



Sixth 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

<u>Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Party</u>
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.	Riel	P.C.
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Lib.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Lib.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	P.C.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Lib.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	P.C.
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP
<i>Vacant</i>	River Heights	
<i>Vacant</i>	Flin Flon	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, December 2, 1994

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

Speaker's Statement

Mr. Speaker: I have a statement for the House.

I must inform the House that Jerry Storie, the honourable member for Flin Flon, and Sharon Carstairs, the honourable member for River Heights, have resigned their seats in the House effective July 20, 1994, and September 15, 1994, respectively.

I am therefore tabling their resignations and my letters to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council advising of the vacancies thus created in the membership of the House.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Physical Education in Schools

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Lawrence Danylchuk, Lana Woods, Brian Humniski and others, urging the Minister responsible for Education (Mr. Manness) to consider reinstating physical education as a compulsory core subject area.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Public Accounts for 1993-94, Volumes 1, 2 and 3.

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 morning, from the Stonewall Centennial School, fifty-six Grade 5 students under the direction of Mrs. Cheryl Lekopoy and Mrs. Kari Kinley. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable

member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer).

Also, from the Concord School, we have five Grades 9 and 10 students under the direction of Mrs. Joan Taylor. This school is also located in the constituency of the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer).

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

* (1005)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Air Command—Winnipeg Government Strategy

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, first of all, we would like to pass on our condolences to the Downey family on the passing of the minister's father.

I have a question to the First Minister.

We were expecting on December 12 word about the military proposals dealing with the Air Command in Winnipeg, pursuant to the joint Senate and House of Commons committee recommending the closure of the Air Command and the merger of those commands in the Ottawa-Hull area and out of the community of Winnipeg.

This follows other decisions, Mr. Speaker, dealing with private contracts for aerospace jobs here in Manitoba, reductions in jobs here in the province of Manitoba, and we are very concerned about the Air Command here in Manitoba. It has close to a million dollars in payroll per month in the military, direct military in Manitoba, and a number of other civilian jobs here in the province of Manitoba.

I would like to ask the Premier: What is the strategy of the provincial government dealing with keeping the Air Command positions here in Manitoba and dealing with the proposals now from both the Defence minister and the joint

Senate and the House of Commons committee?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite both for his words of condolence for the Deputy Premier—and I will pass those along, of course—and, secondly, for his question about a very troublesome issue.

The Leader of the Opposition and I spent a great deal of time in Ottawa and travelling back and forth to Portage la Prairie in years gone by as we dealt with the closure of the base there and its renewal in the form of a private training centre. We did, of course, at that time have the support of Liberals in this House. We did, of course, at that time have the support of Liberals in Ottawa.

It is very disconcerting to see the actions being taken today to add to those actions that have already destroyed hundreds of jobs, high-tech jobs in the private sector in the aerospace industry with the cancellation of the EH-101 helicopter contract. Now we have tremendous potential job losses both at Bristol Aerospace in the CF-5 overhaul losses that are being alluded to and now the potential for reorganization and loss of Air Command.

We have been talking, I have been talking with various senior-officer-level people at Air Command. Of course, there is no certainty in any of the proposals at the moment.

Our position will be to do everything possible to convince the federal government in Ottawa that they ought to ensure that there is a balance and a fairness to Canada in the distribution of its military personnel, in the distribution of its military employment.

We believe that there continues to be very, very strong evidence that this is the best place for Air Command, that in all of the changes, certainly centralization to Ottawa ought not to be an option and that Air Command ought to remain here. We will do everything within our power to convince Ottawa. We, obviously, have not seen any final plans. It is in the rumour stage, but we will be doing everything we can to head it off at the pass, so to speak, Mr. Speaker.

Aerospace Industry Defence Conversion Program

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am sure all members of the House join you on the Air Command issue and the payroll here in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we have lost a number of jobs in the private sector aerospace industry. We have cited Boeing in the past. Bristol is being challenged, the cancellation of the helicopter, but all those programs were supposed to be replaced by a defence conversion program. I think it is important that the government not only raise the concerns and opposition to the federal government moving away from these jobs in Manitoba, but also have an alternative program for the aerospace industry here in Manitoba.

Does the provincial government have a conversion strategy with the federal government? Can the Premier table that in this House today so that we all can join together with positive suggestions to implement the promise to move from a military industry, a defence conversion program which was promised, to help industries in transition from high military production to high-tech civilian production in Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we have been very much involved in the creation of an Aerospace Industries Association here, which I think is a very positive contribution on the part of the industry itself.

Formerly, industry sectors that were in like areas of manufacturing used to look upon themselves as competitors. As a result of some leadership that I think is very forward looking, our industry here has created a co-operative situation in which they work together.

We as a government have been very supportive of it and working very strongly with them so that any of these kinds of opportunities for conversion are ones that we will not only be a part of but supportive of and very much involved with the Aerospace Industries Association on.

The difficulty, of course, is that a major, major economic contributor, a financial contributor to the aerospace industry was the military purchases. Major decisions have been made by the federal Liberal government to cut down their intended purchases, particularly the EH-101. We are told now that operating costs and maintenance costs on the old helicopters that many view as very dangerous are much higher than expected and the net savings that were projected are much less, if any, Mr. Speaker. All of those decisions, of course, continue to impact the industry.

The difficulty is that they are facing the same pressures on the private side, on the private commercial aircraft purchase side. In fact, Boeing has indicated very grave concerns at the fact that very few of their new aircraft are being purchased by Canadian-based airlines and have indicated their concerns.

I have been in touch with the CEO of Boeing in Seattle to let him know that we believe it is very important that they maintain their commitments here, their presence here, their employment here. Given that this is one of their lower-cost production centres throughout North America, we believe that there is strong reason why they ought to continue to support the Winnipeg operation, but that too has impacts based on decisions that are made outside of our level of government.

