewson report. It did not appear in the second Crewson report. Are there matters we are not aware of? Has the minister done that investigation as he promised, or did he not do it? When will we have that investigation? When will it be tabled in the House? Is he reviewing matters? Are there any criminal issues raised? Has he referred this over to the Crown? What is the status of the

situation? We did not get an answer from the Premier (Mr. Filmon) on the first question.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): The concern at the time this issue arose was the suggestion that Mr. Gobuty was using names such as the Premier's in his submission and that was followed up. There was some confusion in terms of the information the federal government received in terms of that information not being in the original submission. It was subsequently submitted to them in terms of the references and the names provided, and the Premier has clearly outlined the letter that he forwarded immediately to Mr. Gobuty at that time and clarified that situation.

In terms of the offering memorandum by Mr. Gobuty in that particular investment, to the best of my knowledge, it lapsed at the end of the year without selling a single unit, I believe, Mr. Speaker.

Federal Consultations

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): It still does not answer the question about whether the government approved it or not. What were the conditions of that approval? Did they falsely try to market this sale? A lot of questions are still not answered again by the minister's answer here today.

Mr. Speaker, on June 2, 1993, the government was allowing the funds to continue to invest approximately \$30 million of immigrant investment funds that had been previously approved by the Province of Manitoba. The minister, at that point, argued that it is Ottawa's job to monitor this, and he will be demanding in the next week that the federal government respond to the issue of monitoring the \$30 million that has been approved in immigrant investment funds after the internal investigation of March 1991, some \$30 million that are now presently not being monitored, as identified in the Crewson report.

Mr. Speaker, the minister was in Ottawa with the minister responsible for these funds. In fact, I think they were working on the same leadership campaign. Did the minister raise the issue of federal involvement with Bernard Valcourt, the federal minister, while he was in Ottawa last weekend? Did he raise the issue of the \$30 million in funds that are now flowing without monitoring? Did he raise the issue of a trustee being appointed?

They were at the same convention, supporting the same leadership candidate. Did he have communication with the federal minister responsible, as he indicated last week?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): First of all, let not the Leader of the Opposition attempt to confuse people or anybody on this issue in terms of the suggestion he is making, in terms of the funds that are available to be invested. There is approximately \$30 million available to be invested through a syndicated fund.

We have already put on record that we are not approving any new funds, no new syndicated funds, and no new project-specific funds, but there is a pool of resources that is available, not about to be monitored in terms of potential investment. We have outlined in this House a procedure we have in place in terms of potential investments, in terms of economic benefit analysis, and we have also made a very specific request to the federal government in terms of the monitoring provision, to which, to date, I have not had a response to the letter I forwarded to Mr. Valcourt or to a phone call I recently placed to him.

We will continue to pursue the matter with the federal government. In the interim, we are not approving any further syndicated fund investments. If we need to, we will enhance the monitoring provisions, but we have said all along, and the Leader of the Opposition knows full well, this is a national program. There should be national monitoring provisions. Funds across Canada should be treated the same, but, Mr. Speaker, at this particular point in time, we have corresponded with them in writing. We have corresponded with them by phone calls.

Mr. Speaker, to suggest that we are at a leadership convention and that I should seek out Mr. Valcourt to pursue this is absolutely unreasonable and unrealistic. I have corresponded with him through the proper channels in writing. I have corresponded to his office by phone call, and we will continue to pursue the matter with the federal government.

* (1345)

Licensed Practical Nurses Layoffs

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the minister agreed with the fact that St. Boniface Hospital was reducing its staff by 10

percent and threw the lives of hundreds of hardworking and long-time employees into disarray.

What assurances can this minister give today to the other several thousand LPNs who are working in the hospital and in the health care field, to assure them that they, too, will not be part of the casualty list of the government's reform package?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, always in his preamble, attempts to paint pictures and innuendoes that are not appropriate.

My honourable friend made the allegation yesterday incorrectly that this was stimulated by the work of the APM contract. That was wrong. Today, he says I concurred or agreed with or initiated these staff layoffs at St. Boniface Hospital and now is alleging it is part of health care reform.

Mr. Speaker, every hospital in Manitoba has a responsibility—the urban hospitals, St. Boniface one of them—to operate without a deficit. That policy, Sir, was put in place by the former government under Howard Pawley and the Minister of Health the Honourable Larry Desjardins. It was put in place so they would have some financial control and some management discipline in terms of the way they operate their facilities.

Subsequent to that, in working with government, St. Boniface and other hospitals have examined the way they undertake care provision. Not-for-admission surgery is part of it, and that led to the reduction of the need for surgical beds at St. Boniface and the resulting layoffs, Sir.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Speaker, only this Minister of Health can blame yesterday's cuts on somebody else, everyone else, and evade the responsibility of where the decision is made.

My supplementary to the minister, Mr. Speaker, is: How can Ms. Connie Curran now cut an additional \$45 million to \$65 million out of the Health Sciences Centre budget and the St. Boniface budget after they have pared down to the bone? Where are the \$45-million to \$65-million cuts going to come from at St. Boniface and Health Sciences Centre?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, that, of course, is a subject of discussion and investigation at both Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface as a result of the initiation by those two facilities and the

agreement by government to enter into that contract with Connie Curran.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say, with all the respect I can muster, to my honourable friend the New Democrat, that across the length and breadth of Canada, from British Columbia governed by New Democrats to Newfoundland governed by Liberals, the health care system is changing. It is downsizing on the acute-care sector side. Fewer beds are being used. Beds are being retired from service in Newfoundland, Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, regardless of the political affiliation of government.

The only people who have consistently said the system does not have to change are New Democrats in opposition. From the luxury of opposition, New Democrats say spend, tax and borrow, but from the reality of government, they try to reduce costs in government. They introduce legislation, as in Ontario, to reduce the wage bill of government in Ontario by \$2 billion.

When will my honourable friend acknowledge reality and come into the real world and stop living in the past and being afraid of the future?

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Speaker, how can this minister state this system is somehow rational in reforming itself when he has not put any community services in place to deal with those, and, secondly, he let all the LPNs be fired while he is still awaiting a report on the mix of hospital staff and LPNs by the end of the month?

* (1350)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, again, my honourable friend does not have his facts straight. I am sorry.

One of these days my honourable friend might actually research a question he poses so he does not look so foolish, but, then, of course, Sir, I have come to the conclusion my honourable friend lives in a fool's paradise, and by his length of stay there, his fellow residents have elevated him to the status of reigning monarch.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, our rules are very clear. The minister does not have to answer the question, but he should at least be in the ballpark.

I would like to ask him to at least attempt, once, to give a straightforward answer to a very serious

question raised by our Health critic on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: I believe the honourable minister is attempting to answer the question.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable minister, answer the question, please.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend says there should be services in the community to replace the employment for 39 surgical beds that is not necessary because surgical procedures are moving from inpatient to outpatient. He wants to create community services when they are not needed to replace services in the institution.

My honourable friend simply does not understand the changes, the shifts in health care. You replace services in other areas of the health care department when you have to, in moving them from a tertiary hospital, but for not-for-admission surgery and a better admission process, you do not need additional community-based services.

It is a management-efficiency task that allows you to make reductions and maintain the level of service, quality of service, and the budget integrity of the hospital.

Child Protection Centre Service Levels

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Family Services.

Today, we read in the paper yet again about individuals who are before the courts charged with brutally beating and injuring their child. The story is truly horrific and, unfortunately, all too common in our society.

It is shocking that cases like this exist at all, and, in fact, I think, far more often than many of us are prepared to admit. It is also cases like this that highlight the importance of the Child Protection Centre and the work it does at the Health Sciences Centre.

My question for the minister is based on his statement two weeks ago in Family Services Estimates when he said: We are asking the Child Protection Centre to use an accumulated surplus which they have at their disposal to continue to provide the same level of service.

We have now learned that the \$417,000 surplus, which they were to have used and have used in the past to cover deficits, has been taken away by the department.

My question for the minister: What is the Child Protection Centre to do with their \$125,000 deficit now that they do not have the accumulated surplus to cover that, which the minister said they would have? What is his response to the 1.6 staff positions, nursing positions, which are currently being laid off at the Child Protection Centre? How are they going to continue that same level of service?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, certainly, all of us are concerned about the cases that are brought up in the media where the safety net of agencies and social workers and the services put in place are not as effective as we would all want them to be.

As a result, we are working on many fronts to improve the abilities of child welfare agencies through a number of reforms we have talked about both in the House and in Estimates. Currently, we have a task force that is also investigating what are perceived to be some of the weaknesses in native child welfare agencies. So there are a number of reforms that are in place.

In reference to the Child Protection Centre, there are some discussions going on at the present time between our staff to clarify some of the issues the member has referenced.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, specific to those discussions, Mr. Fenwick, the director of Child and Family Services, has told the centre there will be no further funds allocated. They were originally told they could use \$200,000 of that \$417,000 to cover their deficit and to maintain the current level of care they offer.

My question to the minister: How does he link and put together, rationalize, that statement that they will no longer be able to do that and the resulting layoffs which are required with his statement 12 days ago that he wanted and he was going to make sure that this agency was able to continue to provide the same level of service?

Those are his words. How does he defend those in the wake of the information they have been given that they are going to have to have layoffs?

Mr. Gillieshammer: Mr. Speaker, we certainly value the services that have been provided by the

child protection agency. There are some discussions going on at this time regarding the level of that surplus and funding.

I can assure you our department will work together with them and seriously consider how we can maintain the services they have provided.

* (1355)

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, my final question is for the minister.

Given that the layoffs are currently occurring and that the positions which are being cut were for training of medical students and staff at Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface, as well as for an outreach program to the schools, will the minister commit today that, in fact, those are essential services of the Child Protection Centre and that they need to be maintained and that those layoffs should not and cannot occur if he is going to maintain his commitment to the children of this province and this agency to maintain current levels of service?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Mr. Speaker, our commitment is to continue to work with the Child Protection Centre and to certainly proceed with the review of those services that are being undertaken at this time with members of our department.

Health Care System Kidney Dialysis Services

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health.

Concern about adequate kidney dialysis service is turning into fear and taking on life-threatening proportions. We have been informed that dialysis patients have been told by hospital staff at the Health Sciences Centre that if provincial funding is not forthcoming, anyone not on a waiting list for a transplant would be sent home and not receive dialysis services.

The minister and others will know, of course, that anyone who needs dialysis and does not receive it would have a life expectancy of about two weeks.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health if he will assure all dialysis patients today that this is not government policy and that services will be available to all patients who need dialysis.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned with the allegation

my honourable friend has indicated, that staff—and I want to make sure what my honourable friend is saying—at the Health Sciences Centre dialysis program, under the leadership of Dr. Jeffery, are telling, who, current patients that no more admissions, and people will be sent home to die?

Is that what is being communicated at Health Sciences Centre? I want to be absolutely sure of what my honourable friend is saying.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to clarify for the minister since this is a serious matter, and I do not want the minister to at all distort what is being said, although it is serious enough on its own.

I want to ask him how he feels about the situation where dialysis patients are being told by hospital staff that if provincial funding was not forthcoming, anyone not on the transplant list would be sent home.

My question again: Will the minister assure us and all patients that this is not government policy and services will be there for patients who need them?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, that is why I am so concerned about my honourable friend's statement and question, because that is not a policy of this government, and, secondly, I do not believe that is a policy of the renal dialysis program at the Health Sciences Centre.

That is why, if my honourable friend can possibly provide me with more detailed information as to who is making that statement to whom, I want to investigate that very quickly and very seriously because that has all the implications that are disruptive, not at all helpful to individuals who are suffering from kidney failure and need the services of dialysis. That is a very inappropriate message for anyone to be giving to patients who are that vulnerable in their need for care.

I would like my honourable friend, if she can, after Question Period, to provide me with details and more specifics.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Obviously, an individual who is fearing for his or her life is going to be somewhat reluctant to go public. We will certainly do our best to encourage these individuals to call the minister and to relay their concerns and to have that treated in confidence.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health: Further to the comments made this past Monday by the head of Nephrology at Health Sciences Centre when he said that only more money, patient deaths or transplants will prevent overload, given that transplants are not able to meet the need, is the minister now prepared to assure all of us that funding of dialysis services will be adequate to meet the need?

* (1400)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, the dialysis program is one in which we have very seriously invested new resource, additional resource and additional program in the five years I have been minister. This program is very valuable to government, and we are trying very much to work with the professionals, the head of dialysis, Dr. Jeffery.

In the five years that I have been Minister of Health, we have added, if my numbers quickly made are correct, some 15 new dialysis machines in Winnipeg and across the length and breadth of Manitoba, including new installations at Thompson funded by this government, including new installations at Portage la Prairie, including support of additions in Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, if we had not put that kind of additional resource into this, I would accept my honourable friend's attempted politicization of this issue, but we are working very diligently. I look forward to my honourable friend sharing more information with me and not try to put out these—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, Beauchesne is very clear in terms of not imputing unworthy motives to members in raising questions.

I had the opportunity to speak to the spouse of one of the patients myself this morning, and if the minister perhaps would have listened to the concerns raised by the member for St. Johns, he would not be imputing unworthy motives. People are concerned. They want answers from the minister.

This is not politicizing the issue. This is dealing with a matter of life or death for those kidney dialysis patients.

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

ACCESS Programs Alternative Funding

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, today on the steps of the Legislature, there were students from the Winnipeg Education Centre who have lost their ACCESS funding. These are young people, many of them single parents, aboriginal, visible minorities for whom the ACCESS program offered hope and an opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister responsible for the cuts to—[interjection]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I believe this question will be directed to the honourable Minister of Education and Training.

I think the honourable Madam Minister would have great difficulty in hearing the question unless the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) would like to carry their discussion outside of this Chamber. The honourable Madam Minister is attempting to listen to the question.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister responsible for the cuts to the ACCESS programs what alternatives she has to offer these students.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, let me say to the member that I must challenge him in the terms he has used, the word "lost."

This government continues to provide \$9.9 million to the ACCESS programs. Let me also tell the member across the way, in case he is not entirely familiar with the program, that for an ACCESS student, the average amount of money available is \$10,600 for those students.

Students who require additional funding may then go to the Canada Student Loan, Manitoba Student Financial Assistance and our student bursary. Totally, ACCESS students may, in fact, collect over \$31,000.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, the issue is a cut of over \$1 million to the ACCESS program—over \$1 million cut—and at a time when other programs like New Careers and Student Social Allowances are also being cut. This government talks about the

importance of education and of sharing the pain, but in fact targets—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Point Douglas, with your question now, please.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: What other programs can these students access so that they can gain the education necessary to get employment and get off social assistance programs?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, let me say to the member, as I have said in this House before, the federal government has changed the way in which they provide funding for ACCESS students. They will be providing their money directly to the bands, the loss which the member sees here.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, this government came forward and provided \$1.1 million. We stepped in to provide support where the federal government had withdrawn its funding, so those students last year could finish their program. That was our commitment. Our commitment remains this year.

Again, I will remind the member, \$9.9 million available for ACCESS programs. We continue to support ACCESS programs. We continue to support students who are in the ACCESS programs.

HIV Compensation Package Blood Transfusion Recipients

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, one of the recommendations made by the committee on blood and HIV in the House of Commons was to trace all those potential patients who have contracted AIDS during the period between 1980 and 1985. Based on those recommendations, the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children had some implementations, and now we know there are six patients who got the disease during that time.

