



Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
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
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
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
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 11, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: I am pleased to table the following reports: The 1992 Annual Report of the Ombudsman; Freedom of Information 1992 Annual Report of the Ombudsman; and the Report of the Indemnities and Allowances Commission of the Manitoba Legislature, March 1994.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report of the Provincial Auditor for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1993.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to table volumes 1, 2 and 3 of the Public Accounts 1992-93.

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 Sandy Bay School, thirty Grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. John Paramor. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings).

Et aussi cet après-midi, nous tenons à vous signaler la présence, dans la galerie publique, de 30 étudiants de la 12^{ième} année du Collège Jeanne Sauvé, sous la direction de M. Bernard Desautels. Cette institution est située dans la circonscription du député de Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay).

[Translation]

And also this afternoon, we would like to indicate the presence of thirty Grade 12 students from College Jeanne Sauvé under the direction of Mr. Bernard Desautels. This school is situated in the

constituency of the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay).

[English]

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Home Care Program Assessment Criteria

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

Last year the government, after the so-called words in the health care reform action plan dealing with bringing services closer to the people in their own community, cut back on home care equipment and further cut back on home care services to people, resulting in a great deal of hardship in terms of the people who rely on home care services.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier chose to change his Health ministers in September of 1993. Shortly after the change in Health minister, the new minister said that he would put a pause on all the cuts in home care services and he would slow down the reductions in services. This is after we released public criteria that were resulting in the cuts in home care, criteria that were in utilization by the government at the time, which the Minister of Health then promised to put on hold.

Mr. Speaker, today the health care coalition of people using the home care services again calls on the government to deal with the services that they require and need to stay and live in the community with dignity and with decent health care services.

I would like to ask the Premier: Has there been a change in the criteria for home care from last year with the cuts that were made by the government, and can the Premier tell us today what are the

criteria for home care services for the people who require them?

* (1335)

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, shortly after taking my new job as Minister of Health, I made some adjustments to the Home Care Program so that reassessments dealing with removal of cleaning and laundry services, an end was put to those reassessments, and people were entitled to have a face-to-face interview with home care officials before any decisions like that went forward. Home care supplies and home care services, cleaning and laundry services for disabled people were reinstated.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health or the Premier (Mr. Filmon) have not released the criteria, because we had criteria that changed last year, criteria that were put on hold by the minister and criteria that now are being implemented by the government through their cutbacks that have reduced dramatically to some people the services they require to live in their homes and their communities with dignity and which, of course, we all know are much more cost-effective than other more acute care hospital care services.

APM Management Consultant Report

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): A second question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

As Premier, he has authorized the hiring of a U.S. consultant named Connie Curran to study a number of components of the Manitoba health care system.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Curran was hired to review home care services in the province of Manitoba. Some of us participated in meetings on changing home care with the home care recipients themselves. The government chose not to go to that forum with the home care community itself; it chose rather to hire Connie Curran, pay her \$4 million U.S.

Would the Premier now agree to table the report that Connie Curran produced on home care services and the contract that the government entered into with Connie Curran? It is our money.

It is the Premier who authorized the spending of that money, and, certainly, it should be our information to deal with the proposals that the government has made.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, this government has seen the need for enhanced and increased services for people in the community. That is the unanimously agreed to approach that ought to be taken in health care not only in Manitoba but in other places in Canada.

As well, we have increased our support to home care services over the last five years by some 83 percent. Now, if there are problems in the area of home care, they have less to do with direct service delivery than they have to do with the bureaucracy that administers the Home Care Program.

We are looking very carefully at that whole system to ensure that those who need home care, those who need more of it, get more home care. Those who recover from their illnesses, obviously, do not need home care anymore or will see decreasing levels or frequency of home care services.

I am quite happy to note that we expect improvements to be made in the area of the administration of the Home Care Program.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the minister did not answer the question. I asked the minister, after we have spent \$4 million of our taxpayers' money, \$4 million U.S., if the contract will be tabled in the Legislature.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) talks in the Speech from the Throne about making things more available and open. Surely, he can order one of his two Ministers of Health to make that information available.

Appeal Process

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): I have a further question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker.

We now have an appeal body dealing with one of the Health departments in government, which is now co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of Health, the person who, by the way, was appointed by the

Premier. If the bureaucracy is in trouble, who appointed the head of the bureaucracy?

The hospital health board has as vice chair, and I have a letter confirming it, the Deputy Minister of Health. So the Deputy Minister of Health makes the administrative recommendations to the government to cut back, and then he sits on the appeal board to deal with the deinsurance of issues.

I would ask the Premier: Are we going to have a truly independent body, are we going to get the criteria so we know what is being appealed and can we get the contract from Connie Curran that we have paid for?

*(1340)

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, you cannot, on the one hand, suggest that there are problems with the administration of a program and then be critical when governments move to correct those problems.

I have acknowledged that not only in home care but in various areas of delivery of government services, not only in Manitoba but elsewhere, there are administrative issues that should be dealt with to improve service delivery to the public. That is whom we are here to serve, and that is whom we should be serving.

I do not think you can be critical on the one hand that there are problems and then criticize those who try also to solve those problems. We are making our Home Care Program more efficient with the measures that have been and will be taken. We are making it better, more user-friendly. Programs like self-managed care, for example, have great potential for better and more appropriate service to people.

It is not good enough to me, Mr. Speaker, that people who are able to order their own lives need to live them according to the way some bureaucrat wants it done.

Those are the kinds of issues we are addressing, and we should not be criticized for addressing those issues.

Youth Court Backlog

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice.

For the first time ever in this province, the backlog of cases awaiting trial in the provincial youth court is now 11 months. This is a court in crisis. Youth are hardly accountable for their offences when they have to wait this long for a hearing.

I ask the question of the minister: What emergency action will she now take to finally deal with this crisis, a crisis that is of her own making?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the administration of the courts and the youth court the member references is of great importance to this government, and as he would know, we have appointed Crown attorneys. They have specific interests in training in the area of dealing with youth and we are now constantly looking at how to manage, with the new Provincial Court Chief Judge whom this government has recently appointed, the numbers within the courts.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, just to clarify, it appears that the response of the minister is that she is taking no action whatsoever.

Given that there has been a 25 percent increase in the number of youths charged with violent crime in Winnipeg alone last year, will the minister tell this House exactly what concrete action she is going to give for Manitobans to have swift and fair justice?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member did not hear me, so let me repeat that this is an issue which requires government to work with the Provincial Court Chief Judge. I am working with the Provincial Court Chief Judge. We are dealing with the issue of backlogs in any of the courts.

I will also remind the member that we have Crown attorneys specifically trained in the area of dealing with youth, and we are working to deal with the issues within the youth court.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, if the minister was dealing with the crisis, the backlog would not have increased from eight to 11 months in a matter of just a few months.

My question to the minister is: Will she not look at the cuts that have taken place in the area of crime prevention for youth? Will she look again at the cut of funding to the Manitoba youth services wilderness camp in 1991 and the cut in correctional facilities—

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

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I think the member has some of his information quite incorrect about the operation in some of the Corrections area. I would like to assure him, and also the people of Manitoba, that we are first of all looking at the issue of prevention in the area of youth crime. We are looking at the administration of the courts both through the preparation of our Crown attorneys and also the preparation of our judges, working with the Chief Provincial Court Judge to deal with any backlogs, to look at filling any judicial vacancies and we are also looking at the area of Corrections.

I have made myself very clear to the people of Manitoba in the area of Corrections that we are looking at more vigorous confinement. We are looking at wilderness camps for this province.

Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Lease Agreement

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation.

Again over the weekend another group of neutral commentators in our province has joined the chorus asking for a full public inquiry and debate into Manitoba Lotteries.

My question for the minister is based on the recent expenditure of \$1.2 million at Manitoba Lotteries Corporation to upgrade their facilities, the renovations done inside. Mr. Speaker, that building is leased from a company called St. James

Square Limited and that company is in part owned—and a director of that company is Arni Thorsteinson. Mr. Thorsteinson is a businessman of repute in this community, but he does have pretty close links to this government and this Premier (Mr. Filmon).

My question for the minister responsible: Will the minister table the lease so that we can be sure and the public can be sure that none of that \$1.2 million in leasehold improvements will go to the landlord in this case?

* (1345)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, firstly, I might remind my honourable friend that the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation is in fact a Crown corporation with a board of directors who make decisions related to the operations of that Crown corporation. Leases that they might enter into and so on, I believe are confidential information to the Crown corporation, but just to ensure that my honourable friend does not read anything more into it than what I have just said, I will investigate the situation and advise him accordingly.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that and would appreciate receiving the lease so that all members can be certain that there is not any profit going to the landlord in this case.

Public Inquiry

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): My second question for the minister: A full public inquiry is clearly needed if this government has nothing to hide, and the minister has indicated that it is arm's length.

This government does own that corporation. I for one, and I think all members, would like to have better access to information.

Mr. Speaker, if I can ask the minister with respect to the cost of a public inquiry which we are suggesting. I note that in a letter of December 24, 1993, Mr. Funk indicates and I quote, and I am prepared to table a copy of that letter: The Lotteries Corporation is planning a public

awareness campaign regarding the benefits of gaming and lottery revenue.

Mr. Speaker, would it not be a better use of that money to allow the public to have a say and understand what is happening in gambling in this province?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, if there is one question that constantly arises from the public with respect to lotteries and gaming in the province, it is that they are not certain as to where all of the money goes, notwithstanding the fact that every dollar is accounted for in the financial statements of the Lotteries Corporation. The expenditures are fully accounted for in the Estimates of the Province of Manitoba, as contained within the budget. They are still unclear as to where the money goes.

Mr. Speaker, that is clearly within the mandate of the Lotteries Corporation; it is to tell them where the money goes.

Five-Year Plan

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this minister attempts regularly to dodge questions about the Lotteries: they are independent, they are run by a board of directors.

Mr. Speaker, this minister and this government is accountable for gaming in this province. They have set the agenda in the last few years, and Lotteries have gone 180 degrees in this province in that time.

My final question for the minister: If they are so open, why is it that we have been consistently unable to see the five-year plan of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation?

It is there, we have had it confirmed from the minister that it is there. Why can we not see it? What are they hiding that we cannot see—the people of this province cannot understand—the five-year plan of Lotteries in this province?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries

Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, the policy of this government respecting the conduct of lotteries and gaming schemes in the province has been made very clear. There is a moratorium.

Mr. Speaker, we have clearly indicated where we feel lotteries and gaming activities have gone and where they will rest for the near future.

The fact that there are plans required by legislation dealing with five-year projections by the Crown Corporations Council for all Crown corporations, those plans change from time to time. Other events intervene such as a moratorium, and so that while those plans are internal planning documents and will remain so, the fact of the matter is that we clearly indicate where the policy of the government is with respect to this matter. I think that has been available for everyone to see.

Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council Police Force Funding

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupert's Land): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice this afternoon.

The Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council police force was established in 1978, as many members of this House will know, to provide locally controlled police services and has been viewed as a model across Canada by aboriginal people and people in general.

Here in Manitoba the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry recommended that the DOTC police force be provided with the greater necessary resources to provide this policing and to assume full responsibility of law enforcement in that area.

My question is to the minister: As this government has gone completely opposite to what the AJI recommended with respect to supporting the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council police force and, as well, the recently announced national aboriginal policing initiative, why has the minister not signed an agreement with the DOTC police force as of this date?

* (1350)

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the

member has his facts wrong as the member before him. Let me remind this member that the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council policing, DOTC policing was a 100 percent federally funded program. When the DOTC wished to have additional funds to their program, an agreement signed bilaterally between the DOTC and the federal government, that approach was made to the federal government.

Mr. Robinson: Mr. Speaker, the minister will have heard my remarks that we recently had a national aboriginal policing initiative announced to work with the federal, provincial and First Nations governments. Manitoba is one of two provinces in Canada that has not yet entered into this arrangement. Is the minister prepared to undergo and get this arrangement going in this province?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I visited the Solicitor General in Ottawa; I indicated directly to him that Manitoba would like to undertake First Nations policing agreements. That visit took place on a Thursday. By Monday our government and the federal government began visiting aboriginal communities in this province to undertake the signing of First Nations policing agreements.

I would like the member to know—perhaps he has missed it—that this government does share Canada's commitment. We have spoken to Canada directly for support of Canada's First Nations policing policy. We are in favour of the First Nations policing policy and in undertaking agreements as quickly as they can be developed, but the member also should know that these are tripartite agreements and they involve consultations with the individual communities.

Mr. Robinson: I know that the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council police force, the 12,000 people on eight reserves that are part of the DOTC have been without police services since November of 1993. What does it take this minister to move on this issue? The federal government appears ready to sign the agreement and the provincial government seems to be dragging its heels on this very important issue. Does it require a tragedy for this minister to realize and take action in signing this agreement?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, let me inform the member that on the day the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council collapsed their police force, I made the offer on that day to bring together a tripartite meeting. That offer was not accepted.

However, since my visit to Ottawa and to meeting with the federal Solicitor General, those tripartite meetings have begun. I would like to stress, the people of Manitoba to know, that those meetings are ongoing and we believe we are making very significant progress.

Canadian Pacific Call Centre Opening

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier of the province.

The number of jobs that have been created by the wise policies of this government, we saw evidence of the effects of these policies again today with the opening of the Canadian Pacific call centre in Winnipeg.

Would the Premier please outline for this House the results which the opening of the call centre will have on Manitoba and Winnipeg?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that the members opposite would not come up with that question, and I compliment the member for Sturgeon Creek for an excellent question.

Yes, we were very pleased, of course, to have Canadian Pacific open their call centre with some 210 new jobs. It is a state-of-the-art facility. It is a service centre here that will be of the highest technology of any railway company in North America. It has some 57 kilometres of various different types of wire and cable for the high state of telecommunications that they will be bringing into that centre. They will, of course, be doing business all throughout North America from this centre.

It continues the history of Manitoba as being a centre for railways in North America, only it takes it to the new-age jobs of the information highway, jobs that represent tremendous investment, some

\$2.5 million of leasehold improvements and a \$7 million annual payroll for Manitoba.

I know that New Democrats are very upset about that, but we believe that is good for business and good for Manitoba.

* (1355)

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): There may be a technical problem in the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps the fault lies with the Premier's hearing piece, because several questions have been asked for the Premier (Mr. Filmon) on this side and he never hears them, but he heard the softball question from the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member knows he does not have a point of order. [interjection] I think we are going to find out about the point of order.

Mr. Filmon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, there may be a technical problem, because I did not hear the member for Flin Flon announce his resignation. Clearly, somebody who is triple-dipping from the taxpayers—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Both honourable members know they do not have a point of order.

International Trade Government Commitment

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the Premier.

This government has created an environment for business in Manitoba and has been personally instrumental in opening the trade opportunities in overseas markets.

My question for the Premier is whether he will, along with his government, continue to work with Manitoba businesses in the promotion of Manitoba and foreign markets?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the interest of the member for Sturgeon Creek, and I know that the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Edwards) has been critical of

Manitoba's efforts to reach out and enhance its trade with other nations throughout the world. In the globalized economy that we are now involved in, it is very, very important.

As a for instance, I know that members opposite are probably not aware of the fact that even in the past three years, Manitoba's exports to the United States have gone up just under 40 percent, just under 40 percent, Mr. Speaker. More particularly, last year alone Manitoba's exports to Mexico went up some 30 percent.

These are indications of the need, the absolute necessity for a province of Manitoba's size to be involved in foreign markets and trade with all of the emerging new markets of the world, particularly where the middle class is expanding and their ability to buy the kinds of goods and services that we produce in this province is increasing.

So we will indeed make that a high priority and continue to put significant efforts behind that.

* (1400)

Economic Policies Fiscal Responsibility

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary question: Will the Premier continue the strategy of economic restraint that has earned this government the respect of major financial institutions at a time when other governments in this country are being looked upon in an unfavourable light by bond rating agencies and investors?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, again, I appreciate the very strong focus of the member for Sturgeon Creek's question. Indeed, it is nice to bring some quality into Question Period, some quality questions. Certainly, the member makes a good point.

When the Dominion Bond Rating Service recently assessed all of the provinces in Canada, it said that since 1987 Manitoba has had the most fiscally responsible government in all of Canada. We take that as a significantly positive analysis of the work that this government has done, and I

assure the member for Sturgeon Creek that we will continue along that path.

Handi-Transit Program Funding

Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Urban Affairs.

Given the fact that upward of 200 people are now denied Handi-Transit each day and the hardship this has created for seniors and the disabled, will the minister restore funding to both Transit and Handi-Transit?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome the new member to his portfolio and indicate that I look forward to working with him as my critic. If I cannot provide the answers in-House, I will be getting back to him at other times with the answers. This one I can provide, but I do want to say I look forward to working with him.

On the Handi-Transit, we cannot restore something we never did in the first place. We do not fund Handi-Transit. What we do is we give a series of block grants to the City of Winnipeg. One is for Transit, and there are several others as well.

This year, in total, the City of Winnipeg received a 5.2 percent increase in its grants. The funding that is given for Transit operations is not intended to fund Transit in its entirety. It simply means that they must spend at least that much on Transit. We expect they would top it up with whatever monies they feel they would like to take from about \$32 million worth of unconditional funding they have available to choose priorities with.

Mr. Schellenberg: Try telling that to the disabled and seniors.

How many seniors and disabled people are going to be forced into institutions, which will take away their dignity of living in their own home, as a result of these cuts?

Mrs. McIntosh: I am sorry, I have a little touch of laryngitis so I am having trouble calling over the noise. I have to wait for quiet. I am not being obstreperous. I just cannot shout over it.

I would like to indicate, Mr. Speaker, I cannot answer that question. That is a question the City of Winnipeg officials will have to decide.

The way The City of Winnipeg Act is structured is the City of Winnipeg is given authority to make certain decisions. That authority goes along with the fact that they are chosen by the local people to make decisions that are close to the neighbourhood level. We provide the money. The city frequently will say to us, please do not tell us where to spend our money, just give us the block grant, we have the ability to choose the priorities because we are there every day knowing how the system works.

We do not run Transit. The city runs Transit. I presume they know the priorities. They have \$4 million more right now this year than they had last year. They are perfectly free to take \$400,000 of that—I would encourage them to do that—and apply it to Handi-Transit if they have ascertained through their studies there is a need.

Mr. Schellenberg: This is just like the home care issue.

When will the minister meet with the people affected by the cuts to Handi-Transit?

Mrs. McIntosh: I should indicate, on behalf of the city, that the city councillors have not made cuts to Handi-Transit. The city councillors have allocated an additional \$400,000.

City Council would like us to designate specific money on top of that as well. We are saying to them, and we have said to them since last year when the previous minister wrote saying: We prefer not to designate and tell you where to break up the money for transit. We will give you extra money this year and you can choose from that the amount that you wish to apply to Handi-Transit. We give you that autonomy because you asked for that autonomy, and we give you that accountability and along with that goes the responsibility to set the priority and make the decision.

We cannot go down and set Winnipeg's budget. If we did that, we would not need Winnipeg City Council.