* (1010)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne and in documents we have had from the government, we have not seen a proposal from the provincial government, a strategy from the provincial government, to deal with the changes in both the private and the public sector of the federal government.

I know that the federal government is involved in these decisions, but, Mr. Speaker, we want to go beyond the concerns raised with the federal government to have a strategy that we put in place, a positive strategy that we put in place, not just a retroactive criticism of the federal government.

There were another 30 layoffs last week, Mr. Speaker, in the aerospace industry. Week after week, workers are very fearful of their jobs here in Manitoba, and I would ask the provincial government and the Premier to table forth a positive proposal for the aerospace industry in Manitoba, a proposal that we can all work together on so that we can keep people working in these industries here in Manitoba.

Mr. Filmon: Well, of course, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite spends all of his time being critical and negative. He does not propose anything positive either.

I can tell the member opposite that in working with an organization, for instance, like Standard Aero engine, they have expanded dramatically the areas of the world in which they are now working. They are getting work out of many other sectors as a result of combined efforts and support from our government, many more sectors than they have had ever before. When it comes to areas such as Bristol Aerospace, we have met with them, with potential clients from many countries of the world, including Korea. We have met with them here in Winnipeg; we have gone with them to Asia to lobby. I made a personal approach to the Prime Minister while we were away to ensure that he raised at a meeting in APEC with the head of government of Malaysia a potential contract for Bristol Aerospace.

Mr. Speaker, we have been proactive in going after new opportunities, new markets, and new thrusts for those companies so that they can, in fact, add to their workload and keep their workforce here, if not enhance it.

Video Lottery Terminals Social Costs

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I hope the Premier is successful in getting a positive program on this unfortunately shrinking industry.

Speaking of industries, there is a very, very rapidly expanding industry in this province, that is,

the lottery industry. It has expanded, doubled, quadrupled under the Filmon government. It is now rather ironic that a publicly owned corporation, the publicly owned monopoly, the Lotteries corporation, is now well ahead of any other company in the top 100 on the Manitoba business guide. The profits of the corporation exceed Great-West Life and Investors Syndicate combined, maybe even more companies in terms of the Lotteries revenues. Every day—in fact, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) put out a statement saying it would be \$180 million on a Tuesday; on a Thursday we had it grow to \$210 million in potential revenue. Who knows where the Conservative lottery policy will end in terms of the revenues?

Mr. Speaker, the government indicated in its Speech from the Throne that early nurturing of vulnerable children is one of the best investments in the future that can be made. Does the government in any one of its hundred health care committees, and I ask the Premier this question, have any review of the impact of VLTs on children in our province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I find it really interesting, the hypocrisy of the member opposite when it comes to talking about Lotteries, because everybody in Manitoba remembers full well that the first lotteries in Manitoba were brought in, in 1970, for the Manitoba Centennial under a New Democratic government. Everybody knows that the first casino was opened under New Democrats in this province. Everybody knows that New Democrats took over and established the first two bingo palaces in the province. Everybody knows that it was the New Democrats who set up the Manitoba Lotteries corporation, so that they could expend all of the revenues of gaming in this province and all of the avenues and opportunities for gaming in this province.

I find it absolutely incredible that I could hear this kind of hypocrisy from the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

I will take the rest of that question as notice and make sure that the minister responsible comes back with the answer.

* (1015)

Mr. Doer: Well, he did not answer any of the question, Mr. Speaker, because the question we dealt with was VLTs, and this is the king of the VLTs in Canada. Nobody else has created them and nobody else has expanded them but the Premier himself, the member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon).

I asked a very specific question dealing with the status of children and the hundred committees this government has running around the province, bumping into each other, studying various forms of health. They have about eight committees, as we understand it, discussing or reviewing the issue of children's health.

We have been given material, Mr. Speaker, that deals with the review of video lottery terminals and children, and I quote: We have visited several regions of the province in determining the needs of Manitoba children. In all rural regions visited, concern was expressed regarding the impact on children of video lottery terminals in rural areas. The concerns included VLTs consuming income necessary for nurturing of children and the potential lack of supervision through VLT use and abuse.

I would ask the Premier: Has he received this information from his Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae)? Is he acting on the recommendations dealing with children or are the words in the Speech from the Throne dealing with nurturing of children, just like many of the other words of this Premier, hollow?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition, because just a week or two ago he put forward an action plan, a so-called NDP action plan that says that they are putting children first.

I thought at the time that what the Leader of the

Opposition was doing was turning a corner in the approach of his party in addressing health issues in Manitoba. It was significant that it was the Leader of the Opposition that made this announcement and not his critic because the approach being taken previously by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) has always been unhelpful and just critical and here we have a positive approach which I have said and say again today: I appreciate that approach because we are all Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, and we should all be working together to try to improve our health system.

The honourable members ought to be aware that we are involved in numerous ways in improving health services and health care services for young people in Manitoba, including initiatives in the area of fetal alcohol syndrome, teen pregnancy, physical education, school-based health programs, speech and language therapy, aboriginal youth health care strategy, rural and northern services child strategy, an action plan for interdepartmental co-ordination of services for children, child safety programs, and on and on and on, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I asked the Premier whether he has implemented the recommendation dealing with the nurturing of children and the impact of VLTs that is coming from one of his 101 committees that he has in health care.

This is a very serious recommendation, Mr. Speaker, coming to his government, and I would ask the Premier: Is he implementing the recommendation made on nurturing of children that has been made by one of his 101 committees that says specifically that, of lottery funds defined for treatment programs, specific research should be undertaken on the impact on children in rural areas and appropriate remediation directed at the results of such research dealing with VLTs in rural Manitoba?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, we do have, of course, an Addictions Foundation of Manitoba that is given significant funding to deal with counselling and all sorts of areas of concern that may be raised with respect to addictions of any type, whether that

is alcohol, whether that is gaming, whether that is drugs or anything else, and additional resources were put to the AFM so that specifically counselling and other resources would be made available should any needs arise or should any needs be identified.