Can the Minister of Health tell us what is being done in Manitoba to make sure all those patients are being traced and they are being informed that they are potentially at risk?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, when that issue arose approximately six or eight weeks ago with the children's hospital in Toronto taking the initiative, we made inquiries with our hospital facilities to see what processes were

available to undertake a similar tracing of individuals. There are aspects of the tracing we can do with a quite reasonable degree of accuracy and completeness; in other words, contacting the individual.

Where there is a difficulty is dependent on the type of blood product that was transfused. As my honourable friend will well know, there are some blood transfusion materials that are single source. In the case where Red Cross has identified a contaminated donor and it is single source back to patients, that contact tracing has been undertaken. It may not be complete, but is reasonably effective.

The difficulty arises where the transfused product is fractionated from a whole series of donors, and there it is virtually impossible to trace with any accuracy. As a consequence, what we are attempting to do right now is create communication with the medical profession in Manitoba wherein we ask them, to the best of their ability, to go back to those years and try and identify transfused Manitobans to give them advice on how they might pursue HIV blood testing to see if they have been exposed.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Speaker, we have five provinces in this country which are going to compensate patients: recently Alberta, Nova Scotia, Ontario.

Can the minister tell us now, will they finally also have a compensation package for these patients who are dying because of AIDS?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, we are very cognizant of the challenge to hemophiliacs whose assistance from the federal government only lasted until roughly April of this year. We have always been willing to approach the issue of supportive programs, not as single provinces, and we are there on behalf of hemophiliacs in Manitoba.

We have some additional initiatives we want to assure happen so there is consistency across Canada, and first and foremost, that the federal government return to the table. That was recommended in the most recent parliamentary report, and I believe is the initiative Saskatchewan wishes to undertake, as well as Alberta.

We are fully supportive of that, and we will be there, Sir, with the federal government to make appropriate supportive initiatives for those individuals whose lives have been so irreversibly altered through no fault of their own.

* (1410)

Skills Training Program Reduction Justification

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, when the government eliminated adult high school bursaries and student social allowances and cut New Careers and ACCESS and Human Resources Opportunity Centres, they made a choice to take away the future from those who have nothing and nowhere else to turn.

I want to ask the Minister of Education: How do any of these cuts fit with the advice of her Skills Training and Advisory Committee, the Winnipeg 2000 economic program or even last week's Framework for Economic Growth? How does it benefit Manitobans to cut away that very first rung on the Education and Training ladder?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, again, we are making every effort, No. 1, to see that students who are currently in school remain in school so that we have students who are at risk identified and so that they finish their high school educations, and then they can progress on to post-secondary education.

For adults, they have the opportunity, the opportunity which still exists, to attend programs within their home division. So there is certainly the opportunity to make sure that adults are able to get their high school education.

As I have spoken to the member for Wolseley before, for those students who have additional difficulties, we maintain literacy programs which are community-based which address some of the very basic needs in terms of reading and numeracy.

So we have a number of programs in which we are continuing to assist Manitobans to receive the basic level of education so that they will have choices and will be able to move on to skills training programs.

Workforce 2000 Management Training Programs

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, the only opportunity that is being offered to these programs is to go on welfare where they are excluded from education.

I want to ask the Minister of Education: How difficult was the choice to take from those with nothing and, under Workforce 2000, to provide for a three-day session at Clear Lake for 10

owner-managers to discuss their business strategy for competition from American companies?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): The member continually, without ever naming, picks an area and attempts to speak about it with no knowledge of really what occurred or what other issues actually happened when they were covering in that particular training session.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are coming in the Estimates of the Department of Education to discuss the area of Workforce 2000, and I will be happy to discuss those particular areas of interest she has.

But just let me remind the member who has had great difficulty with this program, when I was at the labour market ministers' conference, ministers from across Canada were looking for an opportunity and a program where there would be sharing between government and the private sector for skills training.

This province under Workforce 2000 has trained over 54,000 Manitobans.

Ms. Friesen: The issue is taking from those with nothing and giving to Workforce 2000.

I want to ask the Minister of Education again: How difficult was the choice to cut student social allowances, New Careers and ACCESS in order to provide, under Workforce 2000, days of training for managers in product knowledge and marketing skills, training which surely should be the fundamental responsibility of the employer.

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, Mr. Speaker, let me say that we provide a full range within the Department of Education and Training of skills training opportunities now. One of the most recent initiatives we have taken is to bring into the Department of Education and Training areas which were previously in the Department of Family Services and the Department of Labour.

I can tell the member that in the area of Workforce 2000, in addition to training over 54,000 Manitobans, the government contribution to Workforce 2000 since May 1991 has levered from the business partners over \$17 million of their contributions that they put on the table for the training of workers so that workers would receive skills, so that workers could—

Some Honourable Members: Workers?

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, workers, because the training that occurs is for employees, and they have

received additional training which has allowed them to remain employed and has also allowed them portability of skills.

Student Social Allowances Program Funding Elimination Justification

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Premier of what his government said in the throne speech last November about education when he said: "My government realizes that Education and Training are the keys that unlock a world of opportunity and the future of economic growth and prosperity."

That is what this government said last November. Why have they forgotten that by eliminating the student social assistance program? Had they totally forgotten that by their April budget, and if not, why did they eliminate the student social assistance program?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, regrettably, we as a government were left with a huge debt by our predecessors, the New Democratic administration, a public debt that sucks away \$560 million annually from our ability to provide programs.

Programs for people in education, in health and social services can no longer be afforded because of the fact they have left that legacy of debt that sucks up \$560 million of interest. That is the kind of situation that every government in Canada is facing. Every provincial government has had to make difficult choices. We are no different.

The only people who do not have to make difficult choices are the New Democrats who sit from the luxury of opposition and say, spend and tax, spend and tax.

Mr. Speaker, that kind of attitude, of course, is why the New Democrats were shut out yesterday in Alberta—wiped out—because the public can see through that. They know that kind of irresponsibility does not deserve to be in government.

To govern is to choose, and to choose is to have to make difficult choices. That is why this government did not dodge those difficult choices, but, in fact, made those choices, as tough as they were, as difficult as they were, because we were left with that legacy of debt and high taxes by the New Democrats of this province.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Speaker, the Premier sees education as only a debt rather than an investment in the future of young people.

I want to ask the Premier: Why does he want to be remembered as the Premier who kicked students out of school and put them on welfare? Why does he want to be remembered as the Premier who denied people hope, hope of an education in the future and a job?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I, too, see education as an investment, an investment that pays dividends for decades and generations to come.

The problem is the money we could have invested in that education was spent, \$27 million of it, on the sands of Saudi Arabia by New Democrats, and \$21 million of it was just squandered on a bridge to nowhere by New Democrats. Millions and millions of dollars was spent by New Democrats on their friends, hiring thousands and thousands of their friends onto the payroll, squandering millions of dollars, running up a debt that is costing us \$560 million annually.

That is the kind of ill-conceived investment they made so we cannot have that money to spend on education.

Speaker's Ruling

Mr. Speaker: On June 8, 1993, the House leader for the official opposition party, the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), rose on a point of order regarding the words spoken by the honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon). The opposition House leader cited Beauchesne 484.(3) that a member is not permitted to indulge in any reflections or impute any motives to any members, or unworthy motives for their actions.

At that time, I took the matter under advisement, and I have perused Hansard to determine what was said. I believe the words in question were: "... this is an interesting point the member for Wolseley makes. As a former university professor herself, she is arguing the cause for her own people, saying only—"

I have consulted parliamentary authorities and found the following: Citation 481.(e) of Beauchesne reads: "... a Member, while speaking, must not; impute bad motives or motives different from those acknowledged by a Member."

Citation 484.(3) reads: "... a Member will not be permitted by the Speaker ... to impute to any

member or members unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case . . .”.

Having examined what was said, I am ruling that the opposition House leader did not have a point of order. I do not believe that the honourable First Minister did impute unworthy motives to the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) in the exchange in question. However, I do note that in considering the context of all of the questions between the honourable member for Wolseley and the honourable First Minister during Question Period on June 8, some of the words chosen by the honourable First Minister were less than courteous, and I would ask him, as well as all honourable members, to pick their words with care.

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hckes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar); Broadway (Mr. Santos) for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), for Wednesday June 16, at 7 p.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: Transcona (Mr. Reid) for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie); Thompson (Mr. Ashton) for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), for Thursday, June 17, at 10 a.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli); Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) for Broadway (Mr. Santos), for Thursday, June 17, at 10 a.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations be amended as follows: Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) for Wellington (Ms. Barrett).

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): I move, seconded by the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be

amended as follows: Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs).

I move, seconded by the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: St. James (Mr. Edwards) for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry).

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I move, seconded by the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources, for the Wednesday 7 p.m. session: the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) for the member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay); the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) for the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine); the member for Riel (Mr. Ducharme) for the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister).

I move, seconded by the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development, for the Thursday 10 a.m. session, be amended as follows: the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) for the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau); the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) for the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister); the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) for the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson); the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) for the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner).

I move, seconded by the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources, for the Thursday, 10 a.m. session, be amended as follows: the member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) for the member for Riel (Mr. Ducharme).

Motions agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, firstly I would ask if there was a willingness to waive private members' hour today.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Leave is denied.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, would you call Bills 11, 14, 17, 18, followed by Bill 22.

* (1420)

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 11—The Regional Waste Management Authorities, The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), Bill 11, The Regional Waste Management Authorities, The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi concernant les offices régionaux de gestion des déchets, modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois, standing in the name of the honourable member for Inkster.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I had adjourned debate in order for the member for St. James, our Leader, to speak on it.

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise and speak on Bill 11 coming before this House, The Regional Waste Management Authorities, The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act.

I want to start by saying that I am prepared to have this bill move to committee. I hope it goes as soon as possible. I do not believe that there will be other members of our party speaking to it.

We have looked through this bill, and we have reviewed the comments not only of the minister, but of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), the member for Lac du Bonnet, who put comments on the record about the importance of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, this bill allows municipalities to essentially, in a nutshell, come together and get together and create regional waste management facilities. That is for a number of reasons: cost-effectiveness and efficiency of use of the technologies which are available. We do, of course, want to allow municipalities to move in the directions that they see fit to best deal with waste. If it should be on a regional as opposed to a municipal level, then we certainly want to afford them that opportunity.

I do believe that these municipalities do want to deal effectively and responsibly with their waste

concerns. I do believe that a co-operative approach to this is a good idea and important. I do believe that we certainly do need to improve the current system in a lot of areas of this province. We are not adequately dealing with waste, and in particular waste that has toxicity levels, waste that is hazardous to the soil, hazardous to the environment, not adequately protected, not adequately treated.

Of course, that is the reason we, as a party, as well have consistently supported the work of the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. We want to bring those technologies to Manitoba. We want them to be used here, and as well we would like them to be available and to service the needs of other jurisdictions.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we can lead in this area. We have led and I look forward—I noticed some of the press reports recently about the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. We have differences, I think, with the government about how we would approach the construction of that project.

The point is, our party is committed to that facility being constructed as soon as is reasonably possible. That, I think, will assist us and raise the awareness, raise the technological ability around this province.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to indicate to the minister, when we do reach the committee stage on this I am going to, of course, reserve as to whether or not there may be amendments coming forward.

I do have some concerns about some of the particulars of the bill. It is not the appropriate time now to raise those. I can indicate that I do not believe they are major. I am going to listen if there are any presentations—I hope there will be—to indicate how this bill might be improved, but in its current form we are certainly prepared to have this moved to committee.

We have, of course, many bills before the House which have yet to get to committee, but I hope that we can move this one relatively quickly because I assume from the minister's comments that there is some considerable desire on the part of the R.M.s to have this put into place and that there are hopefully some projects in the wings, some who are waiting to move on this. Of course, I would look forward to that.

Our former critic for Environment, the former member for Wolseley, as you will recall, was one

who took his job very seriously, and in fact visited a number of those sites, one or two I believe in the member for Lac du Bonnet's (Mr. Praznik) riding, the Minister of Labour, and exposed for this House some of the grave deficiencies of some of those facilities, and I am glad to hear the minister's comments that it is a very different scene today.

If this bill can put into place, give the R.M.s a further option to meet the waste requirements, the waste needs of their area, the industries and the individuals in their area, then certainly I am prepared to accept that and to give them that option. I know that they will, as they have in the past, go at this responsibly, and I look forward to their achieving the type of success that I think many of them hope for.

Mr. Speaker, with those comments, as I said, I am going to reserve on the question of some amendments. I am going to come to the committee and I am going to listen carefully to the presentations, but in principle, which, of course, is what this stage of debate is about, we are certainly prepared to agree to this bill moving on to the committee stage.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill 14—The Personal Property Security and Consequential Amendments Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), Bill 14 The Personal Property Security and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi concernant les sûretés relatives aux biens personnels et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois, standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson.

Stand? No, leave is denied.

* (1430)

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): I rise to put our caucus's comments on the record on Bill 14, The Personal Property Security and Consequential Amendments Act and to let the House know that I will be the only speaker on this bill. We will be prepared after my brief comments to pass it through to committee.

Mr. Speaker, The Personal Property Security and Consequential Amendments Act is a very large piece of legislation, a very thorough piece of legislation, and a piece of legislation that we feel, by and large, fulfills the objectives of the drafters of this piece of legislation.

Basically, the purpose of the PPSA, if I can abbreviate the legislation's name, is twofold: (1) to bring Manitoba's legislation and regulations into phase with most other provinces, the harmonization process that we have discussed in the context of several other bills in this session; and (2) to bring under one piece of legislation the many laws and regulations that are currently in place.

As I stated, we feel that, by and large, this legislation fulfills its objectives and are, again, waiting for any public comment that may raise some concerns. The basic underlying objective of this piece of legislation is to treat all commercial transactions the same unless there is a functional or substantive reason to differentiate. This already takes place for mortgages and other commercial kinds of situations, but to this date has not been uniformly made for commercial transactions.

It deals with all transactions where a collateral is taken by some secured party—that is, where there is something bought and something sold in a collateral to promise and guarantee delivery or to guarantee that the objectives of the commercial transaction are fulfilled.

It attempts to provide a degree of uniformity, harmonization and co-ordination with other provinces' legislation and to define, in one place, the kinds of collateral, who are the debtors and lenders, the forms of security arrangement agreements that may be undertaken, and who as a lender takes priority in acquiring the property of a debtor.

As I have stated, The Consumer Protection Act deals with these items for consumers, and this bill, Bill 14, deals mainly with corporate or commercial transactions. It looks at or attempts to look at all transactions where a collateral is taken by some secured party.

It includes a number of definitions, as all legislation does, and tries to provide for as many of the circumstances that can surround commercial transactions as is possible. It is a very complicated and extensive piece of legislation, and I would like

to commend the people who were part of the drafting of this legislation.

I would also like to commend the people who gave both the critic for the second opposition party and myself an excellent briefing on this piece of legislation. As a nonlawyer, I greatly appreciated the nontechnical manner in which the briefing was undertaken and the willingness of particularly Professor Braid to answer any and all questions I had about this piece of legislation.