Education System Funding Formula

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness), since he has been in the position of Minister of Education, has spun around this province at every opportunity and told groups that education funding is not an issue. He said this in numerous forums. He said it at the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, where he actually said, there are those of course that will endeavour to make it an issue and he will deal with those.

Well, I want to say to the minister now, it is time to start dealing with them, and I want to ask the Minister of Education today, in this Legislature, whether it is still his position that funding is not an issue and how he can do that after two consecutive years of cuts by this minister as Minister of Finance and Minister of Education?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for acknowledging that I have been out of my office and have been meeting with a number of educational groups over the course of the last number of months.

The question of funding has arisen, and, yes, I have indicated that in the context of reform in education, which certainly the government strongly supports, funding is not an issue, that reform is going to have to be conducted in the context of the restraint that we are in. I also indicated, I said there is no doubt that the NDP will try and make funding a large, large issue because the solution of New Democrats basically is throw more money at every problem that you can.

So the member is basically correct in the statement of his question.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, I have to ask the minister, in light of these rather absurd and self-serving statements that he has made that—

An Honourable Member: What?

Mr. Plohman: Well, that is what they are—

Mr. Manness: I said you were right. I said your question was right.

Mr. Plohman: That is right. Then he makes the statement that funding is not an issue. Mr. Speaker, I have to ask this minister: Is he making this kind of a statement which he has reiterated in the House today, is he making that kind of statement because he thinks that his funding is eminently fair, the pain is felt across the system equally, or is it because he thinks there is more than adequate funding already for the public education system in this province?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, why is the member hollering at me when I agreed with his statement? He has stated his question and—[interjection] I did not tell him how to phrase his first question of the session.

The member asks whether or not the level of funding is fair. Well, Mr. Speaker, as compared to what? In Alberta, there is a 15 percent reduction over the next three years. Ontario, there have been decreases. So we have announced a 2.6 percent reduction to school divisions which had in total roughly \$60 million in surplus and we sense, given the circumstances that we are dealing with from a fiscal perspective, that it was a very fair level of funding.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, the minister did not answer the question. I want to ask him though, again, how he can justify making this kind of self-serving statement when private schools have received a 19 percent increase over the last two years, 12 last year, 7 this year that the minister has announced, and other school divisions in the public education system have been cut by 10 and 12 percent over those same two years. How can the minister justify that?

Mr. Manness: Well, Mr. Speaker, whereas the member opposite wants to set up this class warfare between school districts, I choose not to.

Let me point out that the support for those in the independent school system is roughly 63 percent of the per capita student in the public school system. Let me point out that roughly for the 10,000 students in the independent school system, roughly \$24 million is being allocated in this budget.

Let me mainly point out in case the member has forgotten, this government has delivered on basically all of its policy commitments. This government did make a commitment before the last election working towards 80 percent funding of the public school system and the independent. We have fallen behind that level of increase. We are now at 63 percent.

* (1410)

Manitoba Hazardous Waste Corporation Development Costs

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment.

An initial agreement was signed between the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation and Industrial Ecology Incorporated to begin construction of a hazardous waste plant in Montcalm. The announcement said that this government has invested \$1.75 million in the project to date and is going to sell a 50 percent interest in the company to IEI for a matching amount. Meanwhile, in pitching the corporation to potential investors, its CEO Don Vernon has been saying that the province has spent \$23 million on the development to date. My concern is that the department is understating the amount of taxpayers' money invested in this project.

Can the minister explain the difference between what Mr. Vernon is saying and what his department is saying?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure where the member received those quotes from. The amount that we have been working with the potential investors around in terms of the total number of dollars that have been invested since the original inception of the Crown corporation was about \$17.5 million.

IEI Agreement

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, concerns have been expressed to this minister by many, including Mr. Doug Sherwood,

the CEO of the Crown Corporations Council on the financial capability of IEI to run this facility.

Will the minister place before this House the initial agreement between the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation and IEI to assure the members and the citizens of Manitoba whose money this is, that the deal is truly in our best interest?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, the present position that we are in is that we have a 30-day period in which we are attempting to finalize and fill in some of the blanks that need to be filled in in the initial agreement. I will certainly be prepared to share information with the public. This has been a very public process. In fact, the selection of potential investors was debated many times in a public forum whether or not the government was involved or not.

The community was involved. The community met with the potential investors. Anyone in the community of Montcalm who wanted to find out further information about those who might be co-investors to the government was quite welcome to be involved.

It has been a very transparent process, Mr. Speaker, and I will continue that way.

Ms. McCormick: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

There is also concern expressed by Mr. Sherwood and others that the IEI, which is an Ontario-based consortium of consulting companies, does not have the resources or the backing required to purchase a half interest in Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation.

Will the minister assure this House that the financing for this deal will not come from a discredited Immigrant Investor Fund which was investigated in the Immigrant Investor Program review?

Mr. Cummings: First of all, I would ask the member to name the so-called discredited fund that she is referring to, because there are a number of them there.

Secondly, Mr. Chapple, who was representing IEI at the announcement, was asked very clearly if he could raise the money and he said that he could. We have 30 days in which they must firm up their financing and firm up the general agreement that they are prepared to enter into with the province.

I think that we do the taxpayers of this province, Mr. Speaker, no credit. We do not acknowledge that the soft development costs that the province has invested may now be matched by hard dollars from private industry. That is a good deal.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Tankard Men's Curling Championship and Manitoba Winter Games

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Thompson have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, in the time that we were out of session, there were a number of very significant events hosted by the city of Thompson, in fact two of the most significant events of the sporting year.

I think it would be important if we as the members of the Legislature pay tribute first of all to the organizers of the Tankard men's curling championship which was held in Thompson. It was an excellently run event. If there were any doubters before, Mr. Speaker, there could be no doubt now that it was a tremendous event that was put on by the people of Thompson. I note that there was at least one member of the Legislature who had a specific interest in being able to watch the proceedings, the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner).

I would like to also pay tribute to the organizers of the Winter Games which was just recently held in Thompson. Thompson was host to 1,600 visitors. We had well over 1,400 volunteers. It was a very tremendous opportunity for us to show off our community. I know, once again, that two members of the Legislature had the opportunity to have more than a passing interest, most notably,

the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) and the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Orchard), who both had children participating in the event. I would like to congratulate the organizers of that activity as well.

I would like to also note just in concluding that I know the Minister responsible for Sport (Mr. Ernst) did ask me before the Winter Games whether there might be some difficulty due to snow, Mr. Speaker. I think he was referring to lack of snow but, as the minister knows from his own visit, if anything, we had too much snow. That is one thing Thompson certainly has an excess of when it comes to winter games. It is not only the snow but the organization and the hospitality. I really commend the organizers of both those very significant sporting events.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable minister responsible for Sport have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister responsible for Sport): Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) in congratulating the organizing committees of both the Tankard and the Manitoba Games for the excellent work they did in the community of Thompson.

Thousands of volunteers have participated in events. I think the key recognition of the fact that Mr. Rob Platford and his wife Diane, who were the organizing chairs for the Manitoba Games, were basically wandering around during the event like lost souls without really a whole lot to do because they had it so well organized. Everybody was doing their job, and there was no need for crisis management during the event. I think that is a great testimony to those individuals and obviously to all of the people who participated in organizing those games. They were extremely well run, very well involved from right across the province. We had people from every region, of course. It was a great tribute to the community of Thompson, and we salute them for that.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for St. Boniface have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): I am pleased to rise, Mr. Speaker, to join the other two to compliment the city of Thompson and what they have done over the past months.

Having been a resident of Thompson maybe 25 years ago and having also been involved in a business in the city of Thompson, I know what it is to live and work in Thompson with the people of Thompson. Maybe next time I should run in Thompson. [interjection] I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I apologize.

I would like to say, I think what does those organizations credit is the fact that the volunteers who are involved in the community are always the backbone of these organizations. I compliment the city of Thompson and the people of Thompson for what they have done over the past months. Thank you very much.

Holocaust Awareness Week

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Kildonan have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): I rise in the midst of Holocaust Awareness Week to, of course, declare to this House, as all members I am sure are aware, that this is Holocaust Awareness Week. I have had the occasion to attend many functions including the renaming of a street in the constituency of St. Johns to be called the Warsaw ghetto hero street, as well as a commemorative ceremony at the monument located on the legislative grounds last Friday, Mr. Speaker.

* (1420)

I am sure all members of the House will join with me to maintain something that was said at one of the speeches at the commemorative ceremony, namely, that is the word that was raised over and over again was vigilance, that we all are vigilant to ensure and pay attention to what happens in our society. There was mention of many other of the kinds of situations going on in the world today. As

we speak there are many other actions that are going on in this world that all of us I am sure in this House deplore and require us to be vigilant as well as to maintain cognizance and memory of the terrible holocaust that took away one-third of the world Jewry during those terrible years, and to note and commemorate the heroes of that period as well as remain vigilant now and forever, Mr. Speaker, that that kind of activity will never again happen. Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(Second Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: On the adjourned debate, second day of debate, on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, in answer to his speech at the opening of session, standing in the name of the honourable Leader of the official opposition.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour again to rise on this the Fifth Session of the Thirty-fifth Legislature of the Province of Manitoba.

Basically it is a time to take stock of what has been going on with this government. It is time to reflect, I believe, the feelings of Manitobans that we have been listening to in the coffee shops, at the farm kitchen tables, at the plant gates, to listen and reflect back on their views on the performance of the government. Anybody can write a Speech from the Throne, but as an old saying used to be, an old Latin saying I believe, we have to look at the deeds of government not the words of government. We will be reflecting today on the deeds of government, *facta non verba* as the Latins used to say, not on the words of government.

Mr. Speaker, the feelings we are getting right now from people across this province is this is a government, yes, full of fine words, great press releases, great media communications, a great effort to get their so-called message out, but it is a government that has drifted and drifted from year to year and from speech to speech.

When I listen to the people of this province they say, are we better off in jobs today than we were when the government was elected? They say, no. Is our health care system in better shape today than it was six years ago? No. Do we have a fairer more balanced education system to invest in our young people? Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker.

Do you know what people say to us? They say the only areas of growth that this government has sponsored since they have been elected six years ago has been gambling and welfare. On all the bread-and-butter issues, this government is failing and failing miserably to the people of Manitoba. We saw that during the by-elections last year. That was the testimony. This was the accounting.

The words in this House and the speeches in this House are irrelevant to what the people are saying by their direct ballot last year, last fall. In five by-elections I have never seen it more serious for the Conservative side in my life, going door to door. Not only did the Conservatives lose all five seats, but even Sterling Lyon did not get below 25 percent in the constituency of Osborne. I have never seen the Conservatives below 40 percent in Rossmere, even when the NDP was winning the seat by a narrow margin.

When we were going door to door in many communities in those by-elections, the one thing we found out is if anybody was undecided, the only thing they had decided is they were not voting Conservative again because they had less people working, less opportunity in their health care system and less fairness in their education system. That is the one thing we found loud and clear.

So I would like to start by welcoming the five members that have been elected, the three on the NDP side, the two on the Liberal side, and welcoming them to this Chamber, Mr. Speaker. I believe that Manitobans have seen four of the five in Question Period already, in the two brief Question Periods we have had, and I am sure we will see the member for The Maples shortly, but I think they are fine representatives of their community.

I want to congratulate specifically the new member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg), the new member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), the new member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), the new member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) and the new member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick).

I also want to welcome to the Legislature all members. This could be the last session before the election, Mr. Speaker. It is, after all, the fifth session, and I welcome the return of all members.

We already know of two members that have indicated they are not going to return after the next election, a fine member in our caucus, our deputy leader (Mr. Storie) and a 13-year person who has performed admirably in this Chamber, has performed in his role of cabinet, in his role as third-party critic and in the role of opposition critic with integrity, dignity, honesty and a person I know that all Manitobans are proud to have worked with. He has not left yet, and he will be available to vote with the people of Flin Flon and against the government at all the possible voting times.

* (1430)

I know the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) is also leaving this Chamber, I believe presently working at the University of Manitoba and will leave shortly after the session. I understand she is going to another Chamber, Mr. Speaker. We are not part of the Liberal career path, either to the Court of Appeal or to the Chamber, but we will see what happens. We wish her a personal best. We will save our comments about that decision of the Prime Minister at a later point. I do wish her well on a personal basis on her decision.

No doubt there will be members of the Conservative side who will be here for their last Speech from the Throne. I do not know who they are yet. We hear various rumours from various members of you. We can kind of guess, Mr. Speaker, but I am sure with every election the people take personal stock. I know, in all sincerity, with the pressure on family lives and personal lives, that some people will leave. They will leave

for the most noble of reasons and they will have left this place a finer place for their contributions. So I do not know who it is across the way who will be leaving and when they will be leaving in a fourth year. I just know there have been some very good people in last elections who have left, willingly some and not willingly others, and that is part of the democracy. I want to formally wish them well in their decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I want to wish you well again. I know it is a pro forma wish that we all make, but I just want to say that this is beyond a pro forma wish. We wish you very well. We think you have brought to this Chamber a nonpartisan sense of decision making. I can only quote a constituent of mine, a railroader from the CN, who said to me the other day when we came together to the Lieutenant-Governor's chamber: I would like to meet the Speaker of the House; he looks like a nice guy and a fair guy. And he did have the chance to meet you. He said he is a nice guy and a fair guy and kind of a raunchy guy, too, in the nicest sense of the word, in the kindest sense of the word. I am only quoting the railroader directly to you. You would only want direct feedback, and he liked you a lot and he thought you did a good job.

The kind of dignity and integrity you bring to the Chamber is reminiscent I think of Speaker Fraser in the House of Commons who from time to time went against the government of the day. I recall the material that was handed out on the GST. He was very critical of the former Finance minister of the day in terms of not having the legal authority to put out certain material before an act of Parliament was passed on the GST. I thought that was a courageous decision against the former Conservative government, being a Conservative member of the bench.

I dare say, Mr. Speaker, that ultimately at some point I think this Chamber will move from an appointed Speaker by the Premier to an elected Speaker. I think that is happening in other provinces, and I would dare say that if there was an election day—I can only speak as an individual because it would be individual votes—I would think you would stand a very good test from all

sides of this Chamber, a real testimony to your abilities in that chair.

I am not saying that because I want to get longer preambles. It is an old basketball rule always to criticize the referee to get the next call. I do not know whether the opposite works. We will find out.

Mr. Speaker, the government's record speaks for itself. There were a few good ideas in the Speech from the Throne, and I want to talk about the driver's licence for young people. Now, it was not very detailed. We have to look at it in terms of how it will be implemented, and will it make sense to young people, because if it does make sense for young people, I think for some kids, or some youth, a driver's licence is a very important move towards greater rights in our society.

I have always believed that a licence is not a privilege, Mr. Speaker, it is a responsibility, and I would like to see the specific legislation that you are proposing. I know there have been other moves in the United States dealing with drivers' licences. I think the example the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) mentioned to me was Bill Clinton's policy about graduating from high school, et cetera, but we certainly want to look at it and look at it positively.

The NDP did propose a similar proposal, Mr. Speaker. Before the session started, we proposed that we look at the public insurance act and have an extra premium or an excess premium for individuals that are convicted of offences dealing with damage towards automobiles for a period of time, again, a direct consequence for action against individuals or their property.

We would like to look at that along with other changes to the public insurance act, including a proposal to make the public insurance act and the proposals under the no-fault system to have an appeal body that is truly independent from the government. We are very critical of the way the government has established the so-called appeal body. It should not be a body that is close to the government, both socially and politically; it should be a body that is removed from the government. So

we will have a couple of changes to make or propose on the public insurance bill. We did propose 30 amendments before, but part of it will fit I think with the government's proposal on the issue of crime and of what we can do with it.

We asked a number of questions about crime last year. I asked a question to the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) two years ago about youth crime, and I did not get any answers except the kind of Johnny Appleseed response from the Deputy Premier that everything was okay and the world is good to me and there are no problems out there, no problems whatsoever.

Then last year again, I asked the question on youth crime in the spring session of this Chamber, and I have quoted youth statistics showing youth violence had increased. Again I was given the kind of flippant answer from the Deputy Premier, and later on the former Minister of Justice, now the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), came back and said, well, we have got all kinds of committees to deal with youth violence and youth crime. It is not a problem of staffing schools; it is not a problem of cutting back on prevention; it is not a problem of our courts. We have got all these interdepartmental committees going on.

Well, that is the same answer we got when we got asked the questions about violence in schools to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). The Premier said, well, we have created an interdepartmental committee to deal with this issue. This is after a report was tabled by MAST, the school superintendents, the school trustees calling on action and co-ordination by the provincial government. Then, of course, the provincial government did nothing. It had an interdepartmental committee. Is it not surprising today that when our Justice critic asked the minister about the 11-month delay in the youth offender system today, her answer was we are going to hit them over the head with seminars. I guess that is very consistent with what she did when youth violence was in the schools. We are going to have an interdepartmental committee. The public does not want committees. They do not want gestalt therapy. They do not want seminars. They want action.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the Premier directly, he cannot tolerate because the public cannot tolerate 11-month delays in the juvenile justice system of this province. He has sat on a system of justice that is getting more and more out of touch with the public and all the press conferences the Premier has and the Minister of Justice has will not change the reality of a court system that he has put in place.

As a former volunteer—I was the past president of the Boys and Girls Club of Winnipeg and a past worker who was involved in crime prevention programs—I can say from actual experience that the old victim of justice delayed is justice denied is very true in this juvenile justice system. For the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) today to say that she is not responsible and she is going to have a couple of seminars to deal with this real problem, I think is really showing her incompetence. We were worried about that after she was moved from the Ministry of Education, and now we have every reason to worry about it again.

She declares war on drugs, but the only war we see is a press release, a seminar, a sound bite and no action to back up the so-called government resolve, Mr. Speaker. There is chaos, Mr. Premier. There is chaos in the juvenile justice system and you, Sir, have sat on it for six years and done nothing and the people want action.

Mr. Speaker, we believe with this 40 percent increase in youth crime since the government has been in office—violent crime—that you have to have a multidimensional approach to deal with this. You cannot have just a one-dimensional approach. We in the New Democratic Party believe that you must have the ability to have the community be responsible for preventing crime and on the same token you must have a crime and justice system that allows the individual who is involved or alleged to be involved in crime to be held accountable.

Mr. Speaker, we do not see any dimension to the Tory crime policy. We do not see the crime prevention programs being maintained. We do not see crime prevention programs and community responsibility being enhanced. Whether that is in

the aboriginal justice system that we have proposed, whether that is in the community justice system, whether that is downtown or up north, we see absolutely no move to having greater responsibility in the community.

Mr. Speaker, how can this government justify cutting \$100,000 out of crime prevention and then say to the people of this province that they are in fact with them to stop crime? How can this government amalgamate the Child and Family Services divisions of the city of Winnipeg where hundreds of volunteers were working with community ownership to stop crime? All they have done is increase the bureaucracy and decrease the volunteerism, decrease the community activity, decrease the participation. What we have now is more and more people throwing up their hands and saying it is over to you Mr. Government or Mrs. Government. The less and less you involve people, the less and less ownership you have to prevent crime. So all these things must be taken into context.