I am informed, Mr. Speaker, that those resources are considered to be adequate for the needs that are there.

* (1020)

Balanced Budget Legislation Introduction

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of our caucus, we join with you and the Leader of the Opposition and all members of this House in also extending our sympathies to the Downey family at this time of tragedy.

Leaving aside for a moment the issue of the hypocrisy of this government bringing forward balanced budget legislation six and a half years after straight deficits and \$4 billion in new debt, so far the Premier has discussed this, mused about this in generalities and has been long on rhetoric and short on specifics.

My question for the Premier: Will he be placing this legislation before this House before his next budget? Is he prepared to have us discuss and debate and vote on this legislation before his next budget, which will be another, we predict, in a long string of deficit budgets in this province? Will he put it before us so we can debate it and we can stop this outrageous string of deficit budgets. Is he prepared to do that?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, when we speak of hypocrisy, of course, it does bring to mind the Leader of the Liberal Party, because he is the only person I know who can be on every side of every issue all at the same time and give everybody the impression that he is their friend and be absolutely committed to do all the wrong things when he is agreeing with them.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Liberal Party makes an interesting number of points. Firstly, he suggests that somehow he is in favour of balanced budgets. At the same time, he has voted against budgets because they have not spent enough time after time after time. The greatest hypocrisy is the news release that he put out just before the throne speech in which he said that he wanted to do things to address child poverty. When he had a chance to vote for the highest tax credits for families with children in this country in the budget of 1989, he voted against it. It put hundreds of dollars into the pockets of all families with children in Manitoba, and he voted against it. That is the greatest hypocrisy that he perpetrated.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, he uses again a false number, a false number of course that he inherited from the article in today's newspaper by one Frances Russell, and that is that this government has somehow added \$4 billion to the province's debt. What he does not say is that \$1.7 billion of that \$4 billion was simply transferred onto the books because Limestone came on stream during that period of time, an investment that was made prior to this government.

What he does not say is that another over \$400 million of that debt was part of the debt that came on from other Crown corporation spending, that this government has increased the debt of this province at a rate of 1.3 percent of GDP per year, which is the lowest increase, the lowest deficit of any province in Canada as a percentage of GDP throughout seven budgets in government. What he does not say is that every time we have had a budget in this province, he has advocated more spending and a higher deficit, Mr. Speaker. That is the kind of hypocrisy that we deal with.

He also refers to the so-called balanced budget legislation in New Brunswick and he does not say that it leaves out capital debt entirely. On that basis, this province had a balanced budget this year, a balanced budget on an operating basis this year.

So we will talk about deficits. We will talk about balanced budgets, and we will see where

that member in his hypocritical stance really does stand.

Mr. Edwards: That was a very entertaining diatribe from the Premier, Mr. Speaker. He cannot have it both ways. He says, the \$4 billion includes capital, and then he says he does not want to include capital. Either it does or it does not; \$2.3 billion operating, \$4 billion including capital.

My question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: He has had seven budgets in a row with deficits, seven in a row, and now in the dying days of his second term he says, we want balanced budget legislation. Will that legislation require a government to balance the budget more than once in every seven years? Would he be in breach of his own proposed legislation? Where is it, Mr. Speaker?

Why will he not commit to putting it before this House before the election, proving that this is more than an election gimmick?

* (1025)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the member does not even understand that there is a difference between capital debt that is in the hands of a Crown corporation and capital debt that is supported only by the tax dollars of the people of Manitoba. He does not understand that, but he will eventually if the public allows him to stay as Leader of the third party long enough. Maybe then he will have a sense of all of the things that have to be dealt with in government and he will be able to understand his questions a little better.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that this government has worked very, very hard with no support from the opposition parties to get our deficit down to the point that we are now within hailing distance of a balanced budget. We want the public to know that we are absolutely committed to keeping a balanced budget in future.

Mr. Speaker, the fiscal plan says that this government will balance the provincial budget by 1996-97, and we are also going to table legislation to ensure that it carries on from there.

Because I heard the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) make some reference to a surplus in 1988, I would like to table the pages from the budget that was introduced by the Pawley government in 1988, the budget that one may remember Mr. Walding voted against. It talks about a \$334 million deficit. That was what was left for the people of Manitoba. I would like to table that so members opposite will understand exactly what happened, because they have selective recall.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, the essential message from this Premier and this government is: Do as I talk, not as I walk. This Premier is saying: After seven deficits, we are converted; we want to balance the budget with regularity.

There have been seven budgets in a row that have run deficits.

My question for the Premier: We have January and February, we have the rest of this month before the Christmas break, Mr. Speaker. Will he commit to putting this legislation before us? We will commit to staying in January and February to debate it, to talk about it, to vote on it and to put some meat on the bones of the rhetoric that he is engaged in. Is he prepared to have this debate and have this vote before his next deficit budget?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words.

This is the government that against all of the opposition from the members opposite, including the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), who day after day in this Legislature has stood up and told this government to spend more, spend more, spend more—against all of that advice, we have continued without any increase in taxes.

I recall him and his Leader who was before him saying that they would raise taxes and they would spend more and they would increase our deficit. Now he is trying to be a born-again deficit fighter, Mr. Speaker? Give me a break.

* (1030)

Prostate Clinic Report Tabling Request

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): A prostate centre is a good idea, Mr. Speaker, but so was breast screening and we have not seen it. So was community-based care and we have not seen it. So was nurse-managed care and we have not seen that.