It is also the result of literally decades of work by committees from across the country. There have been groups in virtually every province that have been attempting to make some sense out of commercial transactions and have been trying to have a consistency across provinces and throughout the country.

Bill 14 attempts to bring under one law all of the elements dealing with personal property in commercial transactions: who are the parties, what can be secured, who takes priority in collecting collateral, how can the public be aware of the inventory, equipment, or consumer goods that may be collateral to someone else.

This is an important part of this legislation. It provides for the registering of virtually all kinds of collateral and transactions so that someone else who wants to enter into a commercial agreement with a third party will know exactly what, if any, kinds of collateral are already involved in another transaction.

It also brings Manitoba's personal property laws more into conformity with most other provinces. With a couple of concerns that we have potentially and that we will discuss in committee, we are generally, as I stated before, in agreement with the themes and the objectives and the implementation of Bill 14, and are prepared now to send it to committee so that we can ask if there are any questions on the part of the public at large as to the elements of Bill 14.

With those comments, Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to pass this piece of legislation to committee hearing.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, we certainly can call for the question very soon. I simply want to put a few remarks on the agenda today with respect to Bill 14.

This particular bill does, as the previous speaker said, consolidate a number of pieces of legislation

and puts them into one piece of legislation. This is the kind of goal that I think that we should be achieving in a number of pieces of legislation.

It simplifies the ability of the individual living within our province to only have to analyze and study one very narrow piece of legislation rather than legislation over a myriad of government departments and in a myriad of books that print and distribute the legislation of the Province of Manitoba. So consolidation of this type and form is very, very practical.

Secondly, what this piece of legislation does is to provide for greater synchronization of legislation not only in the province of Manitoba but between provinces, exactly the kinds of things that we want to see happening in trade, for example. It will be easier to move across this country if citizens have a better understanding of legislation and if legislation, whenever possible, can reflect similarities and not dissimilarities from place to place. This will make all citizens in the nation better citizens by giving them access to uniform codes and standards of behaviour.

In addition, we too thank the government for providing a very valid and well-done briefing on this particular piece of legislation. What we would like to see is that kind of briefing made available with each piece of legislation. I think that we would find much easier passage in this House if the government was very clear, particularly when a bill has some complexity, to present that information in as clear as possible terms so that mistakes are not made, misinformation is not given inadvertently sometimes by members of the Chamber, because they think a piece of legislation refers to something which, in fact, it does not.

Mr. Speaker, with that we would be delighted to see this piece of legislation go to committee as quickly as possible. We understand there are some presentations that are to be made. We will, of course, listen to those presentations, but on the basis of the study and analysis that we have been able to provide this piece of legislation, we think it should get very quick passage. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, just briefly to add to the comments of the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), which, of course, I agree with. We do want this bill to go to committee.

I want to say as the one who attended the briefing session with Professor Braid and with Alex Morton that they did a very thorough job. They were very prepared to discuss these issues with us.

I think I had some advantage because I have some familiarity with the Personal Property Registry system in the province; however, it is a complex area and their efforts are appreciated. I think it is also important to recognize that there was a committee which dealt with this and dealt with this for some considerable length of time. I know that Mr. Vecting [phonetic], among others, was involved, and there was a lot of discussion and work that went into making this piece of legislation as good as it can be.

* (1440)

It is intended to normalize the legislation across the western provinces at least, and that is good because, of course, we have a high level of transportation and movement of goods between the provinces, and so it is important as much as possible to have security maintained on similar, if not identical, bases from province to province.

Of course, the big problem with the Personal Property Registry is that the lien registration, the security one takes, is only good within the jurisdiction that you take it. So the problem is that, if goods move between provinces, you can lose your rights. Of course, it is very easy to take property in particular vehicles and other things between provinces.

Sophisticated lenders are able to register in a number of provinces. Some of the less sophisticated, people who are not in the business, do not always do that and oftentimes are caught short and are unable to recover when they are not paid for goods which they sell on a payment basis, payment term, to others who then leave the province.

So it is not a perfect system. I think, frankly, it would be best as a nation to have a national model and to have a national registry. I mean, I have argued for that for a long time that the best protection in this country would be at a national level, and I think we should strive for that.

This is one small step in that direction. It is an important one. I think the next step is to get together in this country and try to normalize our Personal Property Registry systems.

I want to pick up on one other comment that the minister made in his comments, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), who introduced this bill. He said, the area of personal property security is a complex and technical one. I agree. That is too bad for many of the transactions which personal property covers because the truth is that the banks and the lending institutions all have experts and can pay lawyers and pay others to keep track of these things and to register and to know the rules and all those kinds of things.

Who loses by this being overly technical and complex is the individual who happens to come into a situation where they need to take security back on a vehicle, on a piece of property. They are selling to someone but have not been paid in full. They need to know that this system can work for them.

In fact, the staff is very good at the registry. They help individuals. But it is way up on the 12th floor, I think, of the Woodsworth Building, and people do not go up there that often. They just do not know about it. It is not exactly street front.

Mr. Speaker, if there is any way that I think we should move as well, it is to educate the public as to what is offered. What security is offered, what remedies are available, what individuals can do when they want to take security on personal property. That does happen on a regular basis, in particular in the youth vehicle market. Many individuals, unfortunately, are not aware that that ability is there to file a financing statement, to file a security agreement, to take back security, and it would facilitate the marketplace on the sale of goods and, in particular, used goods.

The other final point I want to make with respect to personal property security is simply, Mr. Speaker, to recognize and acknowledge that the staff who work in that branch of the Department of Justice do a very fine job. I have dealt with them on many occasions, and I have seen, even in the years I have been in this Legislature, that service has improved and speed of ability to produce the records on the file.

Mr. Speaker, it could hardly have not improved. The Department of Justice was in such disarray at the end of the tenure of the New Democratic Party, it is truly hard to believe—[interjection] That is true. I cut my teeth on those questions and it was easy

picking. It did give me a certain ability to stand on a daily basis and raise these issues.

We have seen improvements on a number of fronts. That is good, because at root, that branch and that department serves the public, serves the individuals who happen to come into contact with the justice system, and it is important that it work with some speed and some efficiency.

It just plain was not, under the former government, and now, while I still have the odd complaint, perhaps more than the odd complaint according to the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), but the fact is it has improved, and this is an area where it has improved as well.

Mr. Speaker, with those comments, I do not intend to go into any detail. It is a very detailed piece of legislation. I do hope that there will be—I know the Bar Association will want to be involved. I hope the Department of Justice takes on an educational role in educating the public about what is there, how to register, financing statements, how to check whether or not there are liens against vehicles and other goods they purchase.

It is a very important thing for the public to know they can do that for a relatively small fee. I think it is \$8 or \$10. How many people buy a used vehicle and do not check if there is a lien? The public has to know that is available and that that is a prudent thing to do. So there is an educational role to play as well. It does not have to be as complicated and technical as it sounds. We should make every effort to make this usable and used by the public who simply want to take security on property and to check if security has been taken on property before they buy it.

With those comments, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the committee hearings on this bill.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 14, The Personal Property Security and Consequential Amendments Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: That is agreed and so ordered.

Bill 17—The Crown Lands Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), Bill 17, The Crown Lands Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les terres domaniales, standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that that matter remain standing? [agreed]

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this act as well, we are prepared to have to move to committee. It is a bill which essentially covers the situation where the Crown sells land and the sales agreement may contain and does sometimes contain a restriction on the development of all or part of the land in order to protect natural resources. This restriction can be enforced against the subsequent owner of the land. The agreement can be filed in the Land Titles Office. The filing makes future owners aware of the restriction on the use of the land.

That is only fair, Mr. Speaker, that a purchaser of land, when a title search is done prior to sale proceeds flowing, will have notice on the title that there is, in fact, a restriction on the use of the natural resources. Of course, that is very important to know if you are buying a piece of land, what restrictions are on the use of the land, because the assumption is that the restrictions are very few, if any, and what there are will be on the title, so you will know before you buy it, and you will be able to understand. That, of course, will affect the price and desirability of the purchase.

This is an important thing. Although it is a small bill, it is certainly important to any prospective purchaser of land which happens to have those restrictions on it. We are pleased to see that this has come forward and again look forward to some more detailed discussion on it at committee stage and will listen eagerly to anyone wishing to present on this.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot let this bill pass without making reference, however, to the fact that we are deeply concerned about this government's willingness and desire to protect the natural resources in this province on Crown lands or in park lands or anywhere in this province. We have consistently had proven to us that they are not

prepared, in our estimation, to give the due regard for the protection of natural resources, whatever those may be, in this province.

Mr. Speaker, this bill deals with the protection of natural resources as it affects private lands and the purchase of those lands, but we do want some commitment from this government to real protection of our natural resources. They just have not done it, whether it is logging in Nopiming Park, which they overrode the Clean Environment Commission on, whether it is fast-tracking the hearings on the Assiniboine water diversion and not agreeing to do a common sense thing like have a joint review panel.

* (1450)

You can go around this province and find that, while the number of times sustainable development is mentioned, it is in inverse proportion to the actual protection of the environment. The more it is said, the less it is done apparently. We are very concerned about that, and, of course, we will address that more directly under the new parks act legislation.

I did want to put those comments on the record in the context of this bill. I do, of course, look forward to having this bill move to committee. We do not intend to have any other speakers rise on this bill. It is a fairly simple matter. It makes sense, and we will look forward to more detailed discussion at the committee stage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Committee Change

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), for Thursday, June 17, at 10 a.m.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 18—The Corporations Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh), Bill 18, The Corporations Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les

corporations, standing in the name of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale).

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? [agreed]

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to rise today on Bill 18, The Corporations Amendment Act, brought forward by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh).

I have perused her comments and this bill and again am prepared to have this bill move to committee.

Mr. Speaker, I do have some concerns on the wording of the bill, and we will be discussing those at the committee stage. But, to the extent that this bill's principle and purpose is to require trust and loan corporations doing business in the province to register and obtain a business authorization, of course, that appears to us to be a reasonable move. We hope that this bill will do away with some of the duplication of the regulatory activity that has been a problem in the past.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, as all members, I believe, are aware, at the present time, there are some provinces that have adopted what is called the equals approach, and I am somewhat familiar with that. I know the minister spoke of it in her comments, which does result in duplication of activity, in particular, with regard to the auditing function.

So, again, this bill is seeking, we understand, to harmonize those processes with other jurisdictions, which we endorse and look forward to further harmonization. This is another case, I think, of where, because of our constitution in this country, we have a veritable patchwork around the country of rules governing these types of institutions. We should work in the modern era, when goods and companies are operating throughout the country on a regular basis—we should move to a harmonization nationally. It is important, and it is time for us as a nation to do that. Of course, I have said that on many occasions and with respect to many topical areas.

This is another one, where I think we need to move on a national basis to recognize our unity as a nation and as an economic unit. We need to have a consistency and a harmonization which has not been there in the past.

That is not a self-serving comment, because the patchwork gives rise to a lot of work for lawyers. I am prepared to acknowledge that, as we have different sets of rules in each province, it becomes more and more important to have legal counsel around the country, in all the regions, experts in each little province. So, as we move to the national scene, it will become less and less important, one hopes, to have a response to the patchwork nature of our laws.

I want to acknowledge that may not work to the best interests of the legal profession, but I think it is important nationally that we take down some of these differences between us, because the truth is that, in the current situation, money, corporations, goods move quickly, sometimes with the push of a computer button. They are moving across the nation, sometimes across the world. We should do what we can to facilitate the intertransfer of goods, services, and money in this country. That would be an appropriate way to go.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak in support of the principle behind this legislation, and we will look forward at the committee to some comment, perhaps the minister will have it at the time. Perhaps they will appear from the trust and loan corporations; I am not sure what they think about this. I would like to hear from them as to whether or not they are prepared to have any concern about this. It does seem reasonable on the surface, these requirements, but we will withhold our specific comment on some of the provisions until we have heard from them.

I assume that the minister has had some significant consultation with them, prior to bringing forward this legislation. So we do look forward to hearing some of those comments and, again, a reserve on some of the details of this bill for the committee stage. But I do look forward to this moving to the committee, and, as with others that I have spoken on this afternoon, we do not anticipate that there will be a need to have other speakers from our caucus and that this bill might move to the committee at the earliest opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale).

* * *

Mr. Speaker: There appears to be a willingness in the House to revert to Bill 11. We previously agreed to allow this matter to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Swan River. Is there unanimous consent of the House to revert to Bill 11 at this time? [agreed]

Bill 11—The Regional Waste Management Authorities, The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, when I stood the bill, I did not realize that there was an agreement to let it go today. I would like to just take the opportunity to put a few comments on the record with regard to this bill.

In attending municipal conventions, I know that there is a lot of interest in some parts of the province towards moving towards regional waste management, but when you move towards regional waste management, some concerns also arise, Mr. Speaker. As to some of the concerns that have arisen within my constituency and my area of the province, they are concerned about if the government is pushing in this direction to have regional waste management and regional management of other things as well, but particularly with the regional wastes, are they going to attach any money to it?

As you move to a regional waste management facility, the municipalities in my constituency believe that this is going to be much more expensive, distance-wise, travel-wise; also, just managing of the whole site is going to cost a lot more. That is some of the concerns that they have. They understand that this is pushed by some of the municipalities to move in this direction, but they have concerns. When the government established ACRE, they attached money to it. So will there be money available for municipalities to move towards regional waste management sites?

We have to take into consideration, Mr. Speaker, that over the past few budgets by this government we have seen a tremendous amount of offload in costs in roads and in other areas. Municipalities have a shrinking population, and, certainly, actions that this government is supporting relating to agriculture will not help the population in rural Manitoba be sustained.

* (1500)

So, again, there is a smaller tax base to pick up the costs of the waste management sites, to the municipal roads; in fact, another cost that is being offloaded is the cost of calcium applications. Municipalities have, again, a cost passed on to the taxpayers. So we have to be very concerned as we move in the direction of regionalization of how municipalities are going to deal with these additional costs. I would hope that, when we get into discussing this bill, the minister might be able to provide us with some information about how this is being dealt with.

I think that we have to particularly look at how we are going to deal with farm wastes. We have ACRE in place that is dealing with part of that, but there are other wastes that are building up in the rural areas. As I say, with the smaller population base there, Mr. Speaker, there is a concern on how all of this is going to be funded and also the concern that local control is gone, just as we have with the proposed regionalization of hospital facilities, people are concerned about their local control going and their costs going up tremendously. So we have some concerns with that, but apart from that, I would look forward to the opportunity to raise some of those concerns when we get into committee to discuss this bill further. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 11, The Regional Waste Management Authorities, The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi concernant les offices régionaux de gestion des déchets, modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités des apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 22—The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill 23, The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Act; Loi sur la réduction de la semaine de travail et la gestion des salaires dans le secteur public, standing in the

name of the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman). Stand?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? Leave is denied.

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak along with others of my colleagues in our party on this bill, Bill 22.

I want to start by recognizing and acknowledging the fiscal reality of the modern age facing modern governments, and the fiscal reality is that for some two decades now this province and many others have been spending money they simply have not had and have not been raising. They have been spending money that they have been borrowing. Mr. Speaker, that is not currently something that can be said on a partisan basis. All parties have indulged in that in various regions of the country at whatever level and whatever jurisdiction. Spending has been done based on what could be borrowed, not so much what could be raised to actually cover the expense.