The government now talks in this Speech from the Throne about a wilderness camp. Well, what a great idea. When they took office there were two wilderness camps in operation. There was one aboriginal wilderness camp, I believe, under Neecheewan. I have to check that for my facts, but I am pretty sure it was still in existence. Secondly, there was another wilderness camp run out of the Hugh John Macdonald system. There were less people sitting in remand and more people put in placements and programs before you got elected.

* (1440)

Again, deeds not words—your words are fine, your deeds were to cut back wilderness programs, and then you come in here with all the sanctimony in the world after you have cut back these programs.

The Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) is sitting on a drifting justice system and a drifting community prevention system and a drifting system of consequences, and she promises us a seminar. You will excuse us if we are not satisfied with the answers, Mr. Speaker, because I would

dare say the public are not satisfied with the answers.

Mr. Speaker, I would recommend the government look at two bits of material that have been forwarded to it, lots of material that has been forwarded to it from the community. I would cite a letter from Mr. Doug Lawrence, a former senior member of Corrections, that I had received a copy of and the Minister of Justice has received a copy of, who is retired and has become a victim of crime as an individual citizen. He provides a lot of ideas and offers his voluntary services to the government. He, along with hundreds of others, are crying out to get involved, to help the community get involved.

He offers some very good suggestions of how to be very careful about an Americanization of some of the programs that the minister is talking about. How are we going to deal with the aboriginal population and the oversentencing of aboriginal youth? How are we going to deal with mentally disturbed kids? As a volunteer, again, from Special Olympics, I am quite concerned about that issue and how we are going to deal with behavioral problems in our system and how we are going to provide the programs for them.

I would also recommend the paper that was produced by our Minister of Justice, the member for St. Johns, a paper that is now getting tremendous advice and ideas from the people across our system. There is no question—

An Honourable Member: Minister?

Mr. Doer: Critic of Justice. Sorry, Mr. Speaker, Freudian slip.

Mr. Speaker, you have to look at the whole issue of ownership for the community—volunteers, teachers, children living in poverty with the child poverty rate going up and, yes, you have to look at the consequences when youth get into trouble. Clearly, both areas have to be addressed.

I would encourage the government to look at changes to the Young Offenders Act. I personally was against the Young Offenders Act. I personally thought, again, as a volunteer of the boys and girls club, the old juvenile delinquents act had less

lawyers and more common sense than we have now under the Young Offenders Act, which is really a kind of a manifestation of the American justice system. Even though the juvenile delinquents act was outdated in some areas, it had more flexibility on the age side, it had more flexibility on the sentencing side, and when the child was sentenced to adult court or a young adult was sent to adult court for a very serious crime, there was no differential punishment for that young offender if they were very, very seriously causing a risk to the community. The old juvenile delinquents act had a better balance, I think, between the rights of the individual who is accused of a crime and the rights of the community, Mr. Speaker, and I think we have to get a grip on it.

There is a situation in British Columbia where a 16-year-old youth has just been convicted of murder of a six-year-old child. This was a youth that was involved in sexual abuse on two former occasions, yet this child was allowed to baby-sit in a complex in Coquitlam, British Columbia. Nobody in the public or in that community was even aware of the previous sexual behaviour of that child, or young adult, who then went and unfortunately killed a six-year-old person.

We have to get a system that balances the needs of those community children with the needs of that individual who was convicted of sexual assault. We are crying out.

Mr. Speaker, we will work with this Minister of Justice in a nonpartisan way to bring some common sense back to our justice system, to not allow six-year-old kids to be murdered by a youth who has been involved in an offence before. Those changes have to be made on the Young Offenders Act, but this government has to practise what it preaches and not just preach one thing in this Chamber and do nothing about it outside of this Chamber. We are committed to working with you in this regard.

I say this to the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), there is no ideology that does not want to protect the citizens of our communities. We believe in community crime prevention as well. If you will look at the delay in the court system right

now, you better take a long look in the mirror. You better raise it in your own caucus tonight when you have your Monday evening session, because I would say to the member for Pembina, 11 months is justice delayed, and justice delayed is justice denied. If that is Conservative philosophy, you better change it tonight.

Mr. Speaker, we have proposed other amendments, other alternatives dealing with crime. We have proposed that the war on drugs be implemented, that the government promised. Remember that war on drugs? Does the Premier remember the war on drugs? He announced it with a great bit of fanfare in 1990.

Our Justice critic asked the question on Friday—the Minister of Justice, the former Minister of Education, who was the former chair of this committee that travelled around and heard all kinds of ideas and got some proposals and had some seminars, had the war on drugs. In fact I think we rechallenged the war on drugs in 1992 in the Speech from the Throne, but 1994 comes along, all we see is a white flag out there from the Minister of Justice. I surrender, I surrender, are the real silent words from this minister and this Premier, Mr. Speaker. We do not need a government that is going to surrender. The only surrender they should do on this issue is surrender government and let the people change it.

Mr. Speaker, our Health critic last year proposed a ban on violence in the media. We had an all-party House resolution again as another positive alternative of the New Democratic Party, supported by all parties. What has happened to that resolution? Do we just put out press releases? Do we just put out self-serving comments about it? What has happened with this? Did the minister take this to Ottawa with the new government? Did we take it to Ottawa with the old government?

The Premier has a special relationship with the old Minister of Justice and the old Prime Minister. Was that the issue that was raised at the swearing-in ceremony, that \$7,000 trip down to Ottawa with the former Prime Minister? What happened to these resolutions?

The federal government is meeting with the U.S. government now. The U.S. Congress is calling on a greater ban on violence in the media. Where is it? The public is saying, what are you doing about it? Do not give me the press conferences. Do not give me the press releases. Do something about it. Let us just start doing something about youth crime and violence in our media instead of just talking about it.

Mr. Speaker, the whole issue of child poverty, the lack of jobs, the lack of dignity that results in—that too, we believe, is part of the whole issue of insecurity of work, insecurity at home, insecurity in our communities and which is leading to higher crime.

Is it any surprise that when we Americanize our economy and we Americanize our media that we are starting to get American increases in violent crime? I see the unfortunate correlation of a much more Darwinian society every day, much more of the survival of the fittest every day. We are seeing that Darwinian philosophy in our economy resulting in greater Darwinian behaviour in our communities and unacceptable behaviour of crime on our streets.

Mr. Speaker, the insecurity of work is a really important issue. The government talks about work as a secure issue, and yet it has created probably more insecurity than any other jurisdiction in the province of Manitoba in terms of work.

The government's race to the bottom is not working for Manitobans because Manitobans are not working, and it is clear. On Friday there were questions raised by the Liberal Leader on the unemployment statistics and questions posed back by the Premier: this month is better than that month; this month is worse than last year—

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): The best in the country.

Mr. Doer: The Minister of Labour says, it is the best in the country. There are less people working today than when this Minister of Labour took a seat in the Chamber in 1988.

There are less people working today in his communities; there are less people working today

right across Manitoba under this government. Clearly, the month-to-month statistics, the week-to-week statistics, the announcements the Premier makes—he mentioned CPR today, and that is a good announcement today. We said that six months ago when they made it the first time. We said it a year ago when they mentioned it the time before that.

* (1450)

But there is no mention in the Premier's answer about the tragedy about how many jobs we have lost in the motive trades in the CPR. You go to the Weston Shops; you go to look at the locomotive jobs; you look at the running trades jobs. Those are higher paying jobs, and there are more of them we have lost in the last three years than what was made up before in the announcement today.

We congratulate the government on that telemarketing centre. It seems to us that telemarketing has been improved in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. I would rather have a telemarketing job than no job at all.

Well, I would remind the members opposite that in 1988 those members said, we will not buy jobs—in their Speech from the Throne—we will not use incentives to create jobs, and the question is, how much money is being spent for those telemarketing jobs in Brandon?

Of course, Mr. Speaker, I should not ask the members opposite how much money is going to be spent on the Jets with that deal that they sign. As a farmer said to me the other day, I should give my cows hockey sticks and then they can get a blank cheque signed by the Premier of this province.

You want the taxpayers to pay for Serge Sorokin's one-way contract to Moncton, go ahead. You defend it all you want, because we have always said, deal with the reality of the hockey team. Do not just drift and drift and drift with the operating losses being paid for by the taxpayers. We have said that from Day One and we will continue to say it again.

Let us look at the record of this government over the six years. In 1988 the government said—and here they said it again—we do not believe in

handing out money in new grants and incentives. We will intensify our estimates on tourism, in marketing tourism, and less people coming today than in 1988. We will develop northern Manitoba—you may be surprised to hear this—we will develop northern Manitoba as a key of our economic development and, further, our government is committed to having a co-operative arrangement with the federal government. That was their economic strategy in 1988. Just have to pick up the phone was the strategy, Mr. Speaker.

In 1989 the government said that our capital investment will be high. We are particularly proud of our great economic achievement. Our government is particularly proud of the role that it is playing in attracting Wang Laboratories Imaging Centre to the province of Manitoba. Wang. Now how many jobs did that create, Mr. Speaker? How much money did we pay for Wang? Does the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) know? Does the former Minister of Health know? Does the former Minister of Finance know? This was their economic agenda in 1989. Wang. I should tell you, for those who are new in this Chamber, that Wang reduced their commitments, took the money, did not produce back the results to the province of Manitoba, did not create the jobs.

An Honourable Member: Where did they go?

Mr. Doer: I do not know. I do not know where they went. But this is 1989, year two of the Tory drifting economic strategy. Year three, 1990, the Manitoba Conference Board predicts that Manitoba will grow by double the national average. We will review and assess the progress to create smarter business regulation. I think just last week they announced another committee to look at smarter business regulation, four years later.

Now, what happened with their prediction in 1990 for 1991? Manitoba was in last place. Dead last. We were the dead-last government in terms of economic performance. We did not go up above the national average. We went down below the national average, Mr. Speaker. We were in last place in 1991, and all the predictions they made again in 1990 for 1991 were the opposite direction.

This is what you said; this is what happened. I know the Tories do not like bottom lines, because the bottom lines are not very, very positive.

In 1991, we will increase our efforts—they aimed at strengthening our economy that would provide more jobs for Manitobans. Job creation will be our foremost goal of economic agenda. Well, there are less people working today than in 1991 when you made this statement. They said in 1991—listen to this, this is what you said. I guess you think that nobody is going to read this stuff back to you. In 1991, this is in the Speech from the Throne—these are not even the cute answers we get in the Chamber—in 1991 you said, the effects of lower interest rates and a moderated dollar should end the recession by this summer of 1991. Not my words. Your words. Mr. Speaker, 17,000 less people working today than 1991, and the former Minister of Finance says, wonderful work.

Mr. Speaker, in 1992, the government was smarter. The government was smarter in the 1992 Speech from the Throne. The wily old coyote from Emerson must have had something to do with it. You know what the government did in 1992? They took the word “job” out of the Speech from the Throne. When they have taken the jobs out of the economy, then you take the word “job” out of the Speech from the Throne. So that is what they did in 1992. They did not bring forward any jobs in the Speech from the Throne, but here we go, here is the key part of their economic strategy that year: We are going to bring forward plans for the application of VLT revenues to promote economic development throughout the province of Manitoba in 1992.

Of course, in 1991, they said all proceeds from rural VLTs will go to rural economic development, but in 1992 flip-flop, flip-flop, in terms of what they are going to do, Mr. Speaker. So there is where I say, you are right, you have expanded gambling in the province of Manitoba. You have had that as one of the economic engines of your so-called government. [interjection] I think that is the same year the Tupperware plant closed and the minister, former [interjection] Yes, thanks. The fact that the jobs are now in the United States I

guess does not bother the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae).

Mr. Speaker, in 1992, we also had the six conditions of NAFTA. Oh, he should listen to this, because I want to talk about NAFTA. We are very disappointed that by 1994, the government has folded on all six conditions of NAFTA and, of course, the Liberal Party has folded on those same six conditions. They did not even have any conditions. They said they were opposed to NAFTA.

I actually thought that Jean Chretien's promise that we cannot allow for the energy provisions that have been sold out by Mulroney to Bush should never be implemented and the trade agreement with Mexico should be amended to protect Canada's energy and to give Canada a sovereign energy policy just like obtained by the country of Mexico in the Free Trade Agreement—of course, we saw the same flip-flop unfortunately from the federal Liberals as we saw from the provincial Conservatives in this area, Mr. Speaker. Very disappointing, I might say.

So, Mr. Speaker, in 1993 we did not have a Speech from the Throne because the government did not come back in 1993. Of course, in 1994 we see today the government saying again, it is the seventh Speech from the Throne, jobs is the No. 1 priority of this government. Well, less people working today than when you got elected in 1988—less people.

When we look at the government's economic agenda and, you know, if you look through the '80s, from 1982 to 1988 there were 37,000 new jobs created—37,000 jobs. Some years it was 5,000, some years it was 7,000, but 37,000 jobs in the economy. There were more people working than when Lyon left office.

Mr. Speaker, the government has said that their economic strategy is to give tax breaks to companies and that will in turn create jobs. You know, I remember the 1988 election. The Premier said, I am going to get rid of the payroll tax in four years and that will create all kinds of economic opportunities, and then the Liberals said, oh, that is

not good enough. We are going to get rid of the payroll tax in three years. Well, you cannot have it both ways.

The Tories have been consistent. They have given away \$90 million in corporate taxes, and that has been reduced from spending in health and education—\$90 million. Mr. Speaker, \$90 million has been given away in taxation to create jobs and there is less money today. There are less people working today than [interjection] Well, if you had created jobs you would have an argument. There are less people working today under your trickle-down theory than there were when you were elected in 1988—\$90 million more and less people working today than in 1988.

* (1500)

Mr. Speaker, I know there is a lot of edginess across the way to reduce taxation by \$90 million and to have less people, 3,000 less people working today. You cannot even say each job costs a million dollars. If there were 90 more people working today, you could say, well, it costs us \$1 million per job. We cannot even say that in the province of Manitoba, because there are less people working today than when these people were sworn in with such great self-serving promises from the government. Clearly its trickle-down theory of economics does not work.

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

I was actually very surprised when I saw the Liberals in their pre-election promises make the same promise as the Tories, making the same promise to give tax breaks to corporations, but I guess I should not be surprised, Madam Deputy Speaker, because UI has been cut by the federal Liberals, NAFTA has been proclaimed.

I do not know what your position is on final offer selection. I heard the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) taking a different position than the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards). The whole issue of the Liberal promises are exactly the same as the Conservatives—tax breaks for corporations, trickle-down theory—and it does not work because people do not work. I guess we should not

be surprised because we have seen NAFTA proclaimed, we have seen UI being cut, we have seen a whole issue of the cruise missile.

I remember I could not get near the banners to ban the cruise missile when I used to go around with Liberals. At least the Tories do not show up at the peace marches, but the Liberals show up and then they fly the missiles over Canada. You know you could not even get near the ban the cruise missiles, the banners, for Liberals. You could not even elbow your way; they were too close to the banner. But I just noticed a couple of weeks ago that cruise missiles were zipping across Canada, and I guess that was another promise that went down in flames, so to speak, from the Liberals, but I do support the—[interjection]

I have got to say to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux)—and I am glad we have a little break here in the action, so to speak. I cannot say anything else about this, but I am glad that I heard the member for Inkster supporting final offer selection with some of the workers in his own constituency a little while ago. Boy, did we have a tough time from the management lawyer when he was taking away workers' rights between '88 and 1990 in terms of the final offer selection.

I guess that was not a conflict of interest. Was it? I guess that was not a conflict of interest, but I support the member for Inkster's position on it, not the member for St. James's position on that issue, and I will say so when we have a little break in the action.

We are pleased that Lloyd Axworthy brought in final offer selection to end the dock strike at the West Coast. It was interesting they used a creative idea from the past. Maybe the Liberals should get into the future instead of always dealing in the past.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the whole issue of small business promises, again, another alternative, the NDP has proposed that we have change in an act of legislation from the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) on small business regulations. This government promised to change the small business regulation environment in this

province in 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993 and 1994, and what do they do? They created a committee a couple of weeks ago to deal with it, a committee chaired by the eminent Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), you know, never met an issue he could not deal with, just set up a committee and give us some rhetoric. Six years and seven speeches later this is what they do on small business regulation.

I mean, the work was done seven years ago by the former minister and the member for Flin Flon. We will do your work for you. We will bring in an act; we will bring in the alternatives; we will do the work. We will not wait for the drifting Tories across the way.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are some serious federal budget issues that we have to deal with. The federal government is dealing now with the so-called abolition of the GST. I do not think an abolition of the GST is to change the name of the GST or to widen the base of the GST to include food or to bury it. I would make a suggestion to the government. I heard the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), quoted at a Finance ministers' meeting on a radio show, saying that we are not interested on the revenue side of spending for the government; we are interested in the expenditure side. I think he should look, and I think we should always look at both sides of the equation.

Canada now has the second highest personal income tax rate of the G-7 countries. That is why we voted for parts of the 1989 budget. The whole issue of corporate tax fairness—now I know this gets people excited across the way, but Canada now has the lowest corporate tax rate, the most unfair corporate tax rate, again, of the G-7 countries. We would encourage the government because last year they said, we do not tax, but they increased property taxes, which is a real major issue for people in a very unfair way. We are not going to tax children's clothing, and we are not going to tax—what else?—books, but, of course, the provincial sales tax has been expanded.

The Premier's (Mr. Filmon) own briefing notes said that the tax increases last year were the equivalent of 5.7 percent of personal income tax

because he knows that the personal income tax rate in the province only produces \$17 million per percent. Because there are so many loopholes on page 1, by the time you get to page 2, there is no—and I would encourage the government. I know they are going to keep the rate at the same level. I agree with them; it should not be increased.

We should look at the whole issue of the Auditor General's report on fair taxation. We should not have to only look at one side of the equation. I think that Canadians want to see fair taxation. I think the Liberal federal government was, to some degree, elected on the promise of abolishing the GST, and abolishing the GST does not mean hiding it or burying it or broadening it. We believe that dealing with the GST is dealing with that tax unfairness. We would encourage all parties to look at that part of the equation because I do not believe we can get any relief on the one hand for people and get any fairness in spending until we deal with the fundamentals of our revenue side. Auditor General Kenneth Dye had a number of recommendations on how to make the tax system fair, and we would encourage the government to look at that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in terms of dealing with the federal government, we wish the government well in terms of federal-provincial relations. We truly believe that the federal government is important for Manitoba, and it is important to work with the federal government. We believe Manitobans want co-operation with the federal government. I want to say that Manitobans do not want any political party to do the hallelujah chorus if the federal Liberal government shafts the people of Manitoba.

* (1510)

I would join with the Conservatives in terms of the decision to announce the infrastructure program in Quebec, first with the convention centre, to have the NAFTA centre placed in Montreal without any consideration for Manitoba, Madam Deputy Speaker. We do not need people to do the hallelujah chorus every time something goes into the province of Quebec. We need fairness in our co-operation with the federal

government. We do not need one province getting preference.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we are with the government on the issue of tobacco taxation. To us it was wrong that the federal Liberal government acquiesced the smuggling and acquiesced to the situation in Quebec. We would call on the Premier to hold firm, and I know he will, on this issue at the border. I know it is causing problems—that is the amount of seats you won in the by-elections, I would say, zero. I would thank the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey). I was getting too nice in my comments. I was glad he reminded me of what the people said a few months ago. He is always good for a reminder here and there, a heartbeat away. What can I say?