Will the minister today table the study and report recommending the prostate centre and outlining the plans for it, or will he keep it secret like all of the other over 100 government committee reports?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): The difference, Mr. Speaker, in the approach we have adopted over the last several years to the renewal of our health system and the one seemingly advocated by the honourable member is that we are indeed very open and consultative in our approach, so we announce our intention in the throne speech.

As the days and months ahead unfold, details of all of these measures that we have announced will come forward. The honourable member I hope will remain supportive along with his Leader, who has taken a slightly different approach to the whole matter than the honourable member has, which leads to a little confusion about where the NDP really does stand, but it is nice to know that we have their support for these efforts.

As details are available, we will be making them known.

Correspondence Tabling Request

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, will the minister today table the correspondence and communication that the province has had between the province, the Department of Health and the urologists in the province and the patients and the support groups dealing with prostate cancer? Will he table that correspondence and that information so we can have a look at an understanding of what is happening?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated and as the throne speech indicates, our approach has involved consultations amongst over 15,000 Manitobans. That includes all kinds of professionals—medical professionals, nursing professionals and all the others—as well as consumers of health care services in Manitoba.

There is nothing very secret as far as I can tell, because most reports that we are involved in have the input of dozens of people. We have released a number of reports, and we will continue to release reports as we are able to do so.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I take that answer as, no, he will not release the correspondence between the provincial urologist in the province and others.

Funding

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): My final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, is: Will the minister advise this House whether funding for this project will come out of the more than \$20 million additional to be cut out of the hospitals budget this year and what that funding will be for the centre?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I think, in an unprecedented way, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) has met with hospital administrators from all across Manitoba to lay out for them, in a general way, the direction the government is going in a budgetary sense in this coming fiscal year, giving them the kind of lead time that they have always wished they had for their planning.

The minister also made it clear, as the throne speech has done, that the next budget will see redirected funds from acute centres to various areas of community health services.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said to the honourable member, with respect to urology, the funding and its source and its location and all of those issues will unfold in due course.

RCMP Policing Services

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

A few weeks ago the RCMP had to take the unprecedented move of announcing that this government has made absolutely—and this is their word, "absolutely"—no effort to maintain a reasonable standard of policing in this province and noted many Manitoba communities which are dangerously underpoliced. In response, the Minister of Justice has reported on November 5 as saying that she had not been officially advised by the RCMP of these grave concerns. The RCMP reports that on August 12 their commanding officer wrote a seven-page letter to the minister about their concerns, and the minister confirmed receipt of that letter on September 20. We hear one thing always from this minister and another thing always from people in the justice system, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans deserve to know the truth. Is the minister saying that the RCMP of this province are lying?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, let me start from the beginning of what the member is attempting to put forward.

First of all, the comments that were made, not directly to me but through a supposedly, according to the press, leaked document to the press, at that time did not represent the RCMP's position. In negotiating these government deals with the senior officers of the RCMP, the commanding officer of the RCMP in Manitoba has made that clear and has confirmed that. The comments which were made were made by a divisional representative, by a person working within the system who reports simply to who reports to officers within the system. He does not officially negotiate with this government, and let me make it clear, and the RCMP will clarify this also, he does not speak for the RCMP.

Mr. Mackintosh: The minister has missed the most significant issue regarding the administration of justice, I think, in many, many years. The minister says, reportedly in the paper, that she was not advised by the RCMP officially of their concerns. Given that the RCMP say that their commanding officer personally met with this minister, the commanding officer met with this minister on August 8 of this year and the minister confirmed the outcome of this meeting by letter on August 11, who are Manitobans to believe, the chief law enforcement officer of this province or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Mr. Speaker?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, let me say again that this government has and continues to have negotiations with officials of the RCMP. Yes, the member is quite right, I do meet directly with the commanding officer of the RCMP in the province of Manitoba. That is exactly how our negotiations continue. They do not continue through the newspaper, through the media and through documents that are put out by divisional representatives; instead they proceed in a formal manner.

Let me reassure Manitobans again that this government has a very strong commitment to public safety. Mr. Speaker, this government has increased the budget of the RCMP from \$23 million to over \$46 million.

We maintain a strong commitment and strong planning with the RCMP to make sure that services are available to Manitobans.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice has now contradicted the reported comments she made in the media. She admits now that she has had ongoing meetings with the RCMP, was officially apprised of their concerns.

Will the minister now step down so Manitobans can have confidence in a Justice minister in this province and so that she can be replaced by someone who will work with people in the justice system?

Mrs. Vodrey: In the newspaper article which the

member refers to, he will note that I was also quoted in that article as saying that I have ongoing meetings with officials of the RCMP, with the commanding officer of the RCMP and that I in fact do negotiate and that in fact there had been in the past and continue to be meetings which deal with the needs and the concerns of RCMP officers.

Mr. Speaker, the depth of this member's research has been through a newspaper article. Had he read the whole article he would have found those comments also included in the article.

* (1040)

Video Lottery Terminals Social Costs

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Throughout my constituency and throughout rural Manitoba, in communities such as Mafeking, Camperville, Swan River and many other communities, community leaders are concerned with the impact of video lottery terminals. Store owners are expressing concern that there is not as much money being spent on groceries. Teachers are concerned about the health of the children in the schools and their ability to learn, many of them because of lack of food.

Why is this government not moving on the recommendations made by its own committee that money should be put into research on the impacts of video lottery terminals on children in rural Manitoba?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. Wowchuk: That is the same thing we are all getting in rural Manitoba, no answers from this government.

The question is: Why is this government not moving on recommendations to do research into the impacts of the video lottery terminals? When and how much money are they prepared to put in?