Mr. Speaker, the problem with the theory which became current some time ago, that one should spend more in bad times to have the economy pick up and save it in good times, is that it has not worked for one reason, and one reason alone, and that is that governments in good times or bad simply could not stop spending.

I believe that the reason for that is simply that governments and the nature of the beast and the unwillingness of governments to acknowledge that there was reality beyond the next election date. The governments around this country have consistently been unable to face the reality of their spending restraints because they were worrying about the next election, not the next generation. That has to end at some point.

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

The other reality was that in those years, the '70s and '80s, the money was there to be borrowed, and that has something to do with it too. The money was being made available to governments in this country to borrow excessively, and so they did. The temptation was there; programs were started that should have been ended and they were not; and they went and went and went. So I understand and have sympathy with the arguments put forward by the Minister of Finance that at some point we

have to think about the next generation and we have to wonder whether or not it is socially responsible to be fiscally irresponsible, and it is not.

I think you can argue almost down the line with many of the programs which we finance that it is important to have those programs. There are always reasons to have a lot of these programs, but the reality is that if we are spending money today that we do not have and we are borrowing on the future, it may well be that, in those future generations, those programs are needed even more and we do not know that. All we know is that somebody, sometime, is going to have to pay back the money that has been borrowed and stop the deficit financing.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am enough of a realist and, interestingly enough, so are the New Democrats around this country increasingly coming to the view that they cannot spend without limit. It is a great irony that Mr. Rae in Ontario, Mr. Romanow in Saskatchewan, and Mr. Harcourt in British Columbia are coming to grips, as well as others, with the reality of the current world.

Today, more than ever then, more than ever, governments are being called to answer for what, for their priorities because, as money is tight and programs have to be cut, what the government has to be more concerned about and more accountable for than ever before is how they are spending those very limited dollars. My view of the current government is that it knows that it has to save money, but it does not know why, and it does not know what the need, what the priorities demand in the current situation.

I believe that there is a social agenda which is being worked out in the name of fiscal restraint, and the social agenda is, in my view, that those who are paying the price these days for the cuts are the least able to pay. It is the sick and the poor and the young and the uneducated, the unable to defend themselves, the disenfranchised in our society, who are paying the price for the Tory fiscal agenda.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is not the need to show restraint and be creative that I have disagreement with; it is the way that it has worked out in society by these governments. So I start with that framework for discussion of this bill.

Mr. Acting Speaker, let me say that this bill speaks to the need to control costs, and, to that extent, I am in agreement with the need to control

costs. Of course, when one, as this bill does, looks toward the public sector, I believe that most in the public sector—and I certainly believe that we must look to them in part, certainly not in whole, but in part, along with the other sectors of society to deal with this problem, but we must do it in a certain way that is fair and that is consistent with good faith in our dealing with our civil servants. With great regret, that is what is lacking in this bill. I want to just articulate briefly for the minister why this bill is both unfair and, I believe, will be ultimately ineffective.

Mr. Acting Speaker, as one who has participated on a number of occasions in collective bargaining processes, I believe that this bill adds to the death knell of collective bargaining in the public sector in this province. It cannot happen in an environment where one bargains and negotiates always in the knowledge that at the end of day whatever is negotiated may not ultimately bind one of the parties. You cannot negotiate like that. It cannot be done with the way that it is supposed to do, where the parties get together and negotiate and put their demands on the table, and they both understand that there are certain consequences which are going to flow from an inability to agree.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is wrong for this government to have negotiated contracts, to have had their Crown corporations and to have let the school boards negotiate contracts, let all of the individuals, the organizations covered by this legislation negotiate contracts, make agreements and then unilaterally, arbitrarily, later on, change them.

The reason for that is not so much that one might not agree with their goals but the reason for that is plain and simple—they are incompetent. They were unable in their planning, the lauded planning that we have heard about for five years, the five-year plans and the four-year plans, they were unable to get it together apparently, unable to get it together to negotiate on this basis with these unions and with these employees.

* (1510)

If they had gone to the table with a position of restraint, with a position which said we cannot spend X dollars but in a co-operative fashion we want to find ways to save money. Did they do that? No. They went down the road. They went through negotiations, contracts were signed, they

apparently were not happy with the result, even though the contracts were signed and they unilaterally did an end run. It is the end of collective bargaining in the public sector because how can there be trust? How can you sit down for tough negotiations when you know that the people on the other side are not trustworthy? You cannot trust them. You cannot even trust, not only their words, their signature. You cannot trust an agreement that they have signed.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that is the ultimate, in my view, immoral act by this government. They are not prepared to stand by their word. They will change their mind any day, any month, any year and they will decide, we know best and we will do whatever we want. It does not matter what we said in the past; it does not matter what we agreed to in the past. That is their attitude.

(Mr. Bob Rose, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

It is one of arrogance, and it is a very, very shortsighted approach. If they truly had any ability to plan the finances of this government, they would not have been in this position, they would have been able to negotiate based on their current fiscal projections and negotiate in a way that they could be fiscally responsible, but they have not done it because they are incompetent.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the fact is that the result of this will be, they say, they throw out these figures, \$15 million of savings. They are going to save all this money. They are on a road which is one of division and one of dissension throughout the public service, whether it is the hospitals or the schools, whether it is the civil service, morale is at an all-time low. The fact is that if you do not have the people on the front line committed to the common goal, you are not going to succeed—

An Honourable Member: Where was he on final offer?

Mr. Edwards: The member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) says, where was I on final offer. Where was he on final offer selection? He was in favour of getting rid of collective bargaining in that venue as well.

We stood at that time, we stand today, in favour of free collective bargaining. It has worked, and it will work. The hammer for the unions that the NDP wanted and the hammer for the employer that the government wanted both are wrong. It has to work in an environment of equality. It has to work in an

environment of co-operation and trust, and trust is the key. There will be dissension, there will be problems, but trust between the parties ultimately will see them through a difficult relationship. That is being sacrificed in this bill.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if you do not have the health care workers and the nurses and the teachers on your side, do you think ultimately you are going to win? Do you think ultimately you are going to have those savings? Not on your life—it will not work. They have set up a relationship that is one of friction between the parties every working day with the civil servants of this province, with the employees of the Crown corporations and the school boards.

They have created a relationship of mistrust, and they have created a relationship which will mean that their ultimate goal will be frustrated every day that those people work, and that is because of the arrogant attitude of a government that believes they can rule by edict, edict alone. They can let these lofty pearls of wisdom flow down to the people below. That is their attitude, and the result of that is going to be that they do not achieve what they want to achieve.

But maybe what they really wanted to achieve was a public relations hit. Maybe that is what they really wanted to do, to work out their agenda by taking another kick at the civil servants and the teachers in their particular—the people who they think voted for them last time and they think will vote for them again—this is a good place to start. They take a nice hard hit, and it makes a nice press release.

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

Mr. Acting Speaker, where does it leave this province? It leaves this province, at the end of the day and down the road, in a worse fiscal situation. It will leave this government and its relationship with its civil servants permanently impaired. The fact is that if the government had gotten it together to negotiate based on any ability to predict the financial reality of this province, if they had negotiated in good faith and been able to predict that financial scenario, they would not have been in this situation.

I suspect, Mr. Acting Speaker, that they wanted to create this situation, that they did create it, and now they are attempting for their political purposes

to work it out on the backs of the many thousands of people who serve this province. They were not straight with them. They were not honest with them at the time of negotiations, and now they are seeking by edict, in a very arrogant way, consistent with past actions, but nonetheless in a very arrogant way, to play public relations and politics with a relationship which was in existence before they came to power and will have to somehow survive after they leave power—and the sooner the better.

Mr. Acting Speaker, they will not achieve what they say they want to achieve, and I suspect that too is by design. What they really wanted to achieve was a public relations exercise, trying to look fiscally responsible when in fact what they have done in the long run is be fiscally irresponsible and create a relationship which will, not only come back to haunt them, but future governments, because the truth is that the relationship between the thousands of civil servants, employees of Crown corporations and school boards, are now in a position where they have no choice but not to trust their employer on anything. This government has created that.

I believe it is very, very short-term gain in the eyes of this government for very, very long-term pain for the taxpayers of this province. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is the House ready for the question?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (River Heights): Mr. Acting Speaker, I rise on this bill because, quite frankly, I think that it is one of the worst examples of legislation that this government has ever submitted to this House.

I state that because it is such a betrayal of trust. I think, particularly, I find it offensive because of the individual who introduced it. The honourable Finance minister and myself have certainly had our disagreements in the past, but I believe that the Finance minister, and I still believe that the Finance minister is a man of honour and a man of integrity.

I do not find this piece of legislation to be one that is filled, quite frankly, with either honour or integrity. I want to talk about why I feel that way about this particular piece of legislation.

The government, whether it is Liberal, Conservative or New Democratic Party, has a

responsibility, a responsibility to work with its employees in an open, honest and honourable manner. We have, in the province of Manitoba and by long tradition, our civil service, our teachers, our nurses engaged as members of unions. That is their choice.

* (1520)

No one, I think, no matter what our political affiliation, would deny them that choice or that opportunity. When individuals choose to become members of labour unions, they also choose to participate in a process known as bargaining, where management puts forward and represents their position and labour puts forward and represents their position. They negotiate a settlement.

When that settlement cannot be adequately negotiated, arbitrators are called in, sometimes strikes occur, but ultimately the labour-management balance is achieved. What we have done in this province, unfortunately, is to start a process of negotiations which have nothing whatsoever to do with labour-management relations.

What this government has done, and to some degree of consistency, unfortunately, is to say, we will enter into labour-management negotiations; we will sign contracts; we will give our word; we will state, this is our bond. Then we will turn around as a government, and say, sorry. Our bond is of no value; our word is of no good, because we are going to literally, and in fact, rip up the agreement.

We are going to do that by surreptitiously rolling back wages through a piece of legislation which at no point in time has ever gone through the labour-management negotiated process. If the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) honestly believed that wages of civil servants were a serious issue and a serious problem in the Province of Manitoba, then he should have had the courage to negotiate a settlement that was much lower than the one that he negotiated, but he and his Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission (Mr. Praznik) went off and negotiated a 2 percent wage increase.

Nobody forced them to do that. Nobody held their nose down and forced them to sign an agreement, but having signed that agreement, they then go back and say, well, we have signed that, but meanwhile, of course, we are going to impose

something upon you which will literally not only nullify that agreement, but in fact, put you back even further. That does not smack of the kind of honesty and integrity that I have come to expect from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

But there are other serious problems with this particular piece of legislation. What I know as a teacher, as someone who has worked within school systems for a great many of years, is that teachers who work within an urban division have far more potential to upgrade their skills and their educational opportunities than do those who live in rural divisions.

By imposing a holiday time period on civil servants, what this Minister of Finance has done is to encourage school divisions to also remove in-service days from their staff. In terms of the realities of Manitoba today, the following is happening.

Those school divisions that have surpluses, for the most part, are not cancelling in-service days. Though coincidentally, the school divisions that have the largest surpluses are urban school divisions. So their teachers are not losing their in-service days. Those teachers who will also have the potential of going to University of Manitoba, going to University of Winnipeg, going to the University of Brandon, in their home community to further their understanding and knowledge, to upgrade their teaching skills, they are the ones that are still going to have professional days.

The teachers whom I am coming across that are not any longer going to have professional days are those teachers who, unfortunately, are employed in the rural divisions. It is in the rural divisions where the upgrading of the skills is the most difficult to acquire because they do not have ready access to the University of Brandon or the University of Manitoba or the University of Winnipeg.

So what is going to happen is that the skill level of the teachers living in urban divisions is unfortunately going to grow in greater proportions to the skill level of those teachers living in rural divisions. That will not bode well for children who live in rural Manitoba and I think that that is tragic because it is always more difficult to teach in rural divisions. The kind of specialization that teachers can acquire in urban divisions is much easier because what happens is the following.

You work within a very large school. What happens within that school—and if the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister) would just listen a minute—the teacher who is teaching in a senior high school in a large school can often find themselves teaching only Chemistry 300 or perhaps Chemistry 200 and Chemistry 300.

The teacher who teaches in a rural school often find themselves teaching Grade 9 Science, Grade 10 Physics or Grade 11 Physics, Grade 11 Chemistry, Grade 11 Biology, Grade 12 Chemistry, Grade 12 Physics, Grade 12 Biology or a combination of all. That individual, in my opinion, is a much more talented individual because that individual has skills which enable him or her to teach a variety of sciences, but those kinds of skills acquisition are very difficult to achieve.

It is very difficult for a teacher who is teaching four or five or perhaps six sciences to find themselves able to upgrade themselves so that they have up-to-date knowledge in all of the sciences that they are teaching each and every year—much easier for the teacher teaching in an urban setting where perhaps they teach only one or two courses per year.

That is why I am concerned for the rural school divisions and for the rural teachers in those divisions because, if their in-service days are removed from them then they will have less opportunity to upgrade those very necessary skills which they were doing through in-service days. So we are going to develop an unfair balance in terms of what is potentially available to an urban student vis-à-vis a rural student.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Rural students have always worked at a disadvantage in our school systems. Any educational materials will certainly verify that. They work at a disadvantage because they just do not get the kind of specialization. They cannot. It is not physically possible for them to get that specialization. They often, quite frankly, do not have access to university libraries. They do not have access to equipment that is only available sometimes to very large school divisions. Now they will be at a further disadvantage, because they will not have the ability of their teachers to acquire the same skills acquisition that will still remain available to those teachers teaching within urban settings.

*(1530)

A third difficulty that I have with this particular piece of legislation is the inability of the government even yet to explain adequately what are emergency services. The Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), for example, still cannot adequately tell even his own Director, Keith Cooper, how the children who were being inadequately serviced in the number of days they had prior to this time will also now be even more inadequately serviced with 10 compulsory days off. The number of hours available in Child and Family Services is already not adequate enough to deal with the children out there in our community.

I think it is quite clear that the Liberal caucus, the NDP caucus, the Tory caucus will function quite nicely with 10 days off in the summertime or seven days off in the summer and three at Christmas. There is no question about that.

What my concern is are for those essential services where, because we have also chosen to cut back right straight across the board, that those services will not get delivered. If those services do not get delivered then there will be children out there who will indeed be hurting.

That is unfortunately the problem with this legislation. It was not specifically targeted enough to in fact make it possible for those who will suffer no real and genuine ill effect of this legislation and others who will. That is the fundamental inadequacy of this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I have three concerns. One is with the genuine damage that has been done as a result of this legislation with respect to the relationship between labour and management, because I think that what has now happened as a result of this legislation is that you now have a union movement that was, let us be honest, never very happy about a Conservative government, now having moved to the stage where they simply have no trust element left at all. That cannot be healthy for the society in which we live. That is a problem that this government has brought upon itself and a problem whose legacy they will have to live with.

I have been on the record over and over again, saying some of the tactics of some people have affronted me. I have found, for example, and have said it publicly, that picketing in front of the Premier's home of any group within our society is

wrong. It should not be done. That kind of invasion is wrong.