Madam Deputy Speaker, we were absolutely opposed to the change in tobacco smoke policies. The U.S. Surgeon General has just produced an excellent report dealing with tobacco smoke. The U.S. Surgeon General has said that there is a price sensitivity for young people. There is a price sensitivity that allows young people to smoke if the price goes down.

If we care about young people, we will condemn the federal Liberal government move. We will call it for what it is, antihealth, anti-Canada. Let us get Chretien to rescind that change. Let us not acquiesce the smuggling. Let us stand up for good health care policies, and let us roll back that policy on tobacco smoke, which is absolutely unnecessary in terms of this province.

I want to also speak for a moment about the infrastructure program. For the last six years we have called on a national infrastructure program, particularly after 1990, when the private sector decreased its spending and the public sector was in a state of acute protracted restraint, particularly in Manitoba. The infrastructure program was a program, I believe, developed by the former mayor of Vancouver, one Mike Harcourt, now the Premier of British Columbia, and the former deputy mayor of the City of Winnipeg, now the Minister of Culture in Manitoba, one Mr. Ernst, or the member for Charleswood, rather. I think it was a good idea.

We tried to get de Cotret to agree to it in 1987 and '88. Their answer always was that they would prefer to have direct investments where they had, I would argue, more patronage control, but they would argue more control directly rather than having the tripartite system of municipalities, communities and provincial governments working together. I am glad this program has started, Madam Deputy Speaker, but I really want to emphasize that we must have fairness in the implementation of this program.

Already some people are saying to me that this is the Lindenwoods accord. You know, people going to Lindenwoods get the major investment of this program, and people up north are getting nothing. People in northern Manitoba have got very little investment in their infrastructure. If the federal government says that high unemployment across Canada will mean higher investment in certain provinces, why would it not follow then that higher unemployment in the North in an aboriginal community would result in higher investments, Madam Deputy Speaker, in those remote northern communities?

We think that aboriginal people have been really shortchanged on this program, \$2.5 million for aboriginal people in Manitoba. It will barely pay for one minor program in one of the 65 communities. The North has been shafted. [interjection] Well, the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) says, where is Elijah Harper? Madam Deputy Speaker, this is supposed to be a program not between patronage politicians but between municipalities, the provincial government and the federal government.

I do not think we should accuse any politician. [interjection] Yes, he did, Madam Deputy Speaker, to your Minister of Northern Affairs six weeks ago, and we got nothing from this minister. But now we see the transparent policies of the Conservative government: blame Elijah Harper, blame somebody else. The member for Tuxedo is the Premier for the whole province. Do not just put money into Tuxedo, stand up for the whole province.

People in rural Manitoba, Madam Deputy Speaker, are also concerned about the fairness of the program. They have already asked me why there is \$1 million for the Southport swimming pool and no money for other recreational programs across the province. Many communities have been told by the provincial government, there would not be any money for recreational programs. Now maybe I am wrong, but is a swimming pool in Southport for \$1 million, is that a recreational program? I know it is not an educational program. So here we have the spectacle of lifeguards being cut five years ago out of northern Manitoba and swimming pools being built in southern Manitoba, and other communities such as Dauphin and other northern communities being told that there is no such thing as community recreation facilities.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this is a government that is now promising a new Core Area agreement. We hope that takes place. I was responsible for negotiating the last Core Area Agreement and responsible for negotiating The Forks takeover and the public ownership of The Forks, which, I think, has been a public asset that all of us appreciate. We had a good board of directors in terms of planning that development which did not allow—we had good board of directors advisory groups on some of the entrepreneurial programs and social programs.

The member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) was on one of those committees, I recall, and briefing us on some of the stuff, the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen). Truly a nonpartisan government in those days—Del Crewson was on that body. It was a nonpartisan body when we were dealing with these challenges.

But I wish the government well on the Core Agreement, and, again, I hope it deals with the whole issue of a lack of an urban aboriginal strategy, an urban training strategy dealing with the tremendous challenges we have in urban Winnipeg for that Winnipeg development centre. I hope we do not see another Lindenwoods accord. I hope we see real investment in real people for real futures, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I wish the government well two years later in this proposal.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I could go on about the economy and the deficit. Suffice it to say that we were 40 percent off two years ago on our deficit the other way—some \$742 million real deficit according to the auditor—and we are going to be off again 20 to 25 percent this year. I find it rather curious that Saskatchewan that budgeted \$285 million in a deficit the '93-94 fiscal year, with the same equalization changes, could come in at 283 and this government that budgeted 360 is going to come in around 460, 470, 480.

I guess the one lesson is that when you listen to Grant Devine or you listen to the member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon) or when you listen to the former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, the one lesson you get is do not listen to them in terms of the deficit because what the auditor produces in terms of the deficit is a lot different from what the government produces in terms of the deficit.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the whole issue of welfare: \$200 million now. This comes to the second economic initiative of the government; \$200 million more being spent on social assistance than when they were first elected—per year. And this is the problem in your deficit. You have numbers of thousands of people that are now on social assistance not spending money, not purchasing goods, not moving forward—\$200 million. And you say to everybody, oh, we are not going to make work, and we are going to cut back the training, so you have to make welfare programs.

You would rather have people on welfare than work. For six years in a row this government has drifted and drifted and drifted on the social assistance area. Six years of absolute lack of performance, close to a billion dollars in extra spending on social assistance since you have been in office, and what do you have to show for it? Less people working today than when you came into office.

Your ideological stand on not getting people off of welfare onto work for six years, I think, has been a disaster. Your ideological position to cut back student social allowance. It makes more sense to get people trained and onto careers than it

does to cut people back. Your ideological stands on ACCESS and New Careers does not have any sense at all for those of us on this side.

Now we hear the government is going to do something about the whole issue of single mothers. The first thing you can do with single mothers, the most important program for single mothers is child care and daycare. This government has made it much more difficult for average and poor families to have access to daycare. I do not have any problems with people that are accessing daycare that have the means to pay more—that is the way the system was structured—but I have a great deal of difficulty with you, the Tories, making it much more difficult for average and poor families that cannot afford daycare, Madam Deputy Speaker. That is the most important social program to get single mothers working rather than having the situation where they stay on welfare.

* (1520)

Read the Chamber of Commerce report in 1986. You will see in that report, and I remember reading it, that they say that investment in daycare is not a cost, but it is actually a revenue generator, because you get greater personal income tax through more people working. More people working results in greater productivity, greater consumer confidence and greater confidence in proceeding.

I would make one suggestion to our Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson). The poor people of this province, people that are below the means and average people that are having trouble making ends meet—keep child care, particularly for single mothers, available and accessible. If higher income people have to pay more, fine, but do not have our universal child care system decimated by Tory cuts to the lowest and most vulnerable in terms of our society. Be fair on child care and you will be fair to single mothers and people that are struggling to make ends meet.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have to now look at the environmental proposal on the economy. I already agreed with the government in terms of the NAFTA centre. All we are asking for in terms of sustainable development—it is very, very common

sense—we want neighbours to be able to treat neighbours with dignity. We want one neighbour that is worried about a future job, and that is a legitimate concern, to be able to get that job, and we want the other neighbour to know that when that one individual gets a job, that the other individual's health will not be prejudiced by that decision.

All we are asking for in all these difficult decisions is, do not try to play jobs against health, jobs against sustainable development. We agree with the government's theory on sustainable development. All we are asking you to do in all these crucial decisions is balance the job that one neighbour wants to get and needs to get with the health of another neighbour. Make sure the assessment is independent, make sure it is thorough, and let us proceed with jobs and dignity in a healthy and strong environment. [interjection] Well, we are dealing with six years of government record, so it will take a little longer than past years.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have talked about the economy, less people working today than when the government came to office. Let us look at their whole record on health care. Now, this is really, really interesting. In 1988 the government said, we will freeze all hospital care bed cuts and all the changes to day surgery, out surgery; all the programs on home care, we will freeze those and we will not cut any beds. They drifted past the 1988 and 1989 year into a majority government situation in 1990 and, of course, they did not tell us at all what they were going to do in health care after that. As John Crosbie used to say, Lord, if they knew what we were going to do, they would never elect us. Well, I guess that is the same case in terms of the Conservative government on health care.

So then for two more years the government sat back and did nothing until they tabled a so-called health reform package in 1992. Now, this was called an action plan. Remember that. Yes, the action plan. No dates, no times, no places, no action, just absolute rhetoric in that document. Nobody can disagree with the theory of it, but there was no action plan in that document at all.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the government, through their Speeches from the Throne, would say, we are going to do this, we are going to do that. Oh, yes, in 1988, they were going to implement a smart card. Yes, in 1988, you were going to implement a smart card for prescription drugs.

An Honourable Member: I remember that.

Mr. Doer: Do you remember that? They promised it again in 1990, a smart card.

An Honourable Member: They promised it this year.

Mr. Doer: Is it in this year's Speech from the Throne again?

An Honourable Member: It is supposed to be an April 1 starting date.

Mr. Doer: April 1 starting date. Has that already passed? The Pharmacare card is already passed. Drift, drift, drift. I wonder what the Premier does all day. I mean, I do not know what he does in his office. He does nothing. He gets promises and promises and promises, and we get drift, drift, drift. We do not get any action on these things.

The government, after making all their flowery comments—1991, war on drugs, there it comes again: we are going to have another war on drugs. We are going to move towards more health care promotion, illness prevention, disability postponement, refocused health system, 1992. We are going to have more emphasis on community-based care, 1991. Manitobans will have an opportunity to choose lower cost but equally effective health care services in their communities where they live, where they work. That was 1991.

Madam Deputy Speaker, they are so desperate for an idea that in 1993 they had to hire Connie Curran to give them the plan that they never had in their so-called plan in 1992. Six years, you are behind every other province in terms of changes to our health care system. You are so far behind B.C. and Saskatchewan after they have been in office a year and a half or two years that you cannot even begin to count the ways in which you have not developed health care. [interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Doer: Madam Deputy Speaker, this government's only health care initiative was to hire Connie Curran and to change the Ministers of Health when the heat was on. In 1993, they hire Connie Curran. The Premier approves the hiring of a \$4-million U.S. consultant. The Premier approves that this consultant would not have to pay any Canadian or Manitoban taxes. The Premier will not even table the reports that this individual has written, and this has been the health legacy of the Filmon government after five years in office, and now the sixth year in office.

On Friday, the Premier could not even answer how many of the 1,500 are going to be laid off and, more importantly, what is the impact on patient care after all the other lay-offs.

The Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) said that we are exaggerating. It is his report. The former Minister of Health used to read the reports and deny what was in them. This Minister of Health does not even read the reports before he denies what is in them.

Look at what is going on. The rural facilities do not know what their funding is going to be. They have heard you are going to drift past the next election. Look at just one example in mental health, and this is one of the better programs the government has been dealing with. The government builds a \$45-million mental health facility at the Health Sciences Centre. Then they close half the beds at St. Boniface Hospital, and there is a real trauma going on with the community-based beds that are closing at St. Boniface, Victoria and Grace hospitals.

Last month the Bell-Wade Report came out. Apparently that is another report that the Minister of Health did not read. I guess he does not read a lot of things except his press clippings. But he did not read the report, he could not comment on the report, Madam Deputy Speaker, and what we find out is that after they closed the beds at St. Boniface Hospital they are now recommending that the beds be reopened at St. Boniface and the psychiatric beds be closed at a \$45-million Health Sciences Centre facility.

Now, does this Premier have any control of the health care system? He changed the health care program. We saw somebody go from a suit to a sweater in the by-elections. We saw somebody say, we are going to put a pause on all of these things, a pause on all the terrible cutbacks being made by the Filmon government under the former Minister of Health. Now under the Filmon government under this Minister of Health we are going to put a pause on everything. But we still do not know what is being paused, and we still do not know what is happening.

I would suggest that if the people of Manitoba vote Tory they are voting for the Americanization of their health care system, the Americanization of Connie Curran's health care system, and that is why we will take it to the doorstep at every way of the way.

* (1530)

When we go to drift, drift, drift, we have got to go to education. Madam Deputy Speaker, 1988, the new, blue Tory government: My government is committed to consultations with parents, teachers and school administration on the important issues of home schooling, parents' rights and curriculum review.

Now, what have we done over seven years now on this issue? We are going to have a parents' forum. They have not been able to sit down with parents for six years, and now they are going to have a parents' forum six years later. Drift, drift, drift. One Minister of Education to another Minister of Education to a third Minister of Education, and what do we get out of them? A parents' forum. Now, that is action, is it not? That is performance from the Filmon educational agenda.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we are going to get well-educated people. We will be introducing Workforce 2000. In 1991 we will provide equitable opportunities for all Manitobans to develop skills and knowledge. We will increase our efforts dealing with literacy. We will have major initiatives dealing with our community

colleges and school boundaries. We will promote distance education and distance technologies.

And again in 1991: We will release a five-year plan on all facets of the education system, and we will proceed with a review of the boundaries and universities. Of course, that was announced two years later, to have a review on the boundaries. It took them two years to appoint Bill Norrie to chair a Boundaries Review Commission.

Now, I like Bill Norrie; I have dealt with him as Minister of Urban Affairs. But I think with the sensitivity in rural Manitoba, it really does not make a lot of common sense to appoint a former mayor of the City of Winnipeg to be the chair of boundaries that have so much implications and so much importance, particularly for rural Manitoba in terms of their democracy, their say and their input into the education system. I would appoint Bill Norrie to a lot of things, and he is a fine person, but I would have thought, with the sensitivity in rural Manitoba, that this is one body that should have, among other bodies, a northerner or a rural person appointed to that body.

So here we are six years later. Last year, of course, we had—I want to read these things into the record. I know the government does not want to hear their words from the past: education is the key to unlock all our future opportunities. What have they done?

Our education program, who are the winners and who are the losers? If you are a bartender at a golf course going for training, you have a corporate tax break or a corporate training grant. If you are a New Careers student, if you are an ACCESS student, if you are a Winnipeg education student, if you are a student allowance recipient, if you are a person receiving in the public education system and a part of the public education system, you have not got a grant from this government. You have not got fair treatment.

The priority of this government has been to spend close to \$12 million on those who have, rather than giving support for those who do not have. Bartenders and bartender training programs get a higher priority than the public education

system, than the education program in the province of Manitoba.

I do not have any problems with bartenders. I like golf courses, even though I do not do very well at them. I suggest to you on the Conservative side that, with the priorities of cutting back New Careers to give money to corporate community grants, the priority of cutting community colleges, which totally belies the Roblin report, by over 10 percent, you do not know where you are going in education. You are cutting off the people who need the programs the most and giving to people like Bob Kozminski who need it the least.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this is a very unfair education policy, and the people know it. Yes, there are tough choices to be made, but you people have not made tough choices. You have made very unfair choices. You have hurt aboriginal people and the people who need the greatest support—drift, drift, drift.

You cut the Distance Education and Technology Branch back; you cut the Curriculum Services Branch. Any move to try to invest in our future has been cut back by this government.

When I meet with school boards and school officials—we were just in Stonewall last week meeting with school people, they tell us about the difficult choices being made. Their enrollment is going up; their funding is going down; and they cannot understand why private schools are being enhanced, private schools that are being supported by the Liberals and the Tories. [interjection]

Where are you on private schools now?

An Honourable Member: Oh, I am going to talk about it.

Mr. Doer: Oh, you are going to talk about private schools, because I know that, when the Tories promised to go to 50 percent for independent schools, the Liberals promised to go to 80 percent for independent schools, and so the Liberals outbid the Tories.

I always thought it was rather curious, but I heard that the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) again has flip-flopped on this issue on private schools. I guess they have changed their

position on funding to private schools. We have gone from the flip-flop Tories to the flip-flop Liberals.

An Honourable Member: It bothers you too, I will bet.

Mr. Doer: It does not bother me.

Madam Deputy Speaker, these are just some of the examples of the bread-and-butter issues. We are further behind today than we were when the government was elected.

We have proposed a number of alternatives throughout this address of mine. I think there are other major issues that are not just—[interjection] The member is not listening. Cancel the corporate training grants. Cancel the corporate training allowances. Put that money into community colleges. Put that money into ACCESS. Put that money into New Careers. Put that money into Student Social Allowances. Put that money back to people rather than your corporate friends over the way.

There are other broader policy issues that this government must deal with. The so-called information highway is another very major issue. I thought it was very unfortunate this government sold the Manitoba Data Services. [interjection] Well, the head office is now in Regina. The NDP thanks you for your job benevolence, Madam Deputy Speaker. We have got jobs here, there is no question about that. I will acknowledge that, but the head office is now in Regina, and the former Minister of Finance should acknowledge that.

An Honourable Member: What do you want, jobs or head office?

Mr. Doer: I want both, because that is what we had before, Madam Deputy Speaker. Branch-plant Donny, you know—we do not need branch-plant Donny over here. That is why we lost our jobs before.

We want the head office and the branch office here in Manitoba. That is why we are different than the Conservative Party. Look at this whole issue of the policy issue of the information highway. Now we had the privilege of announcing the information highway with the fibre optics in 1987.

God, it has been announced, reannounced and reannounced by every telephone official and every government minister that has come along, including me, Madam Deputy Speaker, but this government—[interjection]

While the Liberals are in favour of the deregulation of telephones, I will read Sheila Finestone's position on this. It is different than your position. I am not sure what your new position is, but if the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) wants to heckle, he better tell us what his position is on the telephone deregulation. Because, is it the federal position now in Ottawa or is it the provincial position that he alleges is here in Manitoba; or is it Reg Alcock's position, which was to privatize the Manitoba Data Services? Three different positions. It is the Xerox party of Manitoba, the Liberal Party. Xerox Sterling Lyon's promise on sales tax. Xerox the NDP promise on the minimum wage. Xerox something else from somewhere else. The Xerox party of Manitoba is the Liberal Party. Every time we want to change our position, just Xerox another position and table it before the people of Manitoba. The only thing they need is a Xerox machine, Madam Deputy Speaker, and a red ribbon to change their position. That is what we need here from the Liberal Party.

Madam Deputy Speaker, let me deal with this information highway in terms of alternatives. We believe that with the merger of voice data and video, and you can see that with the two major companies in the United States, the ITT and AT&T—the At&T now has 20 percent of ownership in a phone company now competing in Manitoba—that we should look at the public policy debates of the electronic highway. The Distance Education report from the provincial government says that the Manitoba Telephone System should take a major leadership role in the whole provision of the information highway. I can understand that, because an educator told me today the Premier is going around making a number of promises on the information highway, but the head, a very major head, of an education facility told me that the information highway and the electronic highway

in Manitoba is equivalent to a goat path because the Tories have no vision and no idea of what they want to do with the telephone system and the educational programs.

* (1540)

So our vision is quite different than the Conservative vision. We agree with Harry Enns when he formerly said, the member for Lakeside, that the highway should be a public highway like the highway system. We should have the electronic highway system owned by the public, Madam Deputy Speaker. Yes, there can be consumer decisions at the local level, at the individual level, like we have with cellular telephones, but we see an electronic highway that allows us to take the revenues from consumer purchases and allows us to take the investments in cablevision and the electronics in video and data and move those revenues on and reinvest in our education system. That is the alternative we see rather than the continued privatization and decimation of some of the tools of our economic development.