Now I will ask the Premier: Are you not

concerned about the children of rural Manitoba and the impacts of video lottery terminals?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I know it must be embarrassing to members opposite to have the member for Swan River, who has been here for four years, not know that she is supposed to place the question to a member of the government. That is why they have moved her into the front row so that she can get some instruction from some of the veterans.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, our rules indicate that we place questions to the government. It is up to the government to determine who answers those questions. If they do not want to answer, that is fine. We do not need that kind of lecture.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member is correct in his point of order. The question is put to the government.

The honourable First Minister is answering the question.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier in response to the same question from her Leader, the fact is that we have placed resources with various areas of government to ensure that if there are difficulties, if there are needs within the community for counselling, support services and others, those are available with the resources, the additional resources that we have placed in the various programs.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, this government talks about hypocrisy in this morning's Question Period, but they are the hypocrites. How can they accuse others of being hypocrites when they are not answering the questions? Why will they not accept the recommendation that is made by their own committee?

If they will not accept that recommendation, can they tell us how much money is being drained out

of rural Manitoba and how much money they are prepared to put back into resources to support children who are affected by the gambling with video lottery terminals? I ask the Minister responsible for Lotteries (Mr. Ernst).

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, as has been reported in this House before, \$2.5 million has been allocated to the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba.

Ms. Wowchuk: Of that, I would ask the government if they will designate specific money to deal with children. There are children who will not be counselled by the Alcoholism Foundation. We have to have money designated and supports put in place for children in rural Manitoba. Will the minister make that commitment?

Mr. Filmon: The Addictions Foundation serves the needs of the families of Manitoba; families obviously include children.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Hanukkah Celebration

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable First Minister have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as Manitobans begin preparations to celebrate the approaching holiday season according to the traditions of their heritage, we are reminded of this province's great cultural diversity. This week our Jewish community is joining their brethren the world over in observing Hanukkah. This eight-day commemoration recalls the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem after Antiochus of Syria was driven from its sacred ground. The symbolic lighting of the Menorah each evening re-enacts the miracle of the small amount of holy oil which burned for eight days until the new oil could be prepared. It is a vivid reminder of the triumph of good over evil—a theme shared and celebrated by many other cultures. For more than 2000 years and across many lands, the Children of Israel have celebrated this victory of faith.

Manitobans of Jewish descent have proudly contributed this and other aspects of their heritage to the great multicultural mosaic in our province and country.

Manitobans recognize that each and every celebration or observance represents a significant contribution to our community and the quality of life within it.

In the spirit of this holiday season, and in recognition of and respect for the Jewish community of Manitoba for their achievements and contributions to our province, I ask the members of this House to join with me in extending our sincerest best wishes during Hanukkah. Members opposite probably have observed that we do have a Menorah out front in the Legislature—I believe for the first time—and the lights are being lit in the evening during the period of the eight days in which the celebration occurs. It will be my privilege tomorrow evening to light the seventh light, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I join together with the Premier, and I am sure all members of the Legislature, to also wish best wishes to all Manitobans of Jewish descent and background concerning the celebration of Hanukkah. I think it is a testimony to not only the multicultural nature of this province, but of the ability of this province to recognize all faiths when in fact there is a Menorah out front of the Legislature that stands as a symbol not only to a religious faith, but to the make-up of this province. I also think it is a testimony to the nature and the make-up of this province when grade school children in our public school system can come to the Legislature and in fact recognize that that is a Menorah and recognize what it symbolizes even if they are not of Jewish faith.

I join with all members of this House to honour all Manitobans and wish them all a happy Hanukkah.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Leader of the second opposition party have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I wish to join on behalf of our caucus members with the members in the other parties in recognizing the celebration and the festival and the religious ceremonies which will form part of the Hanukkah celebration around the world and, of course, in particular in this province. We extend our best wishes to the Jewish community.

Mr. Speaker, it is, I think, symbolic and very important and a very welcome addition to our Legislature that we have a Menorah outside the front. I think that is a very positive thing. I did notice it, and it is very beautiful as one sees it lit up each night.

I want to congratulate the Premier and the government for taking that step and taking that initiative. We join with all members of this House in celebrating the rich heritage and past and contribution of the Jewish community, really to the world community, but obviously in this context to our own province and our own communities in Manitoba. We wish them a very happy, happy Hanukkah, Mr. Speaker.

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

World AIDS Day

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, yesterday many MLAs in this Chamber wore a red ribbon in recognition of international AIDS day. This year the World AIDS Day theme was AIDS in the family, Families take care, which combined the values of the International Year of the Family and also addressed the devastating impact HIV AIDS is having on an increasing number of families around the world.

On World AIDS Day and throughout the year, community groups and individuals are

endeavouring to increase awareness that this pandemic is shaking the foundation of all families. Whether we define a family as two parents and children, a single parent with children and extended group of relatives, a core of close friends or a team of co-workers, families are affected by HIV AIDS. Family, friends and volunteers are caring for more people with HIV AIDS across our province.

Health and Welfare Canada estimates that by the year 2000, one in four people living in the North will be HIV positive. We must all continue to work together with people living with AIDS, health care professionals, community groups and individuals to ensure that a comprehensive strategy is in place in Manitoba to deal with this devastating disease.

* (1050)

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

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, we join with the official opposition party to say a few words in regard to World AIDS Day, which was yesterday, December 1.

Again, I was pleased that most of the members of this Legislature chose to wear red ribbons as a symbol of World AIDS Day. Certainly, in this Year of the Family, I think it is important to recognize that there are many different kinds of families. There are a lot of families right here in Manitoba who are, in fact, facing the difficulty of HIV and the effects of the HIV virus.

Certainly, in the last number of months, we have seen the community rally together in support of programs such as hospice organizations, looking at AIDS shelters and actually getting the community together to really deal with the issue of HIV virus.