This kind of bill just sets up, I think, that kind of confrontational situation over and over and over again. It will not just work to the detriment of this party, and I mean by that the Conservative Party and this Conservative government. It will work to the detriment of every government that comes into power afterwards, because it will have set this regime, except perhaps for the NDP, that there will always be a distrust of government, whether it is Conservative or whether it is Liberal, that they will believe the only government that can adequately represent their interests will be the New Democratic Party. Quite frankly, I do not think they represent their interests at all.

One only has to look at the kind of settlements that they made with the nurses. Far more generous settlements were made with the nurses with the government of the day than were made by the previous government, even when their revenues were far higher. There is a distrust out there because of what this government has done in terms of labour-management negotiations. I think it is a backward step.

I also think it is very unfair and unbalanced, because it affects people very differently depending on where they live. I used the reference of teachers, but they are just simply an example and one that I know first-hand from my own experience.

Thirdly, I am concerned about the service cuts, service cuts which again have not been balanced, service cuts which will obviously impact much more severely on those who work in areas like Child and Family Services than those who work in caucus offices or ministerial offices or even those who work within this building.

There is an unfairness that has been caused by this particular piece of legislation, and I think, quite frankly, the government should reconsider it. I think they should redraft it. I think they can meet their objectives in different means, and they could do that with more honesty and more integrity. I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am moved to make a few comments, having listened with some attention to the comments just made by the member for River Heights, the former Leader of the Liberal

Party. She continues to make contributions to this Chamber that one ought to listen to, but missing from those comments is what troubles me.

I do not, for one moment, want to take these few words of mine out of context that I have any less concern for the concerns that the member expresses eloquently about her concern and continuing concern for children. She has stated, Mr. Speaker, if I recall correctly, that in her moving back to the back bench, my caucus is nervous about it. They have elevated that to a term called the upper benches, but I do not think that she feels offended if I refer to her as a backbencher. She has stated that her particular emphasis in her remaining time in this Chamber will be, as she has demonstrated again today, concern for the children of Manitoba and their need and their demand for care and continued services.

I suppose, Mr. Speaker, what concerns me is, and what ought to start dawning on members of opposition, that the core issue is what kind of care, if any, there will be available in our social services if we do not come to grips with fiscal problems facing, not just this province, but our country. Certainly, we see it every day with our sister provinces throughout the length and breadth of this land. I suppose that is the message that certainly the New Democrats should start to hear and I hope the Liberal Party starts to hear, because in a democracy it is important to have responsible opposition.

It is not good enough to say at the national or federal level, as her Leader is prepared to say, that he will do away with the GST. He will abrogate trade agreements. He will do all these kinds of things. That is really the old style of politics. They know that there are people who do not like the GST. They know that there are people who are concerned about the disruptive impacts of a changing world that compels us to enter into new trading relations with our partners, so important for a country like Canada.

But they do not answer the question. They do not answer the issue with how that one super problem exists about how we maintain the means and how we maintain the fiscal integrity, how we maintain the economy of this nation to ensure that those very services that the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) with my full support and understanding expresses, or the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) expresses, about his

continuing concern about our ability for providing a first-rate health care system. Unless that is meshed in with the overriding issue facing this nation, facing this province, then we are losing, then we are missing the point.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, I am prepared to concede that, as ever, particularly when government takes a broad stroke, generalization and move that there are specific issues that perhaps are impacted in a way less fairly than ought to be. So I think the point of the opposition ought to be in discussing this bill is to be challenging individual ministries such as mine, I have a problem. My department's focus, my department's demand for services are at their highest level during this very period where we are asking the civil service to take one day off. I have a problem on weekends at Grand Beach. I have a problem supervising the people, the Manitobans, who go out to enjoy their weekends of leisure in our provincial park system.

* (1540)

But it is my responsibility then as minister to challenge my chief administrators, my deputy ministers, my staff, my directors, to so organize their time load. I am satisfied, having discussed this issue with Treasury Board and with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), who is essentially the mover of this bill, that can be done.

I would like to think—and I would like to challenge those who are involved in this particular instance; I am referring again to the comments of the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs)—that within child care, understanding that there is going to be somewhere out of the system one day less attention, but the challenge surely is that we apply our brains, our resources, our efforts and our determination to nonetheless not impact on the level of service that, in this particular case, is directed towards the children of Manitoba, those children most vulnerable, those children in need.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to hear from members opposite. Rather than a parading of the kind of really old-style politics in the case of, particularly, the NDP who feel compelled to stand up with their union buddies, in this case the MGEU, to defend whatever turf it is that they are defending, surely they should distance themselves for even just a brief moment during the discourse on this bill to at least acknowledge, to at least recognize that if

the level of services that all of us—we may differ as to the emphasis; we may differ as to the priorities placed, but there is a consensus in this House, and indeed in the province, there is a consensus in Canada that we have a need to employ our best abilities to ensure that those important social programs that uniquely identify us as Canadians, as Manitobans, can in fact have a long-term future, can in fact be financed with the appropriate resources in a way that secures their long-term future, but only if we as a province, only if we as a nation maintain our capacity to produce the necessary wealth to do just that.

So there is an opportunity here, Mr. Speaker, for members of the opposition not just to play the partisan game, because the Liberal Party, honourable members from the official opposition, want to play the game that this government is being selective into who we want to carry out some kind of vendetta against: teachers, organized labour, unions. That, of course, is patent nonsense. I mean no government in its—you know, credit us with some decorum of common sense. There simply is no reason for us to do that.

It has not been said in the last little while. I know it was said very clearly by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), by the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) at the time we indicated we were doing this. We are doing this only because we do not want to do what Bob Rae is doing—laying off thousands of civil servants. We do not want to close down entire services. That is why we are doing this. We are trying to be moderates in this whole business. That is why we are doing this.

I know that statement, those announcements were made some months ago when the decision was made, but let it be repeated now again. Let us not now just fall into the trap of mouthing kind of traditional partisan positions that we hear, or at least let us hear suggestions, let us hear directions.

I would ask the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) to specifically direct her comments to the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) or to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) or Education (Mrs. Vodrey) as to how, in her opinion, we could provide the best possible services to the matters of her concern, the children of Manitoba, the vulnerable children is a matter of concern, under these circumstances, but let us accept, Mr. Speaker, why this is necessary. Let us accept why this on balance is an innovative way of dealing with

the issue, and one, by the way, that has since been copied by most other jurisdictions. Most other jurisdictions have looked to our leadership in this area and have in fact introduced similar measures.

There would be a greater benefit, quite frankly, to honourable members opposite if they really revisited and chose to think about this a little harder and if they chose to question individual senior administrators of departments, deputy ministers and directors, as to how this was going to impact on the services that they are concerned about and then show some consensus and show some unanimity and support this bill at third reading. Thank you.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on this bill also and put a few comments from a different perspective. I think it is very important when we talk about the public service in terms of how we view people when they are serving us and themselves and the public and the taxpayer as a whole and how we can achieve that perspective in a very organized fashion and in a very up-front fashion and make sure that everyone is involved in the process and they feel comfortable and not do something which is going to be backtracking, go back and forth, and try to say something and then change your mind.

We understand the financial realities, and I think our party has taken a very responsible position on many issues. We feel very strongly on this bill that we have to be more open as the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) has put forth her views on the whole issue. I want to talk about the issue as an MLA. We are also doing the service, and I want to talk about it from a point of view as a new Canadian and how we view this bill.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, it is going to be my last session, and that is not a secret, and I want to put some very positive things from a point of view of many people who have supported me and how I can make them feel comfortable to take a more active role in the political process but also taking into account everything that is happening in this province and in this House. I would ask you if I diverge too much from the main point, please forgive me briefly and I will come back again.

It has been five years for me as a member of this Assembly. As a new Canadian and coming from a community which had really not much going for them in 1984 and '85 and '86 and '87—when I ran

in 1988, I ran, of course, on the platform of my party and on the basic principle but, at the same time, to get to know what is happening and also try to contribute. I think one way was to make sure that I brought a different perspective and something to proudly educate myself as well as educate all the members of this House and the media, to some extent, to make sure they understand the other views of other individuals who are also contributing in a major way. Those individuals are all part of these Crown corporations, the hospitals, personal care homes and all the service sectors in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I must tell you I have been very fortunate in this House to make sure those views are well represented. It is not from what I have done, but I think from a point of view of the governing party, from both opposition parties, and especially from my previous Leader from River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs). Those things are very helpful because whatever is being done here, I think it is essential for you to know and the other Manitobans to know that we do play a very, very important role.

It is not very easy when outsiders say, well, the MLAs are overpaid or they do not work or they are unethical or they are dishonest. That simply is not true. We are all here to do a very important job. I do not think that anyone in this House is not honest to themselves because otherwise they would not be here. It is a very difficult job. People have to understand in all those corporations and the public at large that we also are going through the same structural problems they are facing.

Mr. Speaker, take an MLA's job, from his or her personal point of view, and how much time it takes to come to this House and how much time it takes for each and every MLA to develop their own viewpoint and try to work within their own party's ideology or still try to represent all. I think that is a very tough task, and most people outside this House do not understand that part. They think we come here, we come in the morning and we have a coffee party, and at 1:30 we have a Question Period, and then we leave. That simply is not true. I wanted to put that on the record because I have seen it. Some individuals in this House work 18 hours a day. Some ministers work 12 hours a day.

* (1550)

People outside this House criticize—and some of them are part of all these corporations, and they are much better paid than any one of us in this House—the quality of work we do, the responsibility we have, because, for them, if they are not performing well, they are going to be fired. If we are not doing well, we are doing a total injustice to somebody who is not here. I think they have given us fear, so we are doing our job from that point of view. That is a very, very difficult job.

Others have to understand that we perform that role. If we have to sacrifice—as we have said, we are all doing it—then we should not be punished for serving in this community, in this House. If you want the best people who are not going to be financially worried, who are not going to be worried for other things, then you must do what is right. I think we have to stop apologizing for our salaries outside this House.

Mr. Speaker, nobody feels sympathy for anybody who is not confident in and among themselves. I do not think we have to feel that way. I think we should be very strong up-front and say that we do our job. We are also sharing the pain; we are also taking cuts, but let us take it in a broader perspective. I think it is about time, because I have seen it. I have been carrying two full-time jobs. It has been very tough—18 hours a day or 20 hours a day—very, very tough, but I did not shun from my responsibilities. It was not easy.

But, Mr. Speaker, somebody has to tell outside this House that when these kind of bills come, they have a broader view. We have to be very, very open-minded and think what is right for this province in the long run. Whether we have to bring them in first, then afterwards, that is a political process. The ministers and the government can do it.

But I think what I wanted to say, because it is going to be my last session, is that it is very important that we should not be afraid of saying what is right. We should be working for everyone, and we should be respecting ourselves because, as I said, nobody else is going to do it. When we see, on the platform, every other person who is a professional, they feel good about themselves, whether they are physicians, or they are lawyers, or they are chief executive officers of hospitals or major corporations, but politicians, when we are outside, we just shy away from—you know, we are

not going to talk about anything because we are politicians. I think that is wrong.

We should be up-front there. We should be very strong. We should not be afraid of doing things that are right for this province. Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the spirit of this bill, I think we should always think from that point of view and not worry about the polls, what they are going to say tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, because people will only appreciate if you are telling them the truth. It will take time, but truth will sink in, and it is already sinking in, in many areas of the government.

Right now, people expect from us, not what we are opposing, but what we are going to do in the long run. It will be my observation, and I think a helpful observation for this government, any of these things, when they are bringing, it is good to get everybody involved because, when you explain to them, half the problem is resolved. They understand; they are part of us, too. They are trying to be helpful.

But, Mr. Speaker, it has been a very interesting five years. I think, in my way, I have contributed whatever I could. For family circumstances, we all have to make choices. Choices are sometimes very tough and sometimes very painful. I think, in the long run, I have to feel morally responsible to my family, and circumstances are very tough, so I have to make certain choices. But not that I will be going away from my responsibility—I am not going to be—I will be still involved in this part of my life, which is equally important, working as a physician.

But, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am grateful to all the members in this House. I have learned from them, because we learn from each other. If we keep our minds open, I think we are better persons then. I think I have gone through that process, and we mature. But the process and maturing, I will go back again to the same bill. The process has to mature, if we get everybody involved. I think people will feel much more comfortable. They will feel happier, and the process will change, because it is not the 1960s. It is the 1990s, and the world is changing.

If we are going to be very strict, we are not going to be open. We are going to have to compete against the world which is becoming very, very aggressive financially, in which all the barriers are coming down. If we think that we can live in this province and be in an isolated area, I think we are

fooling ourselves. It has to go beyond our boundaries in terms of taking all the advantages of what we have here, taking into account each and every person, and making sure their abilities are well represented in this House, or in any way we can in terms of, not only they have to come here, but they can play a role outside this House also.

Mr. Speaker, I must say to you that some of my own misconceptions have gone away. I think that is very helpful because that is part of a job because, whenever we come here, the way we deal with each other reflects on all of us and we not only bring confidence here, we take that confidence from here and take it outside. That confidence really helps others. I think that is very, very positive. We do not realize that we do that job. So nobody should be ashamed of working in this House and saying they are doing a good job and they are trying their best. So let us stop apologizing for our salaries.

I have enjoyed in this House a relationship which has crossed all political boundaries. I personally believe that we have to have a practical approach. The political ideology is no more acceptable which is totally irrational; it is not acceptable to any parties that I have known. The people of this province will only accept who are practical, who are realistic and who are true to themselves. I think in that way we are going into that path and in some areas the government is moving into that direction.

Mr. Speaker, it is all related to this bill because it is all the public perception what we create. In 1992, when the Health Action Plan was released in this House, we had the easy way out. We could have simply stood up and said, everything is nonsense. Let us kill the plan, but our party and my previous boss and my present chief, we thought, we are going to change the perception, we are going to take a challenge, politically risky, but that process has to change. After almost one year, we are very satisfied with that role we have played.

Our polling has not gone down. Our perception as politicians has gone up. I think that is why it is so important. As I said to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) privately as well as here, do not be afraid of a change. There are only a few who will resist that change, only for a short while. When they know everybody is in the winning lane, they will come to the winning lane. Every province in this country is following the same action plan. I think that says that things have to be changed.

* (1600)

So we have to play a role as public servants, and I think the role is very crucial. The other part which I must say, as a new Canadian, the role was, as I said from the beginning, a little bit different. The question was always in my mind that we always talk about rights. This is my right. This is my right. Where is the responsibility?

I think in our own ways, I am not saying I am the only one who is doing it, everyone is doing it, but I thought this was probably a more approachable area that I could bring some of the ideas and have some of the responsibilities that I can give back to this nation and this province because, Mr. Speaker, what we have here, we do not realize because we have not seen the other part of the world.

I will give you an example. Somebody has to wait for two hours in the emergency room, and we bring the issue. There are five billion people in this world who have no medical coverage—five billion people who have no accessibility as we have it.

So I think we have to be a little bit more open and say how we are going to continue to have that kind of accessibility but take some responsibility and not derail the process, because ultimately if we do that it is not going to be helpful; it is going to be very, very negative because of what has been happening today.

This government is not going to benefit from the political advantage of the Health Action Plan, they are not, because good effects are going to show up in four years time. At that time, you may or may not be the government.

An Honourable Member: We will be here in government.

Mr. Cheema: It could be, but I am saying it is risky.