We see the data services, the telephone system, cablevision, working in concert with the whole issue of public education. We see a co-ordinated strategy. We do not see the decimation of the Distance Education branch. We do not see the decimation of the Curriculum Branch. We want to invest in our future here in Manitoba with Manitoba instruments. We do not want to sell them to companies that are located in New Jersey or companies that are located outside the borders of this province. We want to have our own vision, our own future and our own investment that we can reinvest in our own young people. That is the difference between the NDP and the goat trail of the Conservative Party across the way.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker, we believe in a co-ordinated approach to home care with partnership. We believe in an enhanced role as an alternative with nurses, not just a preferential role with doctors. We see a change in the drug patent law that the Liberal Opposition promised under C-91 in the last federal

election. We see fair funding for our education system. We see tax fairness being the key to the federal review of the GST and a comprehensive and fair review. We see public business being co-ordinated, with the Auditor's report being amended. We see deals like the Jets deal and the Arcor deal being made public rather than being withheld from the public in terms of our investments.

Mr. Speaker, we see a vision of this province that has common sense, which has fairness, and which has an energy to get things moving again. We see a vision that creates jobs and gets more jobs and more people working. We see a vision that says, the people in education should get a fair choice. If it is a choice between bartenders at a golf course and student social allowance or New Careers, you go with the student social allowance. You have no choice.

The Premier cannot just get high accolades from his buddies and cut back the people that need a bridge. The Tories have cut back every bridge to opportunity, whether community colleges, whether it is student social allowance, ACCESS programs, every bridge to opportunity. They have bombed those bridges, and a New Democratic vision is to rebuild those bridges to give people a hand up rather than a corporate handout as we see from the Conservatives.

Mr. Speaker, we see a health care system that goes from chaos to predictability, that we have change, and we see more than the Tory vision of gambling and welfare increases. We see a province that is much fairer and better to deal with.

We see money from welfare being moved into work and small business. We see job corps, job strategy, money from Workforce 2000 to community colleges, a patient bill of right, a northern patient transport fee elimination, a renewal of our Home Care Program. We see fair funding for our public schools. We would restore the New Careers Program. We would have stricter gun controls. We would have a comprehensive antipoverty approach. We would improve benefits for our part-time people, and as we promised before, we would improve the minimum wage. We

would restore the designated funding for Handi Transit, as was in existence in 1989. We would work in true partnership with our northern and aboriginal people.

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

THAT the motion be amended by adding to it after the word "session" the following words:

But this House regrets:

1. that there are fewer people working today than in March of 1988;

2. that with the massive increases in the welfare rolls in Manitoba and the highest child poverty rate in the country, since 1988 welfare expenditures have increased by \$200 million;

3 that by cutting training and education opportunities and failing to offer a jobs strategy for Manitoba youth this government has failed to offer hope to young Manitobans;

4. that this government has hired U.S. health consultant Connie Curran whose proposals would further reduce the level of patient care across Manitoba;

5. that this government has failed to challenge the federal government's refusal to offer specific training, education and adjustment programs to help Manitoba workers who will be displaced as a result of the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement; and

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

Motion presented.

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

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): It is a privilege to again address some comments with respect to the Speech from the Throne that we heard last Thursday. I open by offering you, Mr. Speaker, my congratulations for once again assuming the onerous custodial responsibilities of this Chamber, and past transgressions being bygones, I offer you my most loyal service and will attempt to be your most obedient servant.

I welcome into the Chamber those new members that have joined us in this session and wish them every success as they embark on this career. I say this to them, Mr. Speaker, with all sincerity, that despite our ranking from time to time in popularity polls, I for one hold to the view that this is indeed a noble calling, and this is a most important vocation that we lend ourselves to on behalf of the residents and citizens of Manitoba, so I enjoin them to experience that with the other members of this Chamber as we try to do our best for the people of Manitoba. I want to also thank the First Minister and my Premier for allowing me, after some notable pause, to address this Chamber for the first time in a long time as your Minister of Agriculture. I appreciate that.

* (1550)

As is all too usual, my style and speaking candidly about all matters, I must acknowledge to this Chamber as well that last September 10, some of you, particularly my critic from Swan River, will know was not really the best of times in terms of harvest in the province of Manitoba. The thought did occur to me, Mr. Premier, that I was relatively at peace with the world in looking after the ducks and the geese and the black bear and the odd elk that would knock over a beehive or invade a farmer's alfalfa field, and if all of that got too much, Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Natural Resources, I could always retire to some rest and recreation in any one of our beautiful provincial parks that was also part of the responsibility of the job.

So I had some misgivings at that particular time, but nonetheless, I say again, with all the conviction I can muster, in my judgment, and it serves us well to remind us of that in our evergrowing urban society, that agriculture is still far the most important activity that we engage in as a civilized society.

While agriculture has been there in some form since the dawn of man, there is something more important. It is the ability to produce surplus agricultural production that is the basis for all civilizations. Back in the days of antiquity, whether it was the Grecians or the Romans or the

Babylonians, it was when societies and their farmers got together in an organized way and provided surplus food production that allowed artisans to flourish, that allowed senators to debate the evolution of parliaments in Greece, that allowed all these things to happen.

Mr. Speaker, it is not at all out of place to remind us that we would not be arguing in this House about our Departments of Health or Family Services or Justice or anything else if all of us had to engage all our time in the pursuit of food. You know, there are still, regrettably, some countries, and we see them flashed on our television occasionally, where that still is the case, where simply the requirements for families to go out and gather food for their immediate needs is still very much the daily task. In those countries they do not argue about the things that we argue about here because that is so fundamental.

So, Mr. Speaker, I take it as an extreme privilege to be the Minister of Agriculture for the Province of Manitoba, and I am looking forward to ensuring that in the province of Manitoba we maximize our opportunities in agriculture because there are opportunities there that can be and ought to be seized. I want to also indicate that I suspect that we will be hearing more of it from time to time. The First Minister responded to a question just earlier today in Question Period. But it is my view that historians 50 years hence, 100 years hence, will come to regard those significant international trade obligations that this country has entered into in the last four or five years beginning with the U.S.-Canada agreement, we refer to it as CUSTA, the NAFTA agreement and the now very soon to be concluded, I believe in the next few days, the final signatures on the GATT agreement. Those three international trade agreements are of extreme importance to the well-being of this province and of this country.

Mr. Speaker, it is with regret that the New Democrats continue to hold on to that Neanderthal position of blind opposition. Our Liberal friends are a little different. Our Liberal friends, being the opportunists that they are, they were going to wrestle NAFTA to the ground up until they got to

be in power, and then with amazing, amazing, swiftness they embraced the NAFTA because our Liberal friends understand. Certainly, the present Minister of Finance understands it. The present Minister of Trade and Commerce, Mr. MacLaren, understands it. The present Minister of Agriculture understands it. So all the Liberal friends were doing, they stuck that finger up in the air and they sensed that Maude Barlow and the New Democrats and a few others who were holding on to yesteryear—

Mr. Speaker, one should not be too harsh on the New Democrats or on those who hold that view, because with these obligations comes change, and change brings anxiety, and that is understandable that all too often the citizen on the street worries about these changes. The farmer worries about these changes. But for those of us who have had the access and the privilege to read the information, to understand the arguments, there is no justification, no justification to blindly hold that position. It is seldom that within the space of such a short period of time that these obligations were entered into that they bear such significant fruit. In agriculture, and I am more versed in agriculture, our agricultural trade has increased since CUSTA by 58 percent. What is the argument about that big trading giant going on right now? It is because of our agricultural goods flowing into that American market.

Mr. Speaker, it is in these agreements that a great deal of our future and opportunity lies in agriculture. It will be my responsibility to have Manitoba farmers participate to the fullest in what these opportunities provide. It is by coincidence, I suppose, although that perhaps is not quite accurate, but at the same time another very major fundamental change is in the process of taking place and likely will be concluded relatively shortly, and I refer to a long-held traditional agriculture support program, the Western Grain Transportation policy program, which we are more familiar with as the Crow benefit. That benefit is not going to be around much longer. It has been nibbled at in pretty substantial chunks by the

previous administration, and Mr. Paul Martin took another \$36 million out of it in the last budget.

What does that mean for particularly Manitoba producers? The honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) knows what it means. It means that the Manitoba barley producer, the Manitoba feed grain producer is going to be saddled with substantially higher costs to move that grain into export markets. So, Mr. Speaker, what do you do? As the NDP do, they continue to rail against the inevitable. What we should be doing is looking at what the alternatives are. Why should we be exporting a product for which we get three and a half cents a pound or four cents a pound when we can export a product for which we get \$1.50 or \$2.00 a pound and create jobs for Manitobans while we are doing it? That is what we should be doing. That is what we are going to be doing.

Mr. Speaker, without getting into too much detail, this is an opportunity in these debates, the few debates that we have in the Legislature, the throne speech, the budget, to really delve on the principles that count with respect to these issues. Let me, for the edification of all our members opposite, though, indicate just these two salient facts. Under the NAFTA agreement, and it is not only the NAFTA agreement, it is very much also the GATT agreement that has opened up markets in all the signatory countries that have signed, but notably for us the East, the Far East, the Japanese, the Koreans, the other countries that are beginning to want our processed foods in greater and greater numbers.

For all too many years, those markets, particularly in beef and in pork, have been closed to us. Under GATT they have been substantially increased. Under NAFTA it is predicted, Mr. Speaker, not by this little Minister of Agriculture, not by the Manitoba Department of Agriculture, but by the very powerful and strong United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary Esty, that Mexico alone will require, when the beef imports drop completely on January 1, 1995, the equivalent

of one million animals, beef animals, annually to come into that market.

It is a tremendous expansion in the red-meat industry. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am well aware that the bulk or the majority of that will be American beef, there will be some Australian beef, there will be some Argentinian beef maybe, but when that kind of meat moves into a market that hitherto has not been serviced it provides great opportunities for Canadian and, more specifically, for Manitoba cattle producers.

* (1600)

The question of pork is even more dramatic. I found these figures, quite frankly, to be surprising. We hear a lot about the big United States hog and pork industry. They exported, for instance, in the last year for which stats are available in '92, some 153,000 tons of processed pork to 62 nations of the world. Again with a 25 percent tariff barrier being removed from Mexico in five equal stages and will be reduced to zero by the year 2000, it is estimated, again by American agricultural officials, that the Mexican market alone in pork will require 400,000 tons of pork.

Mr. Speaker, it is for that reason that my department, my government encourages and sees, particularly in the production of pork but in all livestock production, tremendous opportunities for our well-being in the province of Manitoba. This expansion does not come without its problems. This expansion has to be addressed in terms of how we at the same time regard the natural environment in which all of us, including the hog producers, the cattle producers and all of the rest of the citizens of our fine province, wish and hope to raise our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, have we been sitting idly by and simply blindly pushing expansion without due regard for that? No, we have not. My colleague, the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), will within days promulgate into law fixed and firm livestock regulations with respect to how they are to be handled, how they are to be looked after, how the environment is to be looked after, and

under what circumstances they can be proceeded with.

In addition to that, this Legislature a year ago, under the leadership of my predecessor, the honourable member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay), passed a farm practices act, legislation that was proclaimed on February 1 of this year. A board has been established which will be to a large extent the board that will receive legitimate complaints and address them.

On the other hand, they will also be the board that vexatious and frivolous complaints can be dealt with, because I have no intention of standing by and allowing my primary producers to be needlessly harassed by what otherwise may be well-intentioned citizens, but who have no understanding of the needs of agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, those specific actions by this government are in place, but I look to honourable members opposite for some understanding of the importance of these matters. We believe with a great deal of confidence that we can in fact double the pork production in the province of Manitoba.

What does that mean? That means the equivalent of 10,000 jobs—3,000 on the farm, 7,000 in the processing industry, which would more likely be located in our urban areas. Do you realize what that is, Mr. Speaker? That is the equivalent of several Incos, any number of major industries. At the same time, what it does is that it addresses the looming problem of what our grain farmers do with the grain that they no longer can as readily export because of the disappearance of the Crow benefit.

It is, from that point of view, a stroke of luck, if you like, or a great convenience that these two measures are coming together at the same time, that markets for livestock expansion are broadening for us and at the same time we are coming under pressure because of the changes to the Crow benefit as to how our cereal producers, our feed grain producers, will move their grain.

Mr. Speaker, I would need to get some special permission from the House, and certainly some accommodation from honourable members

opposite, and I have not really flown this past my First Minister yet, but what is becoming important right now, as I speak, is that we stand up to our American friends. They are our friends, but they like to play hard ball from time to time. They invent the fine print in some of the contracts. It is important for the departments of Agriculture, it is important for Agriculture Canada to put our very best minds in defence of accessing that tremendous market that is there. I can do more for Manitoba farmers in ensuring that we have the full access to the American market and other markets so that we can find the stability in the expanded production whereof I speak.

Mr. Speaker, I am disturbed. I am disturbed by some of the attitude that members opposite are taking to this issue. It should be noted that we do not live in a vacuum. If we have a problem facing us, our neighbouring provinces are well aware of it, Saskatchewan particularly. Saskatchewan is doing all they can to do much the same as what I am suggesting, of what I am speaking here.

I am disturbed at the difference in attitude, and I speak to the members of the media now as much as anybody else, but they are fed all too often by what goes on in the House and by the mindless opposition that is sometimes being voiced in this Chamber and elsewhere to some of these planned expansions.

Let us talk about the pork industry, for instance. In Saskatchewan, who are attempting to do their best to increase pork production because they are very much aware of the job opportunities it creates, the farm diversification that it does, when they talk about a large pork farm opening, they talk about the fact that it will employ a hundred people on staff, it will create 600 jobs off the farm, and it goes on and on. It will consume 600,000, 700,000 tonnes of barley and grain. That is what they talk about.

In our paper, unfortunately, our story reads differently. When a \$3-million investment in pork production regrettably goes up in flames through an unfortunate accident, our paper reports it this way: the \$3-million venture expected to produce 45.3 cubic metres of manure—as though anybody

in their right mind would invest \$3 million to produce 45 cubic metres of manure. I mean, what utter nonsense.

Unless we change that attitude, unless we understand, and we have to understand that, urbanites have to understand that, we are talking about our health system, we are talking about our education system, we are talking about our family services system. Unless we dedicate a bit more time increasing wealth in this province, the other arguments are academic. I—[interjection] Mr. Speaker, from across the way, what do we hear from them with respect to the wealth-producing opportunities in Swan River, Louisiana Pacific? What do we hear from them? Kill it. What do we hear about the wealth-producing plans that the workers of Abitibi Price are taking? Any time a development is taking place, members opposite are among the first to object.

Regrettably, with increasing consistency, the objection is made prior to any perusal of the plan, prior to any looking at whether or not the project is a worthy one, whether it is doable, whether it can meet environmental standards. It is object, object, object, and that is not going to wash with the people of Manitoba. I can see that we will have an opportunity in Manitoba to turn these challenges into job-creation opportunities, both on the farm and in our cities, and we will find the fullness of these agreements working to our benefit.

Mr. Speaker, on the more direct and immediate situation with respect to the Department of Agriculture, I look forward to engaging in debate with honourable members opposite when the department's Estimates come before the department. I would ask honourable members' support and indulgence for the Department of Agriculture. I appreciate that on the daily kind of hit list of things to knock a government over the head with, agriculture does not figure that strong, and I do not really object to that, you know, if you choose to spend your time in opposition at that time. But I am satisfied that travelling throughout the width and breadth of this province, Manitoba farmers will understand the message this government is bringing them, and I intend to bring

it as forcefully as I can to all parts of the province. We will undertake some very serious negotiations, reorganizations of some of the support programs that are in place.

* (1610)

I can report to the House that some of the past support programs no longer are required and are being asked to be withdrawn. When do you hear that happening? Like the cattlemen, for instance, voluntarily asking to withdraw from a tripartite cattle support program. The pork industry is much in the same situation. They will be likely terminating their program, which is a multi-million-dollar support program on or about June 30. Now, I should also acknowledge that they are asking for some monies or similar monies to be set aside for different programs, and they will receive our full and due attention. Certainly, the opportunities are there for us to maximize these opportunities that we have in these new trade agreements, and I for one find this an extremely exciting time to be part of agriculture and look forward to serving to the best of my ability. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I rise with a great deal of pleasure after eight months of silence from the government benches, and the opportunity for us now to debate the issues of importance to the people of Manitoba, particularly following the not surprising discussion the Premier and I had just previous of the not surprising results in the recent by-elections, where the people of Manitoba voted very clearly against the government's initiatives, particularly in the health care field.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the occasion since that period of time to continue my door knocking and my contact with people in the community of Kildonan, and clearly on the doorstep, there are several clear issues that have come to the fore. Firstly, there is a great deal of distrust by the electorate of the government's health care policies. There is no doubt in my mind that that is pre-eminent. That became clear in the by-elections, and it is evident today, as recently as last Friday when I was on the doorstep.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, there is concern about the taxation situation in this province and the effect that the government's policies have had on the average person, particularly the tax increases contained in last year's budget and, corresponding to that, on the unfortunate cutbacks that have resulted in—and those are the items that are not measured in terms of taxes that have amounted to really direct taxes on many individuals in the community.

Thirdly, there is a concern about personal security and the like, Mr. Speaker. I have mentioned this previously, and I find it sad and in fact tragic that there are many members of my community, particularly the elderly, who in fact are fearful about going out at night, are fearful about walking down the streets in Winnipeg. I think that is extremely unfortunate in our society. It is a condition that has grown up over the last several years, and I sincerely hope that we in this Chamber and in other chambers, and anything that we in the political process can do, I sincerely hope there is something that we can do to try to improve the situation.

My personal attempt at that is I have assisted members of the community in organizing neighbourhood watches. We are endeavouring now, with the assistance of the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), we are both attempting to work in our community to set up a drop-in centre for the youths, to give them a place to go and activities to go to as well as to provide some reassurance to the community. We are working in our community to do that, this and other measures [interjection]

The members for Arthur (Mr. Downey) and Pembina (Mr. Orchard) are both making comments, and I hope they have the fortitude to maintain their silence during the balance of my speech.

The other matters that clearly come to the fore, Mr. Speaker, as I canvassed the community is the whole question of the quality of our education system and the quality of our health care system. It seems to me that there are two very significant activities that the population wishes their

government to be involved in. These are the health care system and the education system and there is clearly a feeling in the community that both of these responsibilities of the government are not succeeding.

How do I say this without being overtly partisan? The fact is that the trust in the health care system is at an all-time low and trust in the education system is at an all-time low. Part of that is members opposite activities and part of it, I think, is a general trend that is reflected throughout society as a whole. It is something that we all must deal with on all sides of the House in a nonpartisan sense, Mr. Speaker, if in fact we can.

However, there are things that we can do in the political process that I think the government should undertake to try to improve the situations in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to next deal with some of the areas of the health care field that we have not had an opportunity to deal with in this Chamber for eight long months, eight long months while members opposite scrambled about and tried to figure out how they were going to deal with the health care system. I want to deal with some of these issues today in the opportunity and the time afforded to me in order to put on the record some of our ideas and some of our criticisms of the government with respect to its handling of the health care system.