We certainly would like to put our comments on the record and say that we recognized yesterday as World AIDS Day. Hopefully, as we move into

1995, all of us will be more aware of this terrible disease, of the effect on all families in Manitoba and that we can all do our part to ensure that we can do as much as possible to assist the families through their suffering and, if possible, eliminate the disease.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Health have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I thank honourable members and join with all of my colleagues in this House in making a comment in reference to World AIDS Day, which indeed was yesterday.

Those of us who know, as I do, families who have been touched by this disease know of the incredible hurt, the incredible loneliness that accompanies this disease. I think a worldwide awareness of that and an awareness of the things that we should do to prevent the spread of AIDS is an extremely worthwhile endeavour.

I join with my colleagues in observing international AIDS day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (First Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: Consideration of the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor as follows:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address us at the opening of the present session.

Motion presented.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, before I address the Assembly, let both Dora and myself pass on our condolences to the Downey family at the passing of one of their family members. It is certainly indeed a sad occasion for the family, and we remember them today.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honour and pleasure to move the acceptance of the throne speech, which was so eloquently presented by the Honourable Yvon Dumont, the Lieutenant-Governor of this province. I would like to thank the Premier, Gary Filmon, for bestowing this distinguished duty upon me and for the confidence he and my colleagues and His Honour have placed in me.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back all members of this House on this momentous occasion of the history of this province, the sitting of the Sixth Session of the Thirty-fifth Legislature.

I would also like to welcome our new Pages. This will afford them an excellent opportunity to be an integral part in this page of our history books. While learning about the process of government would they experience first hand the shaping of our province today, the positive effects which will be rippled through the years for generations to come. I look forward to making their acquaintances.

I also welcome you, Mr. Speaker. May your wisdom guide us as we contemplate and debate the agenda for the government of our term of this session. I appreciate, Sir, and I am sure all honourable members of this House will agree, your dedication to your duties, the sincerity of your service and the commitment to the people of Manitoba and this government. You are a friend to me and truly to all Manitobans.

I also would like to welcome back as Deputy Speaker the member for Seine River, Louise Dacquay. You have always demonstrated your ability to keep us focused in our privileged responsibilities, and we look forward to your assistance and guidance during the critical debates to follow.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation also to my constituents once again for bestowing on me the honour of representing them in this Chamber. I continually look forward to their guidance as we deliberate the future of our province. I have valued the advice and opinions they have given me in the past, and I look forward to the continued counsel from them in the future.

I congratulate the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of our great province for the diligence that he has demonstrated for championing the interests of all the people of Manitoba and look forward to his continued leadership in guiding this great province into the most significant period of our history. The people of Manitoba have, time and again, supported the course he and his government is charting for the continued prosperity of Manitoba.

This government made a commitment to Manitobans four years ago to consult, to listen and to act on their behalf and in their best interests. Our records attest that we have been, as we shall continue to be, a reflection of the voice of our constituents.

We consulted the people of Manitoba on issues that concern Manitobans. The people spoke. The government listened. We listened to the demand of the people for their selected government to lay the groundwork for prosperity today and for the future of Manitobans to come. The people wanted this government to steer this province on a true and noble course in formulating responsible budgets and sound fiscal planning in the prudent readjustments of our health care system, in bolstering support for our families, in looking after the needs of our seniors, in stabilizing and developing a healthy economy, and in vitalizing our education system to best reflect the needs of our children and educators today and for the future.

In these and many other issues which are near and dear to the hearts of Manitobans, this government has listened.

The hallmark of this administration is not only in its attentiveness to the voice of this province.

We have heard the voice of the people, Mr. Speaker, but, more importantly, we have acted on what they have said. We have acted responsibly through our commitment to jobs and economic development. We have acted prudently in the administration and legislation of government affairs, and we have acted with heart, sensitive to the fabric of Manitoba and its people.

Our throne speech is an illustration of our direction for Manitoba and is a clear reflection of the direction offered by our people in this province.

Mr. Speaker, six years ago, the people of Manitoba said that they were tired of the huge tax burden they were being saddled with by the previous socialist government and their borrow-more and spend-more attitude of fiscal irresponsibility. This action and that government were flatly rejected. The people spoke, and this government listened. They were tired of high taxes and a huge burden of accumulated debt that this excessive borrowing and spending had rendered to our province.

The people of Manitoba wanted responsible government that could fiscally manage and at the same time retain and enhance the services that they required. The people of Manitoba wanted real jobs for today and tomorrow, not the short-term, band-aid solutions of make-work projects of the previous government. In short, the people of Manitoba wanted, needed and demanded a change for the better.

* (1100)

What the people of Manitoba demanded, the people of Manitoba got. That is our democracy. That is our government in action. The task for this government was not simply to do better than the previous government. That was too easy. The challenge for this government, Mr. Speaker, was to be the best government that this province has had for the people of Manitoba.

With Premier Filmon at the head of the good ship Manitoba and a spirited crew with a vision

for the future, this province has been steering a course to a bright, bright future. For example, we have put into place programs that allow communities to invest in themselves.

The Grow Bonds program is one such initiative. The key to the celebrated success of this program is that it will encourage individuals and communities to join forces to develop industries and to develop and enhance business and therefore provide jobs to the young people of those communities, with such entrepreneurial efforts bringing the welcome consequences of providing much needed employment to the communities and, as I said before, the young people.

We can cite many success stories from Morden to the Interlake and from all across Manitoba.

The Grow Bonds and other programs add value to our economy in real dollars and cents and create jobs to strengthen our labour force.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Liberal Party of Manitoba called the Grow Bonds program "small potatoes."

To Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, who have invested their hard-earned dollars, made sacrifices and taken risks on their community, this is clearly an insult.

To those Manitobans who put in the hard work and long hours to make the dream a reality and this province a better place to live, this is again an insult. They are insulting not only the people and the communities who have a vision for their sustained prosperity but all the men and women and the children today and throughout our colourful and illustrious history who have carved a life out of this land.