But when you take a risk, as I said, if you have the courage of your convictions, as Mrs. Carstairs told me in 1988, then we will succeed. I think that is a very positive attitude to keep in life, because that is, again, in keeping with whatever we do in this House.

Mr. Speaker, in the 10 years I have been in this province, I came on the 27th of June in 1983, I have been practising for 10 years. I have met thousands of patients and their families. What I have learned from them, one thing, is they feel very strongly about this province and the quality of life. But they feel somewhat threatened, because we always

hear the negative things not the positive things, because people have fed them, to some extent, only on the negative ideas or negative things in life, but not the positive attitude.

If we can take the positive attitude, I think we can win on that. We can win as a province, as a people, as a community, as a nation. I think those things have to continue. I wish that we would be more broad-minded, and we have more free votes on some of the issues. We have more representation of what my constituents are saying.

I mean, how do we know, how can I tell you when my constituents, more than 80 percent favour the Health Action Plan? How can I oppose them? Am I representing their views or my own views? Those are some of the examples, we have to be somewhat more open and continue on a reform in many ways.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on, but I think it is very important for me to thank each and every member in this House for their co-operation, for their support and for their willingness to not only understand me, but for giving me encouragement for what I can contribute. I think in that way we have helped each other to become better human beings, decent human beings. I think, then, we are serving not only our families, and I consider families by the communities, because that is a continuous process. I think we are helping the province.

Mr. Speaker, if, at any time, knowingly or unknowingly, I have said something which has caused anybody personal harm, I feel sorry for that, but when we are in this House, in the heat of the environment things can happen. I must say that I have enjoyed my relationship with Mr. Orchard, the Minister of Health. We have developed a mutual respect, but by developing that respect we have not only helped each other to understand what is important, but we are helping others to understand.

I am very hopeful that will continue with my caucus because it is very important for me to see some of the changes, some of the things I stand for personally, equality of rights, the equal access to health care, and Mr. Speaker, on the whole a government that will have a practical approach, a decent heart but not work for short-term gain. Thank you.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, as I begin my remarks, I would certainly be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the member for The Maples

(Mr. Cheema), the previous member for Kildonan. I think it is the ultimate luxury in politics to be making the kind of decision that I know certainly the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) recently made and certainly the member for The Maples is perhaps in the process of making.

I do not in any way want to pre-empt obviously his right, I think, to make that statement himself, but predicating my comments on the fact that certainly, as the member has indicated, his last session in this House. Whether indeed he has another opportunity to participate in debate, I think I speak for all members of the House in saying that we will be losing not only a member of the Legislature who has contributed a lot to this House, but since the member for The Maples has already indicated he will be moving to British Columbia, we will also be losing a respected physician and a valued citizen.

I certainly feel that I speak for everyone in saying that Manitoba's loss is certainly British Columbia's gain, and I wish the member for The Maples all the best in his new career in British Columbia.

I want to address Bill 22 in light of even some of the themes that the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) talked about because I do believe that in debates in this House it is incumbent upon us, particularly in dealing with significant issues of the day, to reflect on principles, to reflect on the impact that a particular bill may be having in terms of further developments in this province, and to reflect on the long-term perspective for this province and the long-term perspective for this country.

I want to basically start by looking at what we are debating in terms of Bill 22, the principle we are dealing with, because I feel it is a fundamental principle.

The bill is very clear, and without quoting it from any specific section, I just want to give members of this House an indication of exactly what this bill deals with, the principle of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, this bill prevails over every other act and every regulation, collective agreement, employment contract or arrangement, arbitral or other award or decision and every obligation, right, claim, agreement or arrangement of any kind.

This bill prevails over everything else, not just other legislation brought in by this House but over every collective agreement, employment contract or arrangement, arbitral or other award or decision, every obligation, right, claim, agreement,

arrangement of any kind as prescribed by this particular bill.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): It is a powerful bill.

Mr. Ashton: The Minister of Finance says it is a powerful bill. Mr. Speaker, what this bill does in this House is go further than any other government has gone in the history of Manitoba, even accounting for the one-year freeze that took place on salaries two years ago. It goes above and beyond every other government action in the history of this Legislature.

I want to focus on the impact on collective bargaining, because it is something that I know members opposite treat rather lightly. I appreciate the comments from the member for Lakeside, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns).

I always appreciate his contributions in debates. When we on this side of the House talk about collective bargaining, the importance of collective bargaining, it goes beyond repeating statements made by those in the labour movement, Mr. Speaker, who also support the concept of collective bargaining. It goes to the very heart of our labour relations system. I would say collective bargaining goes to the very heart of many of the benefits that the working people of this province enjoy. It goes to the heart of many of the freedoms that have been developed over the period of time and in very clear measures deals with issues that are determined in collective bargaining that relate to a whole range of issues ranging from salaries to working conditions to job security.

* (1610)

Well, Mr. Speaker, collective bargaining in many ways has been the leading edge of progress in our society. One only has to look at the history of collective action in labour relations to look at what are the origins of our labour relations system. The bottom line is that the ability to organize collectively has been fundamental to the advancement, the benefits and the quality of life for working people. In fact, not only that, but achievements in collective bargaining in many ways prefaced legislation that has moved that to society as a whole.

For example, Mr. Speaker, much of our current labour legislation that recognizes the rights of workers to organize has arisen out of strikes of labour action, of collective bargaining. Medical insurance and union contracts preceded national

medicare. In fact, many union contracts currently have superior insurance to medicare coverage. Pensions were one of the major first achievements in terms of collective bargaining, pensions. Once again, this prefaced the eventual introduction of national pensions in this province.

Safeguards against discrimination have existed in collective agreements for many years and prefaced the introduction of human rights legislation in many provinces. Protection of the health and safety of workers has been in collective agreements and has preceded the introduction of legislated changes that have brought in guaranteed protection for workers.

So when we are talking about collective bargaining, we are talking about the very cutting edge of progress for working people, the very cutting edge. The ability to collective bargain is fundamental to the achievement of all those items I have just listed and will be fundamental to the achievement of those items in the future.

What is the fundamental relationship involved with collective bargaining? It involves, Mr. Speaker, each side trying to convince the other of the validity of its stand. Yes, it involves pressures and whatever mechanisms people can use to do that. It involves those pressures. There is a prescribed legal framework. There are some exceptions to situations in which certain sanctions cannot be used. There are those who have the right to strike, those who do not have the right to strike. There are processes put in place to deal with breakdowns in collective bargaining and negotiations. We have seen them in terms of mediation, arbitration, in terms of final offer selection, for example, that existed in this province for a number of years.

We have an established framework in this country based on a number of principles, the Rand formula, which not only recognizes the right to organize collectively but also the right to organize and represent and have the resources that all elected bodies require to be able to do that. So it is a very elaborate framework, Mr. Speaker, and that is why I am so concerned about the provisions of this bill.

Indeed, it is a powerful bill, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is saying. Let us put it in context here because reference is often made in this House to the changing world, the global

economy. I want to put in context the history of labour relations in this country, the background of collective bargaining, to point out the fallacy of any government that attempts to take away the right to collective bargaining in such a fundamental way as does this bill.

Mr. Speaker, it is no accident that Canada has had one of the worst records of labour relations of any society in the world. We have traditionally had some of the highest days lost due to strikes and lockouts. We have been second to Italy. [interjection] If the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh) wishes to add her comments in the debate, I certainly welcome it, because we have the—[interjection] The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs will have her opportunity when I have completed my remarks, and I look forward to her contribution.

Quite frankly, she should become agitated in terms of statistics that show we have the second highest rate of days lost to strikes and lockouts in the world. [interjection] The minister says, because we have some of those militant unions. The minister shows an abysmal lack of knowledge of what is happening in labour relations in other countries. If she knew what is happening in those other countries, she would recognize that the problem we have in our society in terms of labour relations is in terms of our adversarial system.

Point of Order

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what the procedure is—

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order?

Mrs. McIntosh: Well, it is a question for clarification. The member opposite invited me to stand now and put my comments on the record, which I presume means he is ready to finish speaking and give me the floor so that I can speak about my in-depth intimate knowledge of the unions that he thinks I do not know anything about. Do I ask him to sit down now or what?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I had recognized the honourable minister asking whether or not the honourable Madam Minister was up on a point of order.

The honourable member for Thompson indeed does have the floor at this point in time. If the honourable member finishes his remarks in his

allocated time, honourable Madam Minister will probably still have an opportunity.

* * *

Mr. Ashton: We have been debating this bill for several months, and I think it shows a high level of discourtesy on behalf of the member to expect that when she decides to speak she can get up when everyone else is speaking, Mr. Speaker, and they will sit down.

The minister, if she wishes to participate in debate, will have the same opportunity that I have had by waiting, listening to the other speakers and participating in a debate at that point in time. Once again, the minister did not listen. The minister is very good at not listening because I said that the comparison I made is to the international system of labour relations, the fact that we had the second highest rate of days lost because of strikes and lockouts. We do not have the highest level of labour organization in the western world. Sweden, West Germany, Great Britain, Italy, many countries have exceeded us in terms of the level of organization.

Nor, Mr. Speaker, do we have the most militant unions. There are many countries that have a very strong history in terms of labour militancy. What we have is, we have a system which is adversarial in nature and which results in the kind of situation I saw this morning with a number of my colleagues at Northern Blower where they had been on strike for one year because of the ability of the employer to hire replacement workers and continue to operate the plant—something that would not happen in Ontario or British Columbia or in Quebec, where legislation is in place to prevent that—a strike that would not have happened if this government had not removed final offer selection. What happens is, we end up in the situation where we have unfettered ability on the behalf of some unscrupulous employers to attempt to break unions, to attempt to keep people out on a picket line for a year.

In many other countries, there would never have been a one-year strike. It would have been resolved within a matter of weeks, if not days, and that is my point. When we talk about the global economy we look at the labour relations. One of the fundamental areas that we are weak in this country is in terms of our adversarial system of labour relations in which we are one of the few

countries, outside of the United States, that still sees a significant number of strikes and lockouts that take place over no other issue, Mr. Speaker, than the ability of the employees to organize collectively.

We still, in this country, have so-called consultants provide seminars to some of those unscrupulous business people, and I separate that from the vast majority of people in the business community who do accept labour unions, but we have seminars that take place on how to keep out a union, how to break a union. That is not in keeping with what is happening in other countries.

In many other countries, there is a long history of respect between management and labour in terms of labour relations. When there are difficulties, they are resolved through mechanisms that do not lead in terms of lengthy lockouts and lengthy strikes. Our competitors, Mr. Speaker, have a far better record in terms of labour relations than we do.

So I get back to the reason why. Is it because we have a high level of union militancy as the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh) referred to? It is not. It is not because we have a large level of unionization. It is because of the adversarial system that is in place and it is an adversarial system that is typified in this particular case by this particular bill and the actions of this government in a fundamental attack on collective bargaining.

* (1620)

I want to transpose this, Mr. Speaker. I want to transpose this with what other countries are doing. It is no accident. We have the enviable record of having some of the most significant number of violations of the provisions of the International Labour Organization, the ILO. Canadian provinces have been cited repeatedly for fundamentally violating the ILO provisions and various different international agreements. We have one of the worst records in that regard.

I do not know why it has not dawned on some members opposite that there is a problem here and it is fundamentally because of the adversarial system and the lack of trust and the lack of co-operation that has been developing in this country. One can point fingers as does the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs or other Conservative members, but let us start with a recognition of the problem and the fact that we

should not have the second worst record in terms of days lost, as I said before, in terms of strikes and lockouts in the world. That is hampering our efficiency, those days lost in and of themselves. It is hampering our competitiveness, and the bitterness that is in place hampers that competitiveness.

The Northern Blower picket line today, when that labour dispute is settled, there is going to be lingering bitterness in the workplace that is most definitely going to hamper the productivity in the workforce. Anyone can see that, and that is the kind of situation we see developing all so often.

So what is the government doing when it does this? What the government does when it brings in this bill, as draconian as it is, is it violates that balance that is so fundamental to the collective bargaining process. It violates it. It says in this bill that those in a management position can essentially dictate contract provisions. It gives the ability to any public-sector, broadly defined, employer to violate any provision of any collective agreement that is in place. It allows anyone in that broad public sector to be able to say, yes, six months ago, a year ago, a year and a half ago, yesterday, we signed an agreement, but we now have the legislative right to change all that, to basically reduce salaries, in this particular case, by providing mandatory unpaid days of leave, a reduction in salary by any other name.

Mr. Speaker, what the government does not understand, and what other governments who do this as well do not understand, is how much that poisons the labour relations climate, how much that destroys the labour relations climate in this province. I heard some comments before from members of the House talking about other jurisdictions. Well, there are jurisdictions that have reached negotiated settlements and are living with those collective agreements. I know in the case of British Columbia and Saskatchewan that is indeed the case.

If anyone on the other side feels that anything that is happening in Ontario changes my view and the view of our caucus, they are dead wrong, because I can say that what Ontario is doing, if they legislate anything to my mind that violates the collective bargaining process, they are just as wrong as any other government using the power of government to roll back collectively negotiated settlements. Whatever any other province does or

does not do is their business. I did not vote for the governments in any of those areas. I did not vote for this government either, but I certainly participated in the election.

Mr. Speaker, we have a tradition in this province of tough bargaining, and I found it rather interesting listening to the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs). I think the member for River Heights missed the point when she said about previous settlements. NDP governments negotiate pretty tough agreements, and that is nothing that is in dispute with any of the people that are involved in those negotiations. That is what collective bargaining is about.

When NDP governments are in place, they negotiate on behalf of the citizens of this province, and those who are representing the bargaining units negotiate on behalf of their members. That is what the process is about. The end result is a result of that process.

In this case there is no process. There is no real process. Any negotiations that take place under this bill take place after this bill is a fait accompli. They put a gun to the employees' heads, and they say, you now have a chance to negotiate. That is not negotiations. That is not collective bargaining. That is not bargaining. What that is is intimidation tactics. What it is is draconian politics. What it is is power politics that says, in this particular case, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and this government and the Premier (Mr. Filmon), since they did not like what happened in the bargaining process, now change the rules. It says that, when they sign on behalf of the government, their word does not mean anything. It does not mean anything—the word of the Premier, the word of the Minister of Finance and the word of any other of those ministers.

Mr. Speaker, put yourself in the position of an individual citizen. Can you imagine someone signing a contract and then having the ability through legislation to say, yes, I signed the contract, but so what? It does not apply anymore. There would be a howl, probably even from members opposite. Can you imagine that? What would happen to our legal system, to our property system, our commercial system, if someone could basically, through legislation, wipe out a contract, a contract to purchase land, a contract to purchase a car, a contract of any kind? That is what this bill does. It wipes out every single contract, every

single employment agreement, every single collective agreement prescribed in this bill for 100,000 Manitobans. It is not okay for individual citizens to do that. It is not okay for unions to do that, but it is okay for the government to do that.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what have we come to in this province, in this country of ours when we have sunk to this level at a time when internationally people are looking to co-operation? The bottom line is that we have to wonder why are we moving in the opposite direction in this country?