Mr. Speaker, as was mentioned by our Leader, the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), the government's blueprint was put out in 1992 with much fanfare. In fact, I recall the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) indicating that it was in fact the finest program in North America. I believe he used that on several occasions. What has happened to this program is that it is in tatters. It is in tatters; it is in shambles. The entire health care program of the government is basically in full retreat.

The reason is obvious. The government's health care plan was launched with a fair bit of credibility. The plan had credibility generally in the public for the general goals. That is right. There

were various members of this House lauding this plan and it was hard to be critical of the general overall statements. In fact, there is no question that many of the overall goals are adhered to by all political parties and by all provinces, Mr. Speaker, that is, a move towards more community-based services, a move to maintain people in their own home, a move to reduce the costs to the system, an avoidance of user fees, a utilization of various services if possible without utilizing the higher-priced acute care beds.

* (1620)

The problem is that the government's actions did not match the plan and the public quickly saw through this. When the public saw through it and the government started encountering opposition the entire matter collapsed and became a political mess for members opposite and now we are faced in a situation where we hear lots of talk. We hear talk of a pause but the government's plan really has not changed one iota. The plan has not changed. What has been put on pause? Members opposite talk about the pause. What has been put on pause? Connie Curran still got her \$4 million plus \$800,000 in expenses tax free. That was not put on pause. The home care cuts continue. That was not put on pause. Oh yes, the minister said, okay, we are going to have face-to-face interviews with the people that are being cut off before we cut them off. But they are still being cut off.

Mr. Speaker, people who require ostomy supplies are still paying a user fee. People who require home care equipment are still paying a user fee. People are still waiting in the hallways of hospitals to get in. People are still waiting in long lines to receive health care services. Where is the pause?

Now, there is a pause in rural Manitoba, and let me talk about rural health care reform, which is two years behind the government's own schedule, as indicated in its blue book, Mr. Speaker. Rural health care reform was supposed to follow urban health care reform. Thank heavens that it is not. Thank heavens they do not have to in rural Manitoba go through what has happened in urban Manitoba.

Now, the government, 18 months ago, sent out notices to all the health care regions saying, yes, we are dividing Manitoba up into regions. Please put in proposals dealing with regions that consist of populations of 12,000 to 15,000. Please put those in and we will get back to you. So all of the people in rural Manitoba, all of the institutions and all the facilities and all the people providing care provided those recommendations.

What happened? What happened is the government said, whoops, we are changing our mind. We are not going with that anymore. Now we are going with larger regions, and you know what, Mr. Speaker, that is on hold as are most of the other negative aspects of health care reform because we know that the message is out. Do not continue with the negative aspect of health care reform for 18 months. That dictum went out about the end of last year, early new year, it is a political directive that went out. No negative stuff in health until after the next election. Then after the next election, if the members opposite are re-elected, it is full steam ahead on their so-called health reform, which really amounts to nothing more than cost cutting.

I said earlier that there was a certain amount of credibility and the public was willing to give the government the benefit of the doubt with health care reform, but the problem was when the public saw what the government was doing, when they saw the reality, they rebelled.

Of what am I speaking? I am speaking about a government that says we want to take care from high-priced facilities and move it to lower-priced facilities. So what does it do? It takes children's surgery from Victoria Hospital, which in the government's own program costs \$400 a day, and moves it to the Health Sciences Centre where it costs \$700 a day. That is cost saving according to this government. They take home care services, which by everyone's account is a far better way of providing service to people, and they cut back home care services. They cut back thousands of people from home care. They attempt to lay off thousands of home care workers on a service that, according to someone like Evelyn Shapiro of their

own policy of health and evaluation, is only 10 percent of the cost of a personal care home, and they cut that back.

At the same time, of course, I may have mentioned it once or twice, they hired an American consultant by the name of, I believe it is, Connie Curran, APM Consulting, American Practices Management. Connie Curran, for the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), he may have not heard me mention that name in this House, and \$4 million plus \$800,000 in expenses, tax free, to try to get the government out of the mess that they are in.

Personal care homes in this province are suffering. People in the homes are suffering. We saw a documentary on CBC, the chronicle sum of those concerns, and what action has this government done? Do you know what, Mr. Speaker, that is where the pause is. They are pausing on any action to improve any situation out there. Personal care homes are in a crisis. We called for, immediately, a nonpartisan committee to make recommendations in 60 days to come back to this Chamber to try to improve the situation. We heard not a word from members opposite after they have increased the fees in some of those personal care homes by 74 percent.

We recently heard CJOB did a documentary, I thought a very evenhanded one, Mr. Speaker, on health care, where they identified many of the problems occurring in our health care system. Now members opposite like to say that we in the opposition are fearmongering, that all of these concerns raised are examples of our fearmongering. The objective radio report found that there is a crisis occurring in our health care system, particularly in the emergency rooms, something that we have said for some time. Part of it is as a result of the government's mental health reform, and we have given full marks to the government for their mental health reform. We have said, of all the government initiatives in health, in fact, this is the best, and despite that, it was identified clearly in this documentary that mental health reform is in great difficulty. It is clogging up the emergency rooms and no action from members opposite.

Now I am sure members opposite will refer to the fact that on A4 Health Sciences Centre, a ward that has been reformed by Connie Curran, several nurses there say that things are working fine. That is terrific. The only problem is, the other 68 people who were interviewed in the documentary did not say the same thing and were highly critical of what had happened in terms of the hospital and the health care system.

Mr. Speaker, there is a good deal of difficulty in the health care system. The government says they are on pause, but they are still proceeding with most of the initiatives that were undertaken by the former Minister of Health, now the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Orchard), and it is proceeding on that basis.

We referred to a document in this Chamber on Friday. We brought it to the attention of the minister. Why we had to bring it to the attention of the minister I do not know, since it is the minister's own document. Nonetheless, we brought to his attention the fact that their own labour adjustment committee, the committee that was set up by this government, sort of a jewel in the crown because I know they have been waiting to make big announcements on this, had some difficulty. Now this labour adjustment committee is comprised of labour, management and representatives of the Department of Health.

I remember debating it in Estimates with the late, lamented Minister of Health who was quite pleased with its work, and I think they have done good work, Mr. Speaker, but their own committee was working on an assumption of 1,500 more cuts in the health care system over the next several years, 1,500 in a system that was already hard hit by wholesale holus-bolus slashing and cutting. Their own committee was working under that assumption, and the Minister of Health somehow stood up and said, well, I will not agree with 1,500 cuts. I am glad, and in fact I know the government is not going to do that because they are now in election readiness. All of those cuts are on hold until after the next election. We know that.

Mr. Speaker, this committee did some very significant work. They met with the Minister of

Health (Mr. McCrae) and the deputy minister on December 22 of last year, and they put together in early January a plan for the government to deal with cuts in a humane way. Humane, that is the name of the document, and I quote, in a humane way they are going to deal with the government cuts.

They made recommendations to the government, Mr. Speaker, some of them very significant. They made recommendations for the government. They made recommendations to set up a volunteer incentive program, an early incentive program, involuntary separation severance program, human resource study, education retraining programs, an employee assistance program.

They made basically six recommendations to the government. They made those in early January anticipating additional cuts to the system. No word for two months. No response. The government was on pause on this one. No response. Finally, they got a response back from the deputy minister saying, thank you, we are not going to take your recommendations. We are going to only take one, and in that one we are going to modify it. Thank you, you have done pretty good work, sort of keep on going.

* (1630)

Mr. Speaker, the government set up a committee of representatives, which reported to two ministers, from labour, management and health, asked them to do work, and totally rejected recommendations. Then the minister stands up in the House and says, well, I am not going to do 1,500 cuts. I find it deplorable that the government would put together a committee that would work so hard to make recommendations and then so out of hand completely dismiss them. This was supposed to be attempt to "humanize" health care reform.

Mr. Speaker, it is another example of the government's real agenda, the government's hidden agenda, which is to pare down the health care system as much as they can, to let all of the private enterprise back in, as they have done in home care equipment. The home care equipment

companies are doing terrific. Their profits are way up. All of the private companies are doing very, very well. Why not?

These people have no choice but to get those equipment supplies from these private companies, the private companies that operate the nursing homes that are jumping in now. I suspect they are doing very well. [interjection] The member for Portage (Mr. Pallister) says, set up another Crown corp. I would rather have a public agency looking after the welfare of the citizens of Manitoba than some of those people in the private industry that they have there because they will give you good care, admittedly, long as you can pay. If you cannot pay, the member for Portage agrees, if you cannot pay, then you are out in the street, and we are back to the kind of system that the members fundamentally opposite believe in.

The members fundamentally opposite do not care for or believe in the medicare system we have. It is clear from their actions. When you put user fees on ostomy supplies, when you put user fees on home care equipment, when you put user fees on the system, when you deter people from utilizing the system, when you cut people off home care, when you increase Pharmacare and prevent people from getting proper—do the members opposite not realize that Pharmacare is a preventative measure, that drug treatment in many cases can keep people out of hospitals? Another example, Mr. Speaker, by forcing people not to be able to take drugs, not to have drug therapy, they force them perhaps into more expensive institutions, which is totally contrary to what they plan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this morning we had a perfect contrast and an illustration of the way this government functions in terms of health care. The home care coalition put together a 60-page document that outlined recommendations and comments from a series of hearings that were held last year with respect to home care. Now, I read the document, and I thought it was an excellent document. There are some excellent recommendations made in this study, some excellent recommendations made for improving the home

care system and for improving the situation for those receiving home care.

Do you know what? I look back and I look at what was the government's response to the home care difficulty. The government's response was to have a consultant review home care. Who is that consultant that reviewed home care, Mr. Speaker, and I see right through you. That consultant, and I know you are all eyes, was none other than—have I mentioned the name before?—Connie Curran. Connie Curran looked at home care for this government.

While the home care coalition conducted hearings and talked to the public and talked to people that were affected, Connie Curran was going up and down those streets with her cash register, taking in the money, reviewing home care for this government. There is a perfect illustration of how this government deals with the situation. On the one hand, the public have some hearings to make recommendations; on the other hand, Connie Curran.

Now the minister today kept talking—I know the latest line coming out of the Barb Biggar factory now these days is we are going to talk about self-managed care because the government has had a report from Coopers and Lybrand on self-managed care, and it has worked very well. Now the basic line is we are going to talk about self-managed care, and that is how we are going to defuse this issue of home care with respect to the disabled. Well, they have had the report on Coopers and Lybrand for self-managed care for some time, Mr. Speaker, but they are just keeping it on hold to wait for a good-day news announcement. They are not dealing with the issue; they are dealing with announcements. They are dealing with political hits that they can get off because they are in so much trouble.

If the government was truly open, they would have released all of the reports that they have, but those reports have to be leaked and pulled out. Bell-Wade is an example, have to be leaked in order to get—a report we paid how many hundreds of thousands of dollars, but the minister still pretends it does not exist. It has been on his desk

since December. It has already been on the front page of the Free Press. Frank Manning's Report is another example. The midwifery report is another example. Moe Lerner is another example. There are dozens of reports sitting on the minister's desk. They are all on pause. That kind of stuff is on pause because anything that is potentially negative, Mr. Speaker, is on pause until after the next election when the agenda just rolls right along and when the government trucks right along continuing its cuts and continuing its destruction of the health care system as we know it.

Mr. Speaker, there is one other disquieting point that I wish to reference in terms of this particular issue, and that is another one of the latest lines of the government. The Premier indicated it in his year-end review. The minister indicated all today in his scrums, and that is, blame the bureaucrats. The problem with home care is blame the civil servants. The Premier said in his year-end scrum on CBC that they were given wrong information from the bureaucrats.

We gave the minister the information in the House. He did not believe us. He blamed us for fearmongering. Then when they went out and they lost five by-elections, it was the bureaucrats that had not given them the information. Today, on home care, the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) had the audacity to say, Mr. Speaker, that he did not know about these things because the bureaucrats and the civil servants were not telling him. That is shameful.

If the minister would have attended, or if any members opposite would have attended, the hearings that were attended by both our Leader (Mr. Doer) and the Leader for the Liberal Party (Mr. Edwards) in the summertime, if he would have attended those hearings and talked to the people, they would have known about people being cut off home care, but, no, they did not, and now they are blaming the bureaucrats. Somehow the whole system is screwed up because of the civil servants, not because of the government's cut of the cleaning and laundry service in last year's budget, not because of the cut of the government's ostomy supply so that people have to pay, not

because of the cuts to the home care equipment supply forcing people to pay. No, the problem is because of the bureaucrats.

The problem is members opposite. Not only did members opposite not get it last year, not only did members opposite not get it in the five by-elections, they are still not getting the message. So on Friday, when we bring to their attention a document that illustrates they are still proceeding, albeit secretly, on a path of 1,500 more cuts in the next several years, they blame the bureaucrats or they blame us.

It is pretty clear that most of what we are seeing now in health care is a PR activity, an attempt on the part of the government to get away from the damage that was done in the health care system by their policies, and I suspect that it will not work. They will get their PR announcements. They will go out and try to cover up some of their initiatives and try to say, well, we will not do that after the next election. I think it is part of our role in the opposition to point out what the government's real agenda is, Mr. Speaker, and I can assure you that we will continue to do so as we go along. [interjection]

The members opposite are chortling away and asking us what we would do in the health care system, Mr. Speaker. One thing we would not do is we would not spend \$19 million at the Health Sciences Centre in order to save \$18 million which is what has happened. The members opposite talk—the latest line from the Barb Biggar factory with respect to Connie Curran is to try to say, now, all of those committees and all of those decisions made at the Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface were made by the people there. To a certain extent there were committees and they did some interesting work, but I question—perhaps I will go through some of these recommendations for members opposite, because I am sure they did not have an opportunity to review.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go through some of the recommendations made by the committee, and this is not an attempt to denigrate at all some of the good work done by some of those people. The point is, we did not need a \$4 million plus

\$800,000 consultant to tell us this. They recommended, for example—here is an important one—change from in-house muffin production to an external supplier. It took a \$4 million plus \$800,000 consultant to tell us that, to change from the in-house muffin production to an external supplier. Oh, yes, and they are going to install a new dish machine and cafe on the second floor. We needed a \$4-million consultant to tell us that. Oh yes, here is another one that took a \$4-million consultant—replace booth attendants in the Rehab garage with a ticket meter. That took a \$4-million consultant. No wonder they are spending \$19 million to save \$18 million.

* (1640)

An Honourable Member: What was done before then, Dave?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite says what was done before. I remind members opposite who has been in charge of this system for six years. [interjection] The member for Portage (Mr. Pallister) will have his opportunity to apologize on behalf of the government when he stands up, if he stands up, to speak on the throne speech. He can appear in front of his committees and make all the comments he wants, but he is the one who has to defend his government's health care record, and he is the one who has to talk to the people who phone our office every day and talk about the line-ups and cry about the kind of service being given. Perhaps the member for Portage will take some of those calls and will have some affinity and will be able to reflect on what happens in the health care system.

Mr. Speaker, the recommendations that were made by these committees, some of which I admit are excellent recommendations, and I have said that all along, those recommendations did not require the facilitation—I know members opposite like that, because they hold all kinds of seminars now and are hiring facilitators to conduct those seminars. They did not need a \$4-million facilitator plus \$800,000 expenses, tax-free, in order to carry out those particular difficulties.

I see the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister) keeps chortling on. You will have your opportunity to deal with it, and I hope you will deal with it. I hope the member for Portage will deal with some of the difficulties being incurred in the health care system. Perhaps he could talk to some of the people who are experiencing those services.

Mr. Speaker, I return to the report that was made today by members of the home care coalition group. I return to some of their recommendations. I note that the government, in its throne speech, has called for the creation of an appeal panel to deal with home care. We welcome an appeal panel, but we are certainly calling for a lot more than simply an appeal panel to deal with the home care cutoffs.

It is one thing to have an appeal panel, but the question is: What does one appeal from? It was the government that set up the categories that excluded people from home care last year. It was the government that set up the 16 categories of people that were outright excluded from home care. They denied it but, unfortunately for the government, we happened to find the memo that outlined what the 16 categories were. We provided the 16 categories, and virtually everyone was excluded under those categories.

To have an appeal process is important, but if you do not have the regulations or the discretion to review those individuals and put them back on, appeals become simply meaningless. They are simply efforts in futility. They are simply window-dressing.

To give you an example, Mr. Speaker, when the government raised the fees on personal care homes by 74 percent, an unprecedented increase, they said their damage control, the Barb Biggar factory damage control over there put together and said, you know what, we are going to put together an appeal body that is going to deal with this. So they did. They put together an appeal body. Who chaired the appeal body? The Deputy Minister of Health, the very person who made the policy that caused people to have the fee increases. The very person is the one who is sitting as judge on the appeal.

That is what I fear on this appeal panel that is being set up for home care. Not only do I fear for the fact that the criteria are so narrow that there will be nothing to appeal from but, secondly, I question and wonder who will be on that appeal panel when individuals have to go to that appeal panel and have to try to appeal against the very callous and the very unsympathetic cutting at the expense of the sick that this government has undertaken, Mr. Speaker.

I hope the minister and I hope the entire government reads the report that was provided to them today, the 60-page report that outlines many recommendations in home care that would help improve the system and not just come back with their one-liners that, well, we are going to look at self-managed care alone in a narrow context as an attempt to deal with the problem, because all problems on that side of the House tend to become damage control and tend to become, let us just put it on hold to get us past the next election, the 18 months they are riding through to the next election, Mr. Speaker, which is basically all that members opposite are trying to do until they can get back on their agenda, which continues the cutting and which continues to see the downsizing of our health care system.

Mr. Speaker, I am referring now to reference the medical staff leader, December 1993. Some studies were done of some of the kinds of changes that were implemented in the Manitoba health care system by similar processes that were undertaken by, I am sure, clients of their friend and not ours, Connie Curran. It is interesting, the reference of the medical staff leader, and I quote: Cost-driven, across-the-board downsizing in U.S. hospitals can be hazardous to patients' health, a recent study suggests. According to the study, hospitals that made across-the-board staff reductions of 7.6 percent or more for financial reasons were 400 percent more likely to experience hikes in patient injury or death.

* (1650)

That is precisely the process that has been undertaken in our two Manitoba teaching hospitals, and if members opposite have their way,

it will continue after the next election. Already the effects of those cuts are being felt on a daily basis, and that will continue if this government continues on its course of action. Not to say that changes are not necessary, Mr. Speaker, but we have said for some time, I wonder if anyone asked the hundreds of nurses that have been laid off what their idea of change was. Maybe they should have listened to some of their suggestions.

We meet with people all across the system regularly and members opposite would probably be quite surprised at some of the innovative changes that could be undertaken in the health care system. They can improve the system to make it better for all.

To continue on that quote: When staff size is reduced without redesigning the work, waste is merely impacted, not eliminated. I could go on and on, but the long and the short of it is even if they follow their standards I would suspect the kind of change that they propose, the kind of change that is being undertaken has not been made to work, has done a very great disservice to morale in the health care system.