Mr. Edwards has slapped the very face of Manitoba by belittling that statement. Mr. Edwards owes a clear apology and a sincere apology to the people of Manitoba living today, for all those who have gone before us and who have built this great province from these "small potatoes."

The young people working in those communities call those "small potatoes" real jobs, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, with your permission I would ask one of your Pages to come forward and assist me. I would like to present Mr. Edwards, the Leader of the Liberal Party, with a small potato. I would like you to give that to the Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr. Edwards.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the honourable member for Emerson, but, on two counts, sir, first of all, we refer to the honourable member for St. James as the honourable Leader of the second opposition party or the honourable member for St. James. Also, sir, I would like to direct you to a particular rule in Beauchesne's which clearly indicates that there are no exhibits allowed in the Chamber.

Point of Order

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the Leader of the Liberal Party would in fact want to offer a large potato for the large amount of money VLTs are taking out of—

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

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if perhaps since you made it very clear that our exhibits are not allowed in the House if someone is going to remove the potato and perhaps return it to the member. I think that apart from the one time when we did have a dead pigeon tabled in the House, we have followed the rules in terms of exhibits.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the honourable member for that clarification.

Mr. Penner: I consider this, Mr. Speaker, not an exhibit. I consider this a truly worthy precedent to the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party, and it

is certainly symbolic of what rural Manitoba feels about the comment that was made in regard to the programs that they used to build.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have already indicated that it is an exhibit. The Page is just returning it to the honourable member for Emerson. The honourable member for Emerson does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, the potato that was given, as I said before, is a symbol of how rural Manitobans feel about comments such as debilitating the programs that they have used very successfully to build industries, to build businesses and to develop rural Manitoba.

It is my belief that the small business developed by the Grow Bonds program are also some of the best quality businesses in the world and like agricultural prosperity in this province will continue to grow.

Our small potatoes, Mr. Speaker, are enjoyed by people in the United States and in Japan and in many other countries around the world. The huge mountains of potato chips that are derived from this small potato are of course enjoyed by many, many people, not only in Canada but outside of this country. The industry that has been built around this is invaluable in contributing to rural Manitoba and the diversity of the agricultural community in this province.

We should not underestimate the impact of the kind of programs that we have developed over the past number of years to encourage exactly that kind of development.

I invite the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party to try tasting some of those small potatoes. Given the choice between our home-grown potatoes and his words, you will no doubt find the potatoes easier to swallow.

As long as there are people on earth, food will be one of the commodities that will never go out of fashion or demand. This fact and the purple plains of Manitoba have made agriculture the bread and

butter of our province. There is no doubt that food production has assured the very existence of our people throughout the decades.

With the enhancement, advancement of people and the growth of agricultural demands, so too the transportation networks of rail and road began crisscrossing the country to transport this raw resource to the population base to the east. The St. Lawrence Seaway further ensured the economical transportation of our resources and product east and around the world.

Trading with the world in a commodity that the world will always need has assured the agricultural viability of western Canada in the global market. But the farm community, especially the grains sector, Mr. Speaker, has been devastated by the trade relation measures in both the European community and the United States over the past while. Export enhancement programs and other measures of foreign countries have substituted historical competitiveness in the world market with negotiated agreements under the CUSTA agreement, the NAFTA agreements. Canada had a fairly level playing field.

* (1110)

The GATT was negotiated, however, and some farmers in the United States objected to wheat exports to the U.S., and consequently all the agreements that had been negotiated over the years were recently set aside. The Liberal government in Ottawa sold out the western durum and hard wheat growers by limiting exports in contravention of the previous agreements. Most recently the federal Liberal government has sold out Manitoba farmers and caused irreparable damage, Mr. Speaker, to our provincial economy in one stroke of a pen, not realizing what the impact of that action would be.

We have constantly told our farmers to be innovative, to search out new markets. Well, a couple of years ago, when we had a disastrous effect in the Red River Valley and our quality of wheat was low yet very high in protein, those farmers did exactly that. They searched out new markets under the implementation and under the

agreements of the NAFTA and the CUSTA. And yet our federal government chose to go to the United States and cut those exports of our Canadian wheat in half. The economic impact of that, Mr. Speaker, can seldom or will probably never be truly evaluated.

What took Canadian farmers of high protein wheat years to develop markets in the U.S., the federal Liberals, as I have said before, in one slash of the pen, negated. The federal Liberals have a long history of not supporting farmers and the economy of Manitoba. The Western Grain Transportation agreement is being devastated by the federal Liberals. The federal Liberal Transport minister has made it clear that he would not support agriculture transportation and clearly that in itself, Mr. Speaker, is going to have a \$726 million impact to western Canadian farmers and specifically to Manitoba grain growers and grain producers.

The Agriculture minister in Ottawa has said very clearly that his budget is not immune to reductions. So where will the support for transportation, Mr. Speaker, come from? If the Minister of Transport is saying that he is not going to maintain the Crow benefit, where is Agriculture—in saying that they are going to have their budget reduced—going to take the money from to help farmers in that effort? It smacks of the Trudeau years of telling farmers to sell their own wheat. The farmers would sell their own wheat if they could, but the Chretien Liberals in Ottawa have clearly closed off all other avenues.

All efforts have been stopped by farmers themselves exporting wheat, and now farmers in Manitoba are left with the option of looking inwards only to their own markets.

Our government will stand by its farmers today and in the future and in times of need, as it has in the past. This government recognizes that farming has been and will be the backbone of our economy for many years to come. GRIP and NISA were two examples of some of the abundant support this government has given to our farmers in times of need.