If we are going to move ahead, we need real co-operation between businesses. We need an understanding of the ground rules. We can argue that and certainly we disagree with the position of the Conservatives and the Liberals on many labour issues. We disagreed on final offer selection. We disagreed on The Labour Relations Act amendments they brought in. We have disagreed with what they have done in terms of Workers Compensation. Those are the ground rules, but how long do you think that we can continue in the international environment to talk about co-operation, as is every other government of every other industrialized country in this world, and at the same time be not only not practising what we preach but to be fundamentally destroying any relation between labour and between management. That is the fundamental issue—

An Honourable Member: Are you for it or against it?

Mr. Ashton: The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) has said, are we for or against it? He knows what our position is on Bill 22. We oppose every section in this bill other than the section dealing with MLAs' salaries. We have stated that right from the start. We oppose this bill because it fundamentally violates the principles of collective bargaining.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact the Liberals are opposed on this particular bill. I must say it is a new experience for me to see the new Liberal Leader speaking out about his concern about what is essentially an attack on labour. I say this advisedly, because I have some difficulty with the kind of positions the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) has taken, a member I know who has crossed picket lines, crossed the picket line, in the city, of Trailmobile. That is not taking a balanced position on labour issues.

I do not even know if there are that many Conservative members who would necessarily cross picket lines, but let not the Liberal Party now pretend that it is a newfound friend of labour. It is not a newfound friend of labour. It is now opportune for political reasons to oppose this bill, but they have no principled argument, or at least I believe the Liberal Leader (Mr. Edwards) has no principled argument, on this particular bill. I believe it is a political argument.

* (1630)

So then, Mr. Speaker, I ask members opposite where this ends up. We are now dealing with 100,000 Manitobans in the public sector who can, through the passage of this legislation, have their entire collective agreement, basically, within the provisions of this bill, negated. Do we stop at the public sector? Are we next going to look at the private sector? Talk about everybody sharing the pain, we have often pointed out to the fact that some well-connected Conservative supporters are not exactly feeling that much pain right now.

But are we going to now have a—

An Honourable Member: . . . going broke.

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) talks about going broke. [interjection]

Well, like the government, says the Minister of Finance. I find that an interesting comment because I do not think the government would default on mortgage payments. I think the government operates on a different principle in terms of that, Mr. Speaker.

I think even the Minister of Finance is not suggesting we run the government like some of the Conservative business friends are doing currently. You know, the Minister of Finance knows full well of what I speak.

If we are going to talk about fairness in society, I ask the Minister of Finance: Is it fair to roll back the salary of someone earning \$19,000 by 3.8 percent through this provision? Is that fair?

An Honourable Member: What is fair?

Mr. Ashton: Well, the Minister of Finance asks: What is fair? I think it is an interesting point for debate. This government treats someone making \$90,000 a year the same way it treats someone making \$20,000 a year when there is a major difference between the ability of someone making

\$90,000 a year to absorb a 3.8 percent rollback as compared to a single mother with two kids, and I am talking with direct experience. I am talking to people in that situation, making \$19,000 a year.

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

There is no interest in terms of fairness within the bill. Let us look also at the fact that this bill deals with a range of possible days off. We see some school divisions, as was pointed out by the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), that have reduced the number of days; others have not.

There is no fairness in that. It all depends on the politics in the school division. I commend those school divisions that have resisted the pressures from this government to violate provisions of their collective agreements. I commend those school divisions.

But, Madam Deputy Speaker, this bill is inherently unfair because it does not treat even all public-sector Manitobans fairly. You know, there are differing concerns within the public sector. I know I have talked to many Crown corporation employees who have said that MTS, Hydro and many of the Crown corporations which are currently either profitable or at least in a break-even position—I look at Manitoba Hydro which is doing quite well because of the NSP power sale and the completion of Limestone. They have no relation on the deficit whatsoever. There is no impact on the deficit in terms of this particular bill.

They have had their salaries frozen; now they are having it rolled back 3.8 percent. It does not make a one-cent difference on the deficit.

An Honourable Member: They are part of the family.

Mr. Ashton: Well, they say they are part of the family. As I said before, the only family the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is picking on here is the public sector. We are seeing many people in this society that seem to be outside of the family, many of the people closely connected to the Conservative Party, who seem to go on receiving increased benefits, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I really question the fairness. We note that insurance agents were not affected by this particular bill, in terms of Autopac, by direct decision of the Manitoba government. Is that fair, to treat them in one way and government employees in another?

The minister knows that this is a draconian and rather arbitrary bill that is aimed at attempting to deal with the deficit problem that the government currently has with what has been by, I think, probably the more objective observers in this House—a former Conservative member described as an \$862-million deficit. The minister can juggle the books all he wants. It is of a significant magnitude. It is the highest we have had in this province.

An Honourable Member: No, it is 562, and you had two higher.

Mr. Ashton: Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, the \$300-million man, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), can juggle the books all he wants. He knows there is a serious deficit situation.

The point is that what is happening now is there are people who are being impacted by this bill who have no impact on the deficit to state a purpose of dealing with this. There are many other people now who are being impacted when I do not believe in any way, shape or form, they are part of the deficit problem in this province.

If one looks at the history in terms of settlements of collective agreements in the public sector, Madam Deputy Speaker, one will find that indeed public sector employees have had concession agreements in a number of years in the last decade, the last 15 years. The minister knows that. I do not know if he would describe the most recent contract as a concession contract; I know the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) knows what the government did in terms of negotiating that agreement. Essentially what happened—

An Honourable Member: Peter Olfert said no.

Mr. Ashton: Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, the government said no. The government signed its name and then it said, oh, well, that was then; this is now. We are bringing in a bill. Our signature means nothing.

An Honourable Member: . . . like to do the same thing Decter did.

Mr. Ashton: The minister says, we could have done this, we could have done that, and they continue to cut civil service positions. They continue to reduce the number of employees in all areas, including the full-time and casual and seasonal. They are continuing at this point in time. We just see announcements now within that broad public sector again in terms of hospital care. LPNs

are now out on the street. There is no trade-off. Once again, if they had bargained in good faith, this government might have tried to negotiate some trade-offs in terms of job security, in terms of that as for concessions that the government wished in terms of salaries.

Did they do that? They made absolutely no attempt. In fact, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), I think, showed the degree to which they had no intention. They called in the president of the MGEU. They met with the president of the MGEU, who indicated he was going to be talking to his membership, and then the Minister of Labour phoned—I think it was around midnight that he was able to reach the president of the MGEU, who was travelling in The Pas, to let him know there was a going to be a press release coming out—

An Honourable Member: So was I travelling.

Mr. Ashton: So was he travelling, Madam Deputy Speaker. That really makes me feel a lot better, because he phones the president of the MGEU in The Pas and says, there is a press release coming out, and we are going to roll back wages by 3.8 percent. So much for negotiations.

I mean, Madam Deputy Speaker, this Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and this Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) could not negotiate their way out of a paper bag. The reason they are in this situation now is because they negotiated an agreement. They did not like the agreement, and now they are saying we bring in Bill 22 and heads I win; tails you lose. That is their philosophy of collective bargaining: heads I win; tails you lose. They are incompetent negotiators.

I know the Minister of Finance on many occasions says he is not an expert on labour relations. Indeed, he proves it on a daily basis.

This government is one of the most incompetent governments in negotiating anything, whether it be federal-provincial agreements or collective agreements. The only difference, Madam Deputy Speaker, when it is dealing with the federal government is it cannot negotiate what it cannot get at the bargaining table in terms of northern development agreements, in terms of core area agreements, and many areas where they have lost out, in terms of ERDAs. They can do it with the public employees, and I really find it interesting that members opposite basically do not understand the

fact they have not even tried to bargain collectively in this particular case

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair).

An Honourable Member: Yes, we did.

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Speaker, they bargained collectively, signed an agreement, they broke it. [interjection]

I find it interesting that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) is so vocal now. We have not heard him in the debate yet, and I look forward to hearing from the Minister of Labour and other Conservative members, because I really look forward to their comments in terms of rationalizing this particular—this is the easy move. This is the easy thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour, I look forward to his comments on the record. I look forward to his comments on the record because I look forward to the Minister of Labour indicating to me how this is the new direction, the new age in terms of labour relations in this country.

* (1640)

Is this the route to go? Is the way to be internationally competitive? Are we going to turn our backs on what is happening in other countries where business and labour are working together? Are we going to continue to have the second worst record in terms of labour relations in the entire world, second to Italy? Are we going to continue to have that kind of adversarial relationship? Are we going to continue to do that?

I look forward to their comments on this because this is what I find interesting. This bill is a major direction in terms of labour relations in this province, but the government members once again are silent on this particular bill, and they talk about having—and I like the words of the member for The Maples, (Mr. Cheema) about the long-term perspective; I ask the members opposite, where is the long-term perspective?—and continue to have the big-stick theory of labour relations in this province.

You know the government that goes in and signs the agreements has the big stick here to be able to take back whatever it could not negotiate at the table from the public sector workers, from the single parents with two children, earning \$19,000 a year. I have talked to many people in that situation, people with families earning \$28,000 a year, this is

a farm income earner. Is that really the way to go, Mr. Speaker?

Do they think they are going to have trust? Do they think they are going to be competitive, Mr. Speaker? Are we going to have more co-operation in the workplace when the labour movement is fighting for its very existence in many areas today, and when, in this case, the public sector unions, who are to my mind the fundamental partners in terms of dealing with the challenges we face, when this government, instead of dealing fairly with government employees, brings in Bill 22, brings in an American consultant for \$3.9 million to bring in a plan for health care?

An Honourable Member: Plus \$800,000.

Mr. Ashton: Plus \$800,000 expenses. I do not know if the Minister of Labour is aware, but a lot of people in the health care system do not take this government seriously. They sit there, say: you cut back my wages, but you have \$3.9 million for an American consultant. They have told me, Mr. Speaker, when is this minister and this government going to ask the people who know how to really reform the health care system? That is the front-line people in the health-care system, and that includes the employees, includes the patients, and includes the doctors.

You know, the member for The Maples talked, I think, well, in terms of health care reform, but the government is not listening, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that these are the real issues.

For that reason, I want to make it very clear that our position on this bill is, we are opposed to every single provision in this bill that violates the principle of collective bargaining. I have an amendment which I will read, Mr. Speaker, in just a few minutes, to make it very clear on the record that we oppose the provisions of this bill that are in absolute contravention to every principle of collective bargaining.

In that sense, Mr. Speaker, the only provisions we can and will support are those that were decided upon in this House in terms of MLAs' salaries. I want to make it very clear that our position on this particular bill, and I know certainly my own position on this particular bill applies to any other similar piece of legislation. And whatever province and whatever government brings it in, our position is consistent that we in Manitoba have a better way, and that is why we need co-operation.

We do not need this kind of draconian measure, and that is why I move a reasoned amendment.

I move, seconded by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie),

THAT the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after the word "that" in the first line thereof and substituting the following therefor:

Bill 22 be not now read a second time because, while this House does not oppose the intent of the bill to limit MLAs' remuneration, constituency allowance and cost of living benefits for 1993-94, we disagree in principle with other provisions of this bill which are fundamentally at odds with long-established concepts of and respect for free collective bargaining in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson has moved a reasoned amendment to Bill 22.

Because in the practices of this House, we have not had the opportunity—and I believe the last time I did see such a thing in the Hansards was 1979-1980, so it has been about 13 years since we have had anything to do with this.

I want to take this under advisement. I am going to recess the House for five minutes. I believe there are three rulings from past Speakers that I want to look at. According to this clock, I will be back at—

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Just on a matter of House procedure, I am wondering if we might wish to waive private members' hour, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour? [agreed]

I will be back here at five o'clock. The bells will not ring, but I will be back in the Chair at five o'clock. I thank all honourable members.

The House recessed at 4:47 p.m.

After Recess

The House resumed at 5 p.m.

Speaker's Ruling

Mr. Speaker: The amendment moved by the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) is a reasoned amendment, one of the types of amendment which may be moved during a second reading debate, and I have reviewed it and have

examined previous Manitoba examples and Speakers' Rulings. I have also considered the relevant parliamentary authorities because none of the Manitoba examples dealt with exactly the same type of circumstances.

The honourable member's amendment opposes certain provisions of the bill, but does not oppose others. Beauchesne's Citation 670.(1) indicates that a reasoned amendment "must be declaratory of some principle adverse to, or differing from, the principles, policy or provisions of the bill." Citation 670.(3) states that such an amendment "may not approve the principle of a bill and at the same time enunciate a declaration of policy."

Speaker Jerome of the Canadian House of Commons, in ruling an amendment of this type out of order in 1975, stated that the amendment is a statement of opposition to some parts of the bill rather than an expression of a principle. Even if the amendment could be held to express some principle, it is clearly opposed to some and not all provisions of the bill, but the precedents imply that such an amendment should oppose all the principles or provisions of the bill.

Because the Manitoba experience with this type of amendment is neither recent nor extensive, I have also looked at other authorities. Erskine May is a source for Beauchesne's Citations 670 and 671, to which I have already referred.

In referring to less frequently consulted Canadian and British authorities, I note all agree that the exclusive purpose of a reasoned amendment is to set out the reasons for opposing second reading of a particular bill. In my opinion, the honourable member's amendment does not comply with the authorities referenced and therefore I must rule it out of order.

Mr. Ashton: I challenge your ruling, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been challenged. All those who sustain the Chair, say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Ashton: Yeas and Nays.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members, please.

The question before the House is: Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?

* (1720)

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, Manness, McAlpine, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Orchard, Pallister, Penner, Praznik, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey.

Nays

Ashton, Barrett, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Interlake), Evans (Brandon East), Friesen, Gaudry, Gray, Hickes, Lamoureux, Maloway, Martindale, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylcia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 27, Nays 23.

Mr. Speaker: The ruling of the Chair has been sustained.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to speak on Bill 22. The members opposite have put out the challenge, one could say, to have someone from this side of the House speak to it. I would like to welcome the opportunity to speak to it this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, in listening to comments of members opposite, I find it very interesting the arguments they put forward. I will say this: Many of the arguments that they do advance with respect to this particular piece of legislation are ones that, of course, should come up. They are issues that should be raised about collective bargaining, about the way in which relationships between government as employer and their employees should be handled. I appreciate those arguments. I appreciate the arguments made in this House about free collective bargaining. Certainly, there are valid arguments to be made.

Mr. Speaker, there is also another side of the coin to this issue. I fully appreciate that members opposite have chosen to stand on the other side of that coin, and I take it members of the Liberal Party as well.

These are very difficult and unique times. We have to face that reality. It is fundamental that we

face that reality because there is a lot at stake for the people of the province of Manitoba. There is a lot at stake for the people of Canada in the times we now face.

I am 32 years old. Many of the decisions that were made that have left this province and this country in probably the worst fiscal situation in decades, if not in this century, were made by people who were in power or made decisions when I was not even of voting age, yet today coming into government, we face those difficulties.

It is a time when those of us, all of us who draw our salaries and our pay cheques from the public sector, from the taxpayers of this province have to recognize the difficult situation in which two decades of excessive borrowing and spending have left this country.

I know many have difficulty with that, and that is true. Many in the public sector, many in this House have difficulty with that with respect to their own salaries and benefit packages, but the reality of these times demands we work that through and come to the conclusion that I think every government in Canada, every political party in government in Canada has come to. That is, of course, that there is a need to cut back slightly on the wage, benefit and salary demands that we place upon the public service.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) have made statements in this House, and I will not take too long in my remarks, but I think these points have to be made. I am surprised at the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) when his members got up here continually in the last few days and asked for a response and now that he is getting something on the record he wants to stifle it. That is absolutely shameful, and it is typical of the New Democratic Party—all talk and no action, always painting pictures that there is some magic solution out there when there is not.