If they do not accept us, then perhaps they should—you know, I will share the tapes I have of the recent CJOB documentary done on the health care system. If they will not believe us, then they should at least listen to the people who work in the system who are talking about the tremendous difficulties that are being experienced in the system throughout.

Members opposite have the Bell-Wade Report, which the government is afraid to make public, has been made public, and as the members opposite—I do not know what stand they are taking on that particular report. The minister seems to—like most reports at this point—be keeping it close to his chest, but it is kind of funny, as indicated by my Leader earlier, the government has closed psychiatric beds at Grace Hospital, Misericordia Hospital, St. Boniface, opened a \$43 million site at the Health Sciences Centre. Now the Bell-Wade Report, which probably cost several hundred thousand dollars, perhaps millions of dollars, is now saying, well, we should have psychiatric

services back at St. Boniface Hospital, which we do not necessarily agree with, but which just shows the confusion that is being experienced in the health care system.

The refuge of members opposite as I speak is to talk about other jurisdictions, to talk about other provinces, like Saskatchewan and Ontario, where they expanded their community-based health care system before, and they put it in place, something members opposite promised they would do, but did not do and are still grappling to do, which is why they lost five by-elections, which is why when you went door to door, people said, home care cutbacks, Connie Curran.

Members opposite perhaps should look to other provinces. I tend not to dwell on other provinces because they tend to like to focus on Manitoba because it is the refuge of the weak and if it is the refuge of the, shall I say, unintellectual, to try to diffuse the argument by going to other jurisdictions. To a certain extent I agree. I mean, we should deal with our problems in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the members ought to consider the fact that community resources were put in place prior to the changing of the system, something that was not done here, that was promised here, was not done here. That is the reason the members opposite are in so much political trouble, and that is the reason why we actually do not attach very much credibility at all to statements from members opposite about what they are going to do in the health care system. We do not attach any credibility to it because, frankly, they have not delivered. They have not delivered in that context. They have not in the past, and I do not anticipate or expect that they will deliver in the future with respect to health care reform.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard nothing from this government about preventative health care, about wellness, about co-ordinating services. We have heard nothing about any of those activities. We have heard nothing about a lot of the technological difficulties in the system. I note that my time is up and I would like to continue at some future point. Suffice to say that members on this side of the House will not support this government's throne

speech after six throne speeches that have failed to deliver virtually everything the government promised initially.

Mr. Jack Reimer (Niakwa): Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure and a great privilege to stand up here in the Fifth Session of the Thirty-fifth Legislature of the Manitoba Legislature and to welcome you back and welcome all my colleagues back. When I look back in the fifth session, it is hard to realize and remember when the first session started, but as anything, they say time goes by very fast.

It is a pleasure to welcome you back to your exalted position as the head referee, if you want to call it, in this Chamber, and also my new colleagues in the Legislature. It is a pleasure to welcome the new colleagues from St. Johns, Rupertsland, Rossmere, and also the new members for the Liberal caucus from The Maples and Osborne.

I can only say that I would hope that the new members come into this Chamber with a fresh slate of ideas and a new sense of accomplishment for their constituents instead of being indoctrinated totally by their Leaders and their philosophies in their government, and to be aware of the constituents, be aware of the needs of the constituents and listen, in a sense, and to have the rationalization of ideas that come with the elected position.

I would like to spend a moment or two talking about that great constituency that I represent, Niakwa. When I look back during the last session when we closed, one of the first things that I got actively involved with, which was not necessarily in my constituency, was the great event of Folklorama which was going on in Winnipeg at the time. At that time we had, I believe it was, 42 pavilions here in Winnipeg representing all the various ethno-cultural communities in Manitoba and in Winnipeg.

I would just like to point out, as was stated in the paper a while ago, that Winnipeg is now the most cosmopolitan city in Canada regarding the ethnic communities, and we must be very proud of all the

great contributions that these various ethnic communities have to contribute to Winnipeg and indeed to all of Manitoba.

So it was quite a pleasure to be involved with Folklorama at that time, and I would like to point out too that this year it will be the 25th anniversary of Folklorama, so there are a lot of new and exciting events that are going to be happening here in Winnipeg because of this celebration. The 25th anniversary will bring about a lot of exciting events for the various pavilions. At the same time it is also the celebration of the Year of the Family. Here in Manitoba, not only in the rural areas but here in Winnipeg, a lot of events, a lot of programs, a lot of community groups, places and churches in my community, in my schools are becoming totally aware of the Year of the Family and are planning events to commemorate within their communities, and it is indeed a great pleasure to be part of the celebrations here in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to just spend a little time talking about the throne speech and some of the highlights of it. Indeed, it was a great pleasure to listen to the first throne speech by our new Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable Yvon Dumont, and to be here to hear the plans and the outline of what will happen and what is happening here in Manitoba with our government.

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

As was mentioned in the throne speech, jobs and the economy are naturally a strong priority along with the education, and personal security is highlighted in the Manitoba goal of our commitment in this government. The speech continued public consultation and from across the way we heard the heckling and the cajoling by our opposition that we consult and we go to the people, in a sense, for finding direction.

I should point out that is what in a sense we are elected to do. We are elected to listen to the people. We are elected to listen to our constituents. We are elected to listen to the people of Manitoba to give us a direction and a purpose as to the legislation and the goals and the objectives that we aspire for.

There seems to be a bit of a passing strange type of philosophy from across the way. They seem to say that they are looking for an action, and at the same time they are saying that we do not talk to the people or that we do not listen to the people. Then when we do go up and we bring forth the youth violence summit that was very successfully brought forth by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) at the beginning of December when we had I believe it was over 900 participants at that event with very sound and reasonable solutions that were put forth in a large presentation to the minister and was available for all members, they do not seem to have the faith that the people will have the strength and the fortitude to come forth with any type of resolve on some of the problems that we as legislators are faced with.

So it is a strange situation that the opposition say to do things and yet at the same time not to consult with the people that we are trying to bring legislation for. Just recently the Minister of Education has announced a parents' forum on education, which I believe is of great paramount importance here in Manitoba because, again, we have to listen to the parents.

The education of children in this province has always been of a very high priority, and the fact that we are going to be listening to the people and trying to bring forth some sort of direction as we go into the nineties, because I guess one of the most common cliches we hear now is change and the adaptation to change and to be ready to try to be a part of any program that is brought forth.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is a pleasure to talk on the throne speech and to reinforce the programs and the presentations that are presented by our Premier through the throne speech.

I had the opportunity the other day to meet with sort of a breakfast club group. On a Saturday morning they have a breakfast club. I am not sure whether it is every Saturday or once every Saturday morning every month, but I had the fortune of being invited to listen and to talk with these gentlemen around the breakfast table. There was a genuine concern brought forth by them as to what they perceive are problems here in Manitoba,

what they perceive as what sort of action we should be taking as legislators. There was criticism. There was praise. There was argument. There was consensus.

* (1700)

But in the end, Mr. Acting Speaker, I left the meeting with these gentlemen with the sense that there was a lot more that we have to do to be involved with our community. There was a lot more that we have to listen to to try to get a pulse of what they feel is important and what they feel is necessary for them to understand regarding the programs and the initiatives that we as legislators try to bring forth.

I found it quite interesting and at the same time I would hope that I do get invited back, because it was a learning process for me in trying to understand some of their concerns. At the same time, I believe that I tried to give them some sort of direction as to what we were trying to come about with.

At the same time, Mr. Acting Speaker, it gave me an opportunity to try to bring forth some of the ideas and some of the programs that we as a government felt were very important.

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, some of the other key things in our Speech from the Throne were things that we had to talk about regarding industry and programs that were brought forth. I listened very closely to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), the member for Concordia, in his reply to the throne speech. He had a habit of talking about the industry, the no-growth industry in this province, and the fact that a lot of these industries were declining.

It brought me to think that there is one industry that is growing at an immense speed here in Manitoba, and it is the wine industry. It seems that the wine industry, which is spelled w-h-i-n-e, is growing continually on the other side of the House here. That is an industry that we seem to feel is growing not only from the NDP, but we now hear it from the Liberals too, the whining about what should be done and what can be done. They have a great habit of bringing forth all the whining,

and that is what we hear more than anything else. The member for the opposition talked about the drifts and drifts, and all I could think of was the whining and the whining and the whining. You know, there is always this undertow from the opposition of what is wrong. They look for the negative. They look for the small things. They look for the things that they can pick at and everything else like that.

Manitoba is one of the greatest provinces in Canada. We have the greatest resource, which is our people here in Manitoba. A criticism of Manitoba is really a criticism of our people. When I think of the NDP, they talk about all the wrong things wrong with Manitoba. What they are doing is, they are criticizing the people of Manitoba. It is the people of Manitoba really who are being criticized. They talk about industry. Industry is people. They talk about work. Work is people. They talk about these programs. These are people. These are people who our opposition continually whine about, and it just goes on and on and on.

Well, it is becoming quite evident that the people are not buying that anymore. Manitoba is one of the best provinces in Canada to work in, to live in. The province next door to us, the province of Saskatchewan, they introduced their budget a little while ago. What did they use as a comparison? They used the comparison of the income, and they said people working \$25,000 or less, where is the lowest-tax province in Canada? Manitoba. They then went to the next level, saying \$50,000 of income or less. Where is the lowest? We are the second lowest province of Canada. What did the NDP province of Saskatchewan bring in for the third level of tax, of \$75,000? Manitoba is the third level. So within the grounds of our governance of taxation under our jurisdiction of provincial government, the people who are best off are in Manitoba, under \$25,000, are the best in Canada. Here we have the opposition saying it is the small people who are being hurt and the people of Manitoba are not coming forth with anything that is of any worthiness.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have to talk a little bit about—I heard the member for Concordia talk

about corporate tax. He seems to always like to get around to the fact that corporate taxes are somehow not giving their fair share and the fact that they are not coming into place because they are not producing.

I came across an article that I found very, very interesting regarding corporate tax. We have to look at the structure of what a corporation is. A corporation is a group of shareholders. These are people who have put money into a company because they believe in the strength of that company. It is the little people, it is all the other type of people who invest in these corporations that make corporations grow.

One of the primary functions of corporations is to satisfy its shareholders. Actually, that is the only criteria. A corporation is there to satisfy its shareholders, so its shareholders really are the ones who dictate what a corporation does. These shareholders come forth to the board of directors of the corporation and they say, we want a profit because we want a return on our investment. We are going to give you money to invest, so we want a return on our investment. So where do corporations get their money? They get it from investors.

An interesting thing is, I saw in the *Globe and Mail* the other day—it is called the insider trading factor, and they talk about the huge amount of money that is being invested by—this particular one was the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement Board, which is made up of the union of the Ontario municipal employees. They make note of the fact that they acquired 40,000 shares at \$8.40 and 115,000 shares at \$8.41 to bring their holdings to over four million shares in this particular company, which represents an investment of over \$35 million in this particular industry which is called Federal Industries. They are so powerful with the amount of money they can invest into industries now that a lot of these employee unions and with their pension funds control the market. They have such a high degree of control of the market that they are inside traders. What is their primary function of investing into these companies? To make money. To get a return

on investment. To make profits for these companies to make profits.

It is passing strange that we have the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) saying that these corporations are not paying their own share rate, and yet here are their union bosses on the other hand dumping all this money into these companies so that they can make a profit. There seems to be something different there. I cannot put my finger on what he is saying.

Another article that was in the paper is I guess we are all very familiar with the downturn, if you want to call it, in the real estate market in the last few years and the tremendous amount of large companies, huge companies like Olympia and York and Bramalea that ran into some terrible difficulties with their investments and the fact that they overextended themselves in real estate. We have to think that those buildings go into receivership and then they are bought. Well, who is buying up all these properties that are going into receivership?

*(1710)

An interesting article in the paper. The Ontario Teachers' Pension board, which has assets of around \$27 billion over the last 18 months, has invested over \$450 million in real estate. The Ontario Municipal Employees, the one I just mentioned, has also invested \$2 billion into Bramalea. It goes on to say that the teachers board and the Ontario Municipal Employees union have become two of Canada's biggest commercial landlords and the most influential force in the market today. Together they control over 11 million square feet of real estate. Why would they be investing all this money? To get a return on investment, to make a profit.

Here we have the largest union bosses telling or dictating their people how to put their money into making more money so that they can get a return, to make money, to make a profit. Yet we have the Leader of the Opposition cajoling and saying that these corporations should be paying more tax. It is passing strange the way they sort of try to balance the road. It is just like the Liberals where they try

to balance the fence. They sit on both sides, and they try to have things both ways.

I would like to just spend a moment talking about, naturally, our Liberal friends not only here in the Legislature but our new Liberal friends that are down east there in that big city of Ottawa. I guess we have to say that the way things are turning out we are being exposed to a little bit of the old flip-flop.

We saw the red book there and the red book that was touted around the country with the election and how this was the way it was going to be and this is the way we stand. We are going to tear up NAFTA. We are going to renegotiate NAFTA. There will be no cruise missiles in there. There will be a code of ethics for all our members and things like that.

Now the red book is turning a little pink, I believe, because they have a new book out now. It is the maybe book or the I-am-sorry book, I guess we could call it, because we see now that these little things are creeping into the Liberal purity and their armour that they wanted to run around with during the election when they were being so pure.

I have to remember, just shortly after they got elected, their intergovernmental affairs minister, Marcel Massé, and his little soiree with the Challenger jet when he went down to Boston and New Orleans for the speaking engagements. You could see that this was a sudden thing. They were elected in October, and I guess there was this flurry for him to make these speaking engagements. Then we found out that these engagements were actually booked months and months prior. Now that he was minister, he could jump in the jet for \$179,000 or \$174,000 or whatever it was, fly around for these speaking engagements. We have this juxtaposition, if you want to call it, of the intergovernmental affairs minister, Marcel Massé.

In the paper the other day I noticed this is the same minister now that has been put in charge of the administering of the over 3,000 government appointees that are going to come up in the next little while for the various boards and governors. So it is quite an interesting scenario when you see

the Leader talking about this moral ethics for their government and the new-think, if you want to call it, for the government and here we see the new minister of intergovernmental affairs within a month after—

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (River Heights): The appointment might be mine.

Mr. Reimer: I should backtrack a little bit now on that because the minister of governmental appointments may even make appointments that affect this Chamber and it would be interesting to see whether it reaches way into this Chamber here for an appointment. So we could either congratulate or cajole the minister for some of the appointments that may come into this Chamber.

There was another article in there in regard to the new question of ethics that Prime Minister Chretien was talking about, and that was a little bit of controversy regarding international trade minister Roy MacLaren, where some of his people were selling audiences, if you want to call it, for \$150 a pop, and you can see the minister on a personal basis and a little coffee and conversation. They were called donations. It is an interesting way that these ethics and things come around, that the federal government is already getting closer to.

We have to look a little closer at the provincial Liberals and talk about some of the situations that they are involved with in a sense. I was quite interested in a speaking note regarding the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), speaking at the MHCA, which is the Manitoba Heavy Construction quarterly meeting. He makes a point of talking about the minimum wage, and I have to talk about the Liberal comment that was made that the minimum wage should be increased, I believe he said, from \$5 to \$5.50 per hour.

I would like to just talk about that because, at the same time, there is another article in *The Globe and Mail* regarding minimum wage. It was written by the MacDonald Commission. I believe the MacDonald Commission, the MacDonald I am referring to, I believe he was a Minister of Labour or Minister of Finance with the Liberal

government. It goes back when he was with Trudeau, that is true. His comment was that every 10 percent rise in the minimum wage relative to the average rate increases the unemployment rate by half a percentage point. Here we have the Leader of the Liberal Party saying that we should be going out and making jobs. So the way we make jobs is we increase the minimum wage and here we have the former Minister of Finance of the Liberals saying you cannot do that because all you are doing is increasing the unemployment rate.

So for some reason, there is this philosophy that here again we cut a tax on jobs, that business has something to pay so we have to get it from business. But really privilege awards are not like that, because what happens is the minimum wage works itself up into the system and the union bosses love this because they can pass this on and say, well, what we are doing is we are rewarding up the scale. We are not getting the minimum wage up there. We are talking about getting the wage all the way into the system.

The Leader of the Liberal Party talks about bringing it up to the average. He talks about that we should be competitive with the rest of Canada, and I refer to I guess is the Liberal legislative agenda. I believe this was handed out, and it is based on a questionnaire. I have to point out that there were 85,000 questionnaires distributed and 20,000 questionnaires returned. That is over a hundred thousand questionnaires. I guess if someone was doing some sort of calculation at 43 cents a letter, that is about \$45,000 worth of postage that was sent out. That is just my calculation. It may be more or less, but I would think that for over a hundred thousand letters I guess the post office made a lot of money on that questionnaire.

Anyway, what it came back with is saying that jobs are important. My goodness, is that not quite a revelation? Jobs are important. Anyway, with the minimum wages that are reflected in this Liberal agenda, when we looked at the minimum wages in the Liberal provinces, we are talking about an average of \$5.10. When we look at the average wage for the NDP provinces, we are looking at

\$6.02. So when we talk about Manitoba's average wage of \$5, we are pretty close to the norm if you knock out the NDP provinces.

We talk about this is the solution by the Liberals is to also raise the minimum wage and also put a tax break in, 3 percent tax break—pardon me, not a tax break, but elimination of 3 percent tax break on the provincial sales tax for three months. So what would happen? Where would all that money come from? People would buy large purchases. We would have a blip in the economy with people buying stuff, in all likelihood maybe not even manufactured in Manitoba because we do not manufacture too many fridges and stoves here in Manitoba anymore that I am aware of. It would help some of the other industries, but at the same time it would just give us a little blip on the economy with that. So we have to be looking at what the Liberal agenda is. We look at a lot of the other things of what the Liberal agenda is, and it comes from different sides of the spectrum.

In the Speech from the Throne, we also talked about the programs brought forth by the Minister of Justice regarding the youth violence summit and where we stand on trying to address some of the problems with youth violence right now. I could not help but again look at some of the things that have been in the paper in the last little while. In fact, some of the headlines in the paper have become quite glaring and sensational if you want to call it. One thing in particular was the fact of having a gun—just the other day, I guess it was on Saturday in the paper, where they were talking about young boys bringing guns to one of the collegiates and confronting students with it, and the student thought, well, it is just a joke.

* (1720)

I guess you have to look at some of the ramifications and some of the situations that have taken place with a lot of the hold-ups and the unfortunate violence that is coming about because of the proliferation of guns, and even pellet guns, that are being used right now. In fact, a while ago there was an incident in one of the other schools in which three students were expelled from the school because the school board felt that it was

time to be tough on students; they would not tolerate the fact that the students could be allowed to bring into schools pellet guns. The student came up with, well, I did not know that we could not do this type of thing.

There was an article in the paper in which the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and also the member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) came to the defence of these two, saying that because they said they were sorry, they should be accepting these students back. Mr. Acting Speaker, I do not think that the people and the public are ready to accept the situations where just because they say they are sorry that we would forgive them for walking around with pellet pistols in the schools.

The situation is that the people and the parents and the school boards want the authority that these students should not feel that they have the authority or the right to walk around intimidating anybody with guns or pellet guns or any type of physical violence. You have the situation as mentioned with the Liberal caucus here where you have them saying, okay, if you are sorry, you should be forgiven. On the other hand, you have one of the other members, the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), just recently setting up another forum. We got criticized for having a forum but they had a forum this last weekend, and they come forth saying that this is the way they would like to do it, have another forum.