Sugar is another diversified crop that warrants the attention of government in its achievements to expand the industry. I am given to understand, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberals in Ottawa have signed an agreement with the United States recently severely restricting sugar sales from Canada to the United States. Our sugar industry is competitive without subsidy, yet the Liberals have seen fit to sell out the industry to the Americans without knowledge of either the Canadian industry or the Canadian growers, namely, severe restriction of Canadian sugar products entering the U.S. Does this remind you of time past when Ottawa totally ignored the needs of western Canada? Echoes of "sell your own wheat," right?

Liberals do not care about agriculture. They have clearly demonstrated that. Liberals do not care about small business. Liberals call it "small potatoes." We will remember, and so will rural Manitoba remember. The Filmon team has acted and protected agriculture over the last number of years as long, as we have been in government.

Mr. Speaker, "small potatoes," wheat and sugar are not the only things growing in Manitoba, but everywhere pockets of innovation and development are sprouting. Job creation in Manitoba continues to grow, and as of August we showed an increase of 11,000 jobs over May of 1993. That will have a very definite impact on this economy. You want to call that "small potatoes."

This is due in part to many of the programs that this province has initiated over the last number of years, including the Grow Bonds program and the REDI program. Through the Grow Bond and REDI programs, we have created over 1,200 full-time jobs and over 2,100 jobs for our youth.

I will give you some examples of the work that this government has not only initiated but been involved in, and that is, of course, the development of a new pasta processing plant in southern Manitoba. In light of the fact that the federal Liberals restricted movement of wheat into the United States and other countries, and in light of the fact that durum wheat is the best quality wheat

that we grow, it is important that we support the initiatives of a group of young farmers and aggressive young businessmen in building and enhancing the production, the secondary production, of food products such as pasta in this country.

There are many other small and large industries that are flourishing in our communities and specifically in my constituency. We have a fellow in South Junction, for instance, who builds wood stoves—Portage and Main, the wood-fire system—in South Junction, employs eight people, not one dime of federal support, not one dime of provincial support.

We have Dave Desjardins who set up a sawmill and cuts dimensional lumber to build crates for snowmobiles and exports this crating lumber all over the United States, not one dime of federal or provincial money in building this industry. We have Elmer's Welding at Altona building row crop equipment, the only row crop manufacturer in all of western Canada; he exports 90 percent of his production to the United States, no federal-provincial money involved.

Loewen Manufacturing is employing large numbers of people building replacement parts; Leisure Travel Vans at Gretna is converting vans to travel vans. These are the kinds of initiatives and the kinds of industries, including D. W. Friesen, who is one of the largest printers in western Canada operating out of our constituency. Then, of course, we have Golden West Broadcasting out of Altona, which has been a growth industry and employs people in the media area, which needs to be congratulated. These are the kinds of programs and initiatives that have been started.

Woodstone Foods of Portage la Prairie employing 35 Manitobans with its Grow Bond expansion expects to add another 20 people in the near future. That is "small potatoes," Mr. Speaker. The tire recycling plant at Winkler recently hired 25 new employees. That is "small potatoes." Portage Crocus Foods will create 114 jobs in the blossoming area of economic development. Do you call that "small potatoes"? Monsanto recently

chose Morden over 50 other world locations to locate a plant to produce chemicals in southern Manitoba, a \$5-million plant expansion.

The Institute for Biodiagnostics moved from Ottawa to Winnipeg creating 70 new jobs. Winnipeg Vita Health added 95 jobs in its staff, and Baxter Corporation created 30 jobs. Mr. Speaker, do you call that "small potatoes"? Rural Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg certainly do not.

In total, our strategy has created important new investment. In 1993, 6,000 jobs were delivered in the private sector. It is basically those kinds of small entrepreneurs who have had the vision, had the initiative and had the audacity to move at all odds during a time period of recessionary impacts to move in those areas and expand our employment base in this province.

* (1120)

Our programs are having an impact. Through Grow Bonds, over \$6 million has been invested which has leveraged almost \$20 million in total investment. As an example, Sterling Press of Selkirk is a printing company, which is owned by Debbie and Jim Hickson. Debbie and Jim identified and developed a niche market in cardboard box manufacturing and commercial printing, and in November of 1993 local people, little people, invested \$170,000 through the Grow Bonds issue.

They expected to create 15 jobs, and, in fact, they have created over 20. That is good news, Mr. Speaker; that is not "small potatoes" to Selkirk. The really good news is that Debbie and Jim and the fine people at Sterling Press are growing above expectation, that they cannot print stuff fast enough, so to speak. It is growing so fast, they are looking to do another expansion.

Success stories such as these increase revenues to the province through increased provincial and foreign currency earnings which, in turn, allow us to fund essential programs such as health care, education and family services.

I note with interest the NDP's alternative to the throne speech. I do not know whether this is their way of implementing legislative reform because they presented their throne speech to the general public four days before we had the throne speech. Of course, that is maybe their way of initiating new ways of doing legislation. They want to involve every Manitoban in rebuilding the health care again in Manitoba, and remove, they say, the shroud of secrecy. Then, if I understand correctly by their own document, they want to give the responsibility of health care and the whole system to the Ombudsman. Now I call that being innovative. I call that being truly innovative.

In the next paragraph, they talk about how this government has introduced cutback after cutback in health care, and then they go on to say that we must be fiscally responsible. These are the same people that want to govern Manitoba. If they had listened, Mr. Speaker, if they had watched, they would have noted that this government did not cut back but increased spending in health care by \$600 million over the last six years. A 600-million increase in health care spending, is that a cutback? I ask them: Is that a cutback?

Perhaps I can put it in simpler terms that maybe for the benefits of our members opposite, they can understand. If you put one loonie into health care and you do that 600 million times over six years, you have an increase of \$600 million. Imagine the stack of loonies that it would take.

That, of course, comes out the pockets of every taxpayer in this province, or you are going to have to go out and borrow that money and pay interest on it.

The NDP