I refer the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) to this bill that was introduced by his brothers and sisters in the New Democratic Party in Ontario, into their Legislature, which does virtually the same as what is happening in this province. They have ignored Ontario. You would think the province slipped out of the Canadian Confederation in the number of times that it is referred to by members opposite.

Why would a New Democratic Party government in Ontario, elected with the help of the labour movement, a big portion of which is public sector labour movement, why would they do this? Why would they bring in this bill if it was not absolutely necessary for the greater good of the people of Ontario? Why would they do it? Have they answered that question once in this House? Never once have they answered it.

They say it is wrong, but why would Bob Rae, why would 70 New Democrats in the Ontario Legislature break faith with everything they have stood for if it was not for the greater good of the people of Ontario? That is exactly what is happening here in Manitoba.

I would like to say to the members opposite, they talk about the contract and the collective agreement. We, as an employer, have the right under our collective agreement to lay off, to terminate the employment of our employees. The options that we faced were very simple. We could roll back wages, legislatively. We could negotiate and our union refused to consider that option. We could lay off over 500 additional people in the public service or we could lay everyone off including us, in essence, for 10 days. Those were the four options—[interjection]

The member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) talks about volunteers. We called for volunteers. We got a pool of 400 volunteers which we used to minimize the layoffs that we had to make due to structural change. I am proud of that record. Members do not mention the Queen's Printer office, but a perfect example, 49 positions we eliminated, and as of a couple of weeks ago, all but eight had been found alternative employment within government or had chosen to retire.

* (1730)

Mr. Speaker, we have worked very hard to maintain our employment level, but we had the option of laying off over 500 additional people, and this government chose a method that would keep them working, delivering services in this province, when their own union had abandoned them—when their own union had abandoned, they could care less. Virtually, every call we had in this office from Manitoba Government Employees' Union members was with respect to how the 10 days would come off their pay cheque. Would their benefits be protected during that period?

Mr. Olfert and the MGEU, not a union selected by its employees, one imposed on them by this Legislature, chose to ignore their own members, would not come to the table, said, we do not care, you look after them. Well, we looked after them. We made sure that they were employed. We made sure that their benefits were protected in this period. We made sure that it was spread over their pay cheques to minimize the impact on those people. Did Mr. Olfert care? Not at all, Mr. Speaker, not at all.

Every member on this side of the House can vote for this bill with pride because we have kept over 500 people and their families employed that members opposite are saying to us, lay off, let them go, put them onto the street. That is what this bill is about. That is what it is about. Members of the Liberal Party should be absolutely ashamed of getting into bed with that crowd to put 500 people out onto the street.

Mr. Speaker, let me just tell you, talk about negotiations, this government has agreements in many of our Crown corporations with many very responsible labour organizations. I think of the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, for example, at Hydro and Telephones; the Manitoba Nurses' Union who recognized the problem, and they said certainly we do not like the situation, but we will cut a deal that minimizes the impact, and they did.

Mr. Doer's friends in the MGEU, the member for Concordia's friends, do not want to do that. They do not want to represent their members. They are waiting for the day that their brother Mr. Doer becomes Premier, if that should ever happen, and they can cut a sweet deal and have all the taps flow for them, not to the best interests of the people of Manitoba, but for their own interests.

Mr. Speaker, everyone across the way has some magic answer. The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) talks about negotiation, but we have more agreements with the unions representing public employees than they have in Ontario, with responsible unions in this province.

I just want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, with one thought to the members opposite. If their solutions to all these problems were right, why could Bob Rae not get it in Ontario? Why did Bob Rae introduce his bill and abandon a whole lifetime of his philosophy and beliefs and that of his party? Because the New Democrats in Ontario today put

the people of Ontario and their future ahead of their own special interests.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Manitoba asked the members of the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party if they are prepared to rise to the same challenge. In a few minutes, I predict that they will fall back again into the politics of their interest groups and say no to the broader interests of the people of this province. We will stand with Manitobans.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): This government has never been able to negotiate with business, the federal government, and their own employees on any given issue.

They are absolutely incompetent, starting with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness); starting with the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey); starting with the Premier (Mr. Filmon); starting with the Minister of Industry, Trade, and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson); and finishing off with the incompetent Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik). They have failed, they have failed, they have failed, and they have failed again.

Well, Mr. Speaker—[interjection] Well, they do not want to hear this.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Doer: Well, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) negotiated such a good deal with GRIP, where the federal government offloaded \$50 million on the province. No wonder we are in trouble right now, Mr. Speaker.

Where do I sign, says the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay). Where do I sign? I will sign anything, Charlie. I will sign anything you want, Brian. I will sign anywhere; it is only \$50 million. Who cares? I am a Tory, I am incompetent, I cannot negotiate.

We have the leadership position from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Remember the negotiations he conducted with Repap Corporation? How many hundred-thousands of hectares of land do you want, Mr. Repap? Oh, you are going to create 500 jobs and create a billion dollars of investment, where do I sign? Where do I sign? Oh, I am going to draw a line in the sand. [interjection]

Well, the minister says, stick to the topic. I am going to draw a line in the sand, I will not cross that line. We will need to renegotiate another deal to get our money back and our woodland back, or we

are going to take drastic action, and that will be in June, and then in September, and then in October. What is it now? It is June again. Are you going to draw another line in the sand tomorrow, the next day? This is the kind of negotiated deal the Tories had.

What about the negotiations—[interjection] Let me finish. What about the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey)? He was the one responsible for negotiating Conawapa. They talk about the Province of Ontario. Let us talk about their negotiations on Conawapa. This is a guy that is a heartbeat away from the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) job. He is an utter and total incompetent, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, it was going to create how many billions—12 billion jobs, \$15-billion worth of investment.

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I am enjoying the Leader's rhetorical flourish, I really am, but we are discussing Bill 22.

I know the member is angry because of the pounding delivered by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik). I would ask him to, if he is going to give us a pounding, try to deal with the bill.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I believe the honourable Leader of the Opposition is dealing with Bill 22, The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Act. I believe the honourable member was talking about negotiations.

* * *

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the ability of a government to negotiate and the inability to achieve any kind of agreement. It is germane to Bill 22. That is why I am speaking to it.

On Conawapa we had a situation where the government was negotiating with another government, the Province of Ontario. The Deputy Premier had a couple of options. One was to delay and one was to negotiate with the Province of Ontario in terms of cancellation. Only the Deputy Premier of Manitoba, who is the laughing stock right now in the Province of Ontario, would propose as a negotiating—[interjection]

* (1740)

Well, do you have a thousand-megawatt sale right now? Do you have anything left? You have as much left with Conawapa as you got with Repap. You got nothing—zero.

Mr. Speaker, the government of the day proposes to have a \$300-million penalty for the Province of Ontario to delay it for five years versus about \$115 million to cancel the project. Who put that forward? The minister has confirmed it was approved by cabinet, I guess by the Premier. Oh, I guess they were surprised the next day when the Ontario government took the offer and cancelled it for \$115 million and cancelled a thousand megawatts. That is the negotiating ability of members opposite.

Look at the Premier, Mr. Speaker. He was the one that said, all I have to do is pick up the phone with Brian Mulroney and we will negotiate all these federal-provincial agreements, \$250-million worth of ERDA agreements—nowhere, Mr. Speaker. The Core Area Agreement, a hundred-million-dollar agreement.

I had the privilege of negotiating the last Core Area Agreement with Jake Epp and Bill Norrie. Mr. Speaker, these people for three years cannot negotiate one Core Area Agreement. How can the NDP negotiate with the Tories and the Tories fail with the Tories? Another example of where the Tories cannot negotiate.

Let me give you the fourth example. These are the bright forecasters of the economy: the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), the Premier (Mr. Filmon), great forecasters of the economy. They sit down with their own employees a year and a half ago and they negotiated a 3 percent agreement and COLA this year, right? Let them not stand up and act like great negotiators. They negotiated with their own employees a settlement that was twice the rate of inflation last October. Now, that is the most incompetent negotiation that I have ever seen, absolutely incompetent. [interjection]

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me finish. If the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) would like to be quiet for a minute, we could perhaps get on in this.

Mr. Speaker, the Tories in Manitoba negotiate a settlement that is twice the rate of inflation last year and COLA this year. So they finally realize, when their deficit is \$862 million, that they have negotiated a settlement too high with their own

employees. They have signed a contract. They have ratified it in cabinet.

The Minister of Labour had to recommend it. What you are proposing in this bill, you know what you are saying in this bill? You are saying, I am so incompetent, I negotiated a bad agreement that I have to legislate away what I signed off.

The whole cabinet is saying, we are collectively incompetent, because we negotiated a settlement with our own employees twice the rate of inflation and now this bill is only damage control. This is not bargaining, this is public relations damage control. You know why? Because anybody that knows anything about negotiations knows that the base is where the long-term savings are introduced, and the base is where the long-term costs are introduced.

If you do not deal with the base, and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) knows this, if you have too high a wage package, presumably, if you cannot deal with the base, then all you are doing is dealing with short-term gimmicks.

Mr. Speaker, this is clearly the case here, because this government is not dealing with the problems as they are proposing.

There are alternatives. The Province of Saskatchewan just negotiated a very difficult situation, negotiated a zero, zero and two percent with their own employees, did not bring in legislation. They negotiated. It was not easy. It took about six months. There was the odd comment back and forth. B.C. just negotiated with their own employees a major health care reform, a massive health care reform, again in partnership.

An Honourable Member: What did Clyde Wells do?

Mr. Doer: Clyde Wells, McKenna, a number of provinces have negotiated and taken the easy way out like the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, look at the Winnipeg School Division, I know the members do not want to hear about positive—the Winnipeg School Division just negotiated—because they really did believe in job security—a two year, zero percent settlement in exchange for no layoffs and no contracting out. Again, a way of dealing with the economy in a way that makes sense for jobs and makes sense for people's securities.

Mr. Speaker, there are examples right in our own community of successful partnership. Let the government not suggest with this gimmicky legislation that they are, in fact, saving jobs. I just met with people working in the Children's Dental Program. They all have pink slips.

I just met with specialists dealing with ear and eye, and child psychologists in rural Manitoba. They had been given pink slips. I met with a number of LPNs, they have been given pink slips. Five hundred teachers have been given pink slips in the province of Manitoba.

We know that this government, when it talks about job security, is being very, very dishonest with the people. They have laid off vital social services, New Careers staff being laid off, ACCESS people being laid off, Indian/Metis Friendship staff being laid off. The Anti-Poverty Organization is being closed down.

There are alternatives. We have suggested all along, let us look at the money you give to corporate grants. Let us look at the corporate training versus New Careers. We have suggested ideas in tough times to try to deal with the challenges. They are tough, especially when you run a deficit as high as \$862 million.

The challenges are very, very difficult for all of us. We do not want to inherit a situation when we are elected, Mr. Speaker, that Grant Devine left to Roy Romanow. We would like this government to get some sense of revenues and job security and keep people in this province, but let the government not forget that there are layoffs and massive amounts of layoffs in vital services. Many of them, we would suggest to members opposite, are not cost-effective. Has the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) tabled in this House the response on dealing with the Children's Dental Program? Has he tabled the fact that it is going to cost \$22 million to save \$11 million back in this House?

An Honourable Member: You cannot debate the bill, can you?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I am debating the bill. I am debating the incompetence of the Minister of Finance when it comes to negotiating with your own employees, when it comes to negotiating with Repap, when it comes to negotiating with Wang computers, when it comes to negotiating with Arni Thorsteinson, when it comes to—[interjection] I will

be off topic if I talk about the Immigrant Investor Fund, so I will not do that.

Mr. Speaker—[interjection] If the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) is so confident, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) will be going and seeking a writ on Tuesday. We will wait and see.

Mr. Speaker, I am just saying that this bill is a real camouflage for the fact that this government cannot forecast, cannot deal fairly with the challenges that we do have and has a total inability to negotiate. They negotiated an agreement. How can you possibly defend recommending something in cabinet one day and cabinet approving it, and three or four months later coming back with a piece of legislation?

The Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), all he is doing—he was the one who was the head of the negotiations—by this piece of legislation is admitting that he is a total and utter incompetent. That is what he is doing, because he is covering up in legislation what he agreed to in a collective bargaining agreement.

Mr. Speaker, we do believe that it is absolutely essential for MLAs and members of this Legislature to take the reductions as proposed in this bill, because it would not be fair when the government uses its majority to pass this bill to have MLAs excluded. We believe—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition would submit to a question?

* (1750)

Mr. Doer: When the Deputy Premier starts answering for his own incompetence, then we would love to answer questions, Mr. Speaker. The man who cost us a thousand megawatts.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to take a long time speaking on this bill, but I want to say that collective bargaining is tougher. It was tougher in Saskatchewan than it was to legislate in Newfoundland, and it would have been tougher in Ontario, and we believe the tougher way to go in the long run is more important. You always have to deal with your own employees in a fair way and in a firm way, because it is the public money and it is very important.

We believe that the government had the ability to negotiate with their own employees, and it would

have meant some movement on job security instead of having massive layoffs, but let the government not pretend that in the long run they are saving money with this bill because they are not, because they have not touched the base. They have not touched the base in this bill that they had negotiated.

Whether it is dealing with private sector or whether it is dealing with the federal government or whether it is—[interjection] What I have suggested, and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) may have missed it, that the government should have taken their time. They should have met over a long period of time. They had negotiated—let me finish, **Mr. Speaker**—an agreement with their own employees which included a rate double the inflation and a cost of living the next year.

Instead of laying off 500 people including dental nurses, including child psychologists, including hearing specialists, et cetera, they should have sat down and taken their time with their own employees and tried to renegotiate the high wage increase they negotiated last year and job security which is obviously the most pre-eminent concern for employees this year. There was room to negotiate if you were willing to negotiate.

This government is incompetent in negotiations with the private sector. It is incompetent with the federal government, even the Tory government, in terms of negotiations. They are incompetent with other provinces, and this bill just shows their incompetence with their own employees.

Mr. Speaker, free collective bargaining is worth fighting for. It is worth trying; it is worth attempting. The government is just papering over their own incompetence with this bill today. Thank you very, very much.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 22, The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Act; Loi sur la réduction de la semaine de travail et la gestion des salaires dans le secteur public. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Ashton: Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members, please.

The question before the House is second reading of Bill 22, The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Act; Loi sur la réduction de la semaine de travail et la gestion des salaires dans le secteur public.

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, Manness, McAlpine, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Orchard, Pallister, Penner, Praznik, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey.

Nays

Ashton, Barrett, Carstairs, Cheema, Chomiak, Cerilli, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Gaudry, Gray, Hickes, Lamoureux, Maloway, Martindale, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylycia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Mr. Clerk: Yeas 27, Nays 23.

Mr. Speaker: The motion is accordingly carried.

* (1800)

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, before you adjourn the House, I would like to announce that this bill will be referred to the Standing Committee on Economic Development to sit tomorrow night at 7 p.m. in Room 255.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable government House leader for the information.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, June 16, 1993

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