They are also criticizing because there is not enough money. So we have one member saying that the school divisions and the school boards should be getting more money because they are low on resources, and we have the other ones saying that they should be forgiven because of the fact that they are sorry for what they did. But, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would think that the public and the people that I have talked to over the last short while since we last sat are telling us that youth violence has to be addressed by this administration, and we intend to.

The Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) has come out with a program of discipline camps and the fact that there should be an accountability not only by the young offenders but by the parents involved.

There is a program to look at the licence availability of young people that get into problems and that, if they are charged, they would not get a licence until they are 18.

These are all positive initiatives brought forth by our government. I feel that these are the type of initiatives that government and our government will bring forth because the people are asking for them, Mr. Acting Speaker. So these are programs like this that will show that we are conscious of what the people are talking about.

I would like to just spend a moment talking about some of the other things in the throne speech. I would like to just talk about what was referred to as the North American Commission on the Environment co-operation for the setting up of the facility here in Winnipeg. I was quite surprised when the jobs and the program were switched to another city here in Canada. It was done strictly for political reasons. It was admitted to by the minister, Sheila Copps, that it was a political decision on moving this building to Montreal. There was a promise of over 30 jobs. Yet the Manitoba Liberal Leader said that the federal government has to look after more than just Winnipeg.

Well, I would have thought that the Leader of the Liberal Party would have a bit of an influence with some of his colleagues in the federal House of Commons because there are a fair amount of Liberal M.P.s there. At the same time, I guess, it is the old adage that we out here in the West do not have the clout. They do not feel that Manitoba is the place that has the wherewithal to deal with this. Yet, in the study that was conducted by comparisons, Winnipeg came out ahead in almost all areas of comparison regarding the other cities, in particular, Montreal.

We do not seem to have the political clout through our M.P.s that the other ones have down in eastern Ontario and in Quebec, so we have to sort of fight for ourselves in a sense. As was mentioned by the Leader of the Liberals, there are bigger fish to fry, in a comment made on CJOB. It seems that we can dismiss this as a fact of just kowtowing to what comes out of some of the Liberal propaganda

and their attitudes as towards how and what they want to do with Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to talk a bit about my colleague over from Concordia—I mean from Kildonan, pardon me—who was talking about health care and the so-called job that we may or may not be doing with it. I have got to comment about an article that was in the paper just at the beginning of the year. It was a press conference that was called by the seven hospitals here in Winnipeg: the Health Sciences Centre, St. Boniface, the Brandon hospital, Misericordia, Grace, Concordia and Victoria. What it was was a reply to the fearmongering that was brought forth by various elements, in particular the NDP and the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) in the so-called hurting that was being done by this government to the hospitals.

* (1730)

These hospitals got together to calm the public fears about the hospitals here in Manitoba. I will just quote: The executives from the seven hospitals joined forces to argue that health reform has not placed patients at risk.

I am going to repeat that because it seems quite important that the hospitals themselves are saying that they joined forces to argue that health reform has not placed patients at risk. It is a time to advise the patients we serve that hospitals remain the best place where you need health care. Incidents are not only extremely rare but are also on the decline since 1990.

This is a statement that has come forth by the hospital administrators themselves. This is not something that was brought out by the Minister of Health in our government. This was brought out by the administrators of these seven largest hospitals in Manitoba.

The St. Boniface General Hospital acting vice president said: I am personally satisfied that the quality of care of patients at St. Boniface General Hospital is very good. This is the acting vice president of nursing at St. Boniface Hospital.

I do not know where the member for Kildonan is getting all these fearmongering tactics when the

administrators themselves, for seven of the hospitals, are saying that it is time to advise the patients we serve that hospitals remain the place to be when you need health care. Hospital administrations are saying that health care and reform is happening, and yet the NDP do not accept this. They seem to think that because they can bring forth their own agenda of fear-mongering, their own agenda of how they want to perceive things.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I see that I am very, very close to the end of my speaking time. I would like to just add one small conclusion. This was a quote. I had the privilege of attending the Indigenous Women's Collective of Manitoba, their international women's day, which was back about a year ago. These were the closing remarks of Doris Young who is the founding president of the Indigenous Women's Collective of Manitoba. I think that it bears a resemblance to not only what they are striving for but what we here as a government are striving for.

I quote: As we move through time in our lives, the one thing that is guaranteed is change. The 1990s are a time for many changes, and although we are always limited in resources, we have power within ourselves. We are persistent, committed, dedicated and determined, which is consistent with self-determination.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I thank you very, very much for the time to address this throne speech. Thank you very much.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): I am reminded of the comments that have been made by people before me that in various shapes and sizes and guises, the human spirit and the human mind is a very flexible thing. This occurred to me on Thursday when we came into the Legislative Assembly Chamber for the first time in eight months, a Manitoba record I might add, not one that the government should be particularly proud of, but it is eight months, and it felt like we had never been away. I am not sure what that says, but I just want to make that comment.

I would like first of all to welcome the new members of the Legislature to the House. I remember what it was like when I first came into this august Chamber, and it is quite a moving and remarkable experience. Even given our propensity for less than charitable at times discourse, important things are discussed here, important issues are thrashed out, and there is no doubt that this is a vital part of our system of government.

I would like to welcome my caucus colleagues, the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg), affectionately known by us as the giant killer and the members for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) and St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) and as well the Liberal new members, the member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) and the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski). I am sure that they will enjoy the experience as much as the rest of us are, or they will certainly find it an interesting experience.

As well, I would like to welcome the Pages here for their session with us. You have already had one vote; you are going to have several more, and so far you have done a marvelous job. I am sure you will continue to do so.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I hope you will give my warmest welcome back to the Speaker. He has done a remarkable job and I know will continue to do so in this what promises to be a very difficult session.

Before I begin my brief remarks on the Speech from the Throne, I would like to comment on several statements that were made by my honourable friend the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

The member for Niakwa began or very close to the beginning of his remarks talked about the "whining industry." He was saying the New Democrats in the House were talking about and that we are looking for small things to criticize, that in effect what we say in the House and in public is a criticism of Manitoba. I do think it is important to put on the record the fact that we are not whining. We are making statements and raising issues of concern that are being expressed by people throughout the province of Manitoba,

north, south, east, and west, urban, suburban, rural, and northern. The member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) knows this full well. I will not reflect for any extended length on the fact that the by-elections showed that to be the case. That was last September.

We have all kinds of stories, each and every one of us who are in our constituencies who are talking with our interest groups in the opposition benches, our critic area groups. We know case after case of people and families who are finding the actions and inactions of this government to be devastating for them personally and for the province of Manitoba. For the member for Niakwa to say that we are whining says in effect that the people of Manitoba are whining. I do not think that is what he really wants to say. We are simply reflecting the concerns of the people of Manitoba.

The other thing is, we are not criticizing Manitobans. For him to make that leap of logic or illogic is, again, beneath what I know to be the calibre of the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer). We are criticizing the actions and inactions of the government of Manitoba.

How many are they now—29, if you include the Speaker—members on the government benches whose decisions over the last six years have led to the problems that are facing the province of Manitoba. I wanted to put those corrections on the record and I hope that the member for Niakwa will reflect on his earlier comments.

Two more comments—No. 1, the member for Niakwa discussed corporations and corporate tax structure, et cetera. I want to clarify a couple of things he said. I believe he said, and I am not quoting verbatim, that the corporations are there to satisfy their shareholders and to make a profit and, by inference, if he did not say it straight out, New Democrats do not believe in that. We have never said we do not believe that corporations have a right to earn a profit for themselves and their shareholders. Our concern, Mr. Acting Speaker, is with fair profits, the fact that corporations are citizens of the community just as every single one of us is and have a responsibility to give back to

the community in a fair way the assistance that they have received.

* (1740)

I would just give, Mr. Acting Speaker, one example that we feel shows the unfairness of the current tax structure, and that is the corporation known as Great-West Life, whose headquarters at least for the time being is located in the province of Manitoba in the city of Winnipeg, in the last two years has laid off hundreds of employees, and this last year, this last fiscal year—it was just reported in the newspaper a couple of weeks ago—major profits, record-making profits by Great-West Life, and the chief executive officer also made a record salary and benefits. This is the same corporation that laid off 200 and 300 workers just a year or two ago. Now, our position is, they pay no income tax. A clerk at Great-West Life making \$20,000 a year pays more in personal income taxes than Great-West Life does as a corporate entity.

The final concern that I have to raise about the speech by the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer)—I am sorry, the member for Niakwa, I am putting you forward in your seat and I would suggest that—[interjection] I am talking about the concerns raised, statements made by the member for Niakwa, about the fearmongering tactics of the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) when he—

Point of Order

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. The honourable member for Niakwa, on a point of order.

Mr. Reimer: The member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) is not imputing that I am fearmongering, you know, for the sake of making a point, but I would like to put on the record that as owning a business in the constituency of Wellington I know that the member for Wellington is standing up for me. Thank you.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. The honourable member did not have a point of order.

* * *

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Acting Speaker, the member for Niakwa spoke about "the fearmongering tactics" of the New Democrats and most particularly of the Health critic, the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), and I wanted briefly to respond to that. He also stated that the member for Kildonan must have gotten inaccurate information about the problems facing the health care system and wondered where the member for Kildonan actually got this information.

Well, I very briefly would like to share with him where the member for Kildonan got this information. He, along with every other member on our side of the House, and if the truth be told, every member on the government side of the House, got that information from patients who are lined up for days in corridors of hospitals in the province of Manitoba. He got that information from patients, from families of patients who have seen their parents, their children go from hospital to hospital to hospital because there were not enough beds in one hospital.

They had to transfer emergency patients. It happened to a constituent of mine. They have gotten this information, we have gotten this information, from nurses in the hospitals in the province of Manitoba. We have gotten this information even from doctors in the hospitals in Manitoba. We have gotten this information from people who cannot afford personal care homes anymore, people who are finding that the home care programs have been cut to the point where they are having to go into personal care homes because they cannot afford to stay in their own home.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I just wanted to share that bit of information with the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer). It is not the whining New Democrats, as he would have us believe, that are bringing these things to the floor of the Legislature. It is the people of Manitoba, and soon enough they will have their opportunity to really make a statement.

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like in my remaining half hour to discuss the Speech from the Throne. This is the fourth Speech from the Throne that I have had the interest or the ability to listen to. I had thought, actually, it was the fifth Speech from the Throne, but my honourable colleague reminded us earlier today that actually we had a Speech from the Throne in the fall of 1992, and then lo and behold, with that eight-month Legislative hiatus, we did not actually have a Speech from the Throne in the calendar year 1993.

Mr. Chomiak: Why do we forget them so easily, I wonder?

Ms. Barrett: I know why we forget them so easily. My honourable friend the member for Kildonan asks why we forget the throne speeches so easily. It is because there is nothing in them.

Mr. Acting Speaker, on page 1, and I am going to go through this throne speech, the throne speech talks about the defining challenge for our generation. Our most important responsibility to our own children is to provide—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. I am having a hard time hearing the honourable member for Wellington. If those honourable members across the way want to have a discussion, if they could do it in the loge, I would appreciate it.

Ms. Barrett: On the first page of the throne speech, Mr. Acting Speaker, the speech says, and I quote: The defining challenge for our generation, our most important responsibility to our own children is to provide security in our lives and theirs and to build confidence in our future. Now, I think one could go on for the full 40 minutes just talking about the gross inaccuracies in that statement. I will just say that everything this government has done or not done in the past six years shows the inaccuracy of this statement. The people of Manitoba do not have a sense of hope. They do not have a sense of promise. They do not have a sense of security in their lives and their children's lives, and they do not have any confidence in the future.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am saying as my leader said today and our other caucus colleagues will say in the days ahead, that is due in large part to the actions and inactions of this government. The throne speech goes on to say that responsible government has brought our province through the recession without the massive disruptions felt elsewhere, and I must admit, when I heard those words spoken on Thursday, I almost broke out laughing. It was a question of breaking out laughing or breaking into tears, because again, the absurdity of this comment, this statement is unbelievable. There are more people out of work today than there were six years ago.

The city of Winnipeg has the highest child poverty rate in the country. We have the highest unemployment rate in the western provinces. We have a health care system that is in total disarray. We have a child care system that is being destroyed through the overt actions of the last two, most particularly the first Minister of Family Services of this government. We have a whole litany of destructive actions that have been undertaken by this government.

To say that there are no massive disruptions felt—to the 90,000 people in the city of Winnipeg who are living on social assistance or unemployment insurance, I cannot believe that this government could be as callous and unfeeling and as disregardful of their concerns and issues as they are by saying there have been no massive disruptions.

Again, the health care system, the education system, the social assistance system, all show the massive disruptions that have been felt by the people of this province.

The throne speech goes on to talk about the fact that there is a commitment to accountability and citizen involvement, Mr. Acting Speaker. In response to that, I would like to read a couple of paragraphs from the Manitoba Society of Seniors Journal, from January 19, '94, from the column the Director's Desk, written by the executive director of MSOS, Carol Robertson, where she talks about three words that seem to be stuck in people's throats in Manitoba, and those are: consultation

before change, which talks to me about accountability and citizen involvement. And she says, and I quote: If the provincial government is doing such a great job in listening to the people who are affected by changes, why then are people feeling as if the process of consultation before change is a scam? She goes on to say: I have spent my time in consultation before change but no one listened. The agenda for change and how it will occur is already being implemented. They meet with me not to hear my ideas, but to convince me that I am part of the process. The provincial government has given the words, consultation before change, a bad name.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Acting Speaker, that it could not have been said any better by myself.

* (1750)

The throne speech says that Manitobans want secure and satisfying jobs. We want our children to be taught the fundamentals and the new skills they will need in the next century, and we want our health care system to be high quality, accessible and fair, and to be protected as one of our most important assets, absolutely no question about it. The problem with this statement is that this government, in its six years in office, has done nothing to go towards those goals but has in fact done everything to make those goals further and further away.

It says on page 2, we want our cities and our rural communities, our farms and our businesses, to prosper and grow. I would like to speak just briefly about the rural communities in this province of Manitoba. [interjection]

Actually, the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), I know more about the issues facing rural Manitobans than you may give me credit for. I actually do consult and talk with the people in our caucus who are from rural Manitoba. I have actually on occasion visited rural Manitoba and spoken with people who live there themselves.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this is a government that prides itself on being responsive to the needs and the concerns of rural Manitoba. As a matter of fact, it has a very high percentage of its members

representing rural constituencies, far higher than either of the other two parties. It is most certainly higher than the Liberals, who have only city of Winnipeg representatives.

I would like to share with the members who may not be aware of this on the government benches that, according to Statistics Canada, Manitoba had the lowest farm family income in the country in 1991, and currently for the first time in more than 50 years the population of Manitoba actually shrank. If we look at the statistics and the demographics of where the people of Manitoba are living, they are living more and more within a 50-kilometre radius of the city of Winnipeg, so if the population has shrunk, it has shrunk from the rural and northern areas of the province. This is from a government that says that it is committed to rural issues.

Two other issues in this particular part: two years ago, I believe, when the government first put in video lottery terminals, they promised that the profits from the VLTs would go back directly to rural communities. Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, there is no one in this House and certainly no one who lives outside the city of Winnipeg who knows that that promise was not kept. It was not kept from the very beginning. The rural municipalities are shrinking; the population is declining; the services are not there anymore; and the young people have to leave the rural communities because there are no education resources with the decrease in services to rural communities. The hundreds of millions of dollars that have come from rural Manitoba's video lottery terminals are not going back to services for them as it was promised.

The second area that I think is really a problem, that is really something that says to me how little this government cares for the concerns of real people is the fact that a whole range of service organizations and community groups and mental health organizations throughout the province of Manitoba have asked this government for a rural stress line so that farm families and rural community families can phone and find out where they can get services and can phone and talk about their concerns. What does this government say? In

the communities themselves, they have raised at least half of the money that was needed to run this rural stress line. What does this government do? It says no. No. You can phone the Winnipeg number. This is from a government that says that we on this side of the House do not know anything about rural issues.

Mr. Acting Speaker, further on, the throne speech says that we want our heritage as a multicultural province to be honoured and respected. As the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) stated earlier, this is the 25th anniversary of Folklorama. I think that we all applaud the work that has gone into Folklorama by countless volunteers and community organizations over the last quarter century. No question about it. Folklorama and the cultural projects and the cultural groups that are very active in this province are an enormously important part of our multicultural heritage and must be preserved and protected.

There are also, Mr. Acting Speaker, other parts to the multicultural fabric of our province that this government has not listened to. I speak specifically about the complete dismantling of the Manitoba Intercultural Council that was begun in 1988, when they took away the funding from the MIC, when they instituted the Multiculturalism Secretariat which was completed this last session when the government repealed The Manitoba Intercultural Council Act.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the advocacy work that was done on behalf of the multicultural community by MIC, the research that was done on behalf of the multicultural community by MIC, the education work that was done on behalf of the multiculturalism community by MIC, all have fallen by the wayside because this government does not care about the multicultural community. Instead, what have they done? They have taken the money from the MIC, and they put it into the totally politically appointed Multiculturalism Secretariat and Multicultural Grants Advisory corporation. These decisions will come back to haunt the government of Manitoba.

I would like to go on to the section in the throne speech dealing with jobs and economic security. In the paragraph discussing unemployment, the throne speech says: “. . . those who have advocated quick fixes have lost more and more credibility, leaving a record of failure and debt.”

Mr. Acting Speaker, I do not know—I think I do know but I am not going to speculate here on who those are, but I do know that there is not a record of failure in western Canada worse than ours when it comes to job creation and unemployment. Of the western cities, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina and Saskatoon have the highest unemployment rate by far.

March 1994, the Winnipeg unemployment rate was 13.1 percent. The January through March average was 13.3 percent. It is not getting better because last year it was 11 percent so it is changing as we talk. You hear all about change and the importance of change, but it is changing in the wrong direction.

We will talk about the unemployment rate in Manitoba which is now 10.7 percent. Yes, it is a decrease from last month but it is a one percentage point increase from March of last year. Specifically to refer to the unemployment rate for women, and I will get to the reason for that later in my speech, last year the unemployment rate for women was 7.5 percent, this year 10 percent. Last year in the age category 15 to 24 the unemployment rate for women was 9.7 percent,

this year it is 14.6 percent. For over 25-year-old women, it went from 7 percent to almost 9 percent.

Mr. Acting Speaker, these statistics are dreadful. They show the threadbareness of the government's ideas and work towards job creation. There has not been any job creation in this province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the government's top priority may continue to be jobs and economic growth, but the jobs and economic growth are not there for the people of Winnipeg. They are not there certainly for the women of Manitoba; they are not there for the tens of thousands of people who are unemployed today; they are not there for the almost 10,000 people who have given up looking or have left the province of Manitoba.

Yes, Manitobans are concerned about unemployment, and they are mostly concerned about the fact that this government has done nothing to make the unemployment figures more comfortable for the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would also like to talk about the comments in the throne speech that talk about the principle of fiscal responsibility. This government has—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Wellington will have 13 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. this evening.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 11, 1994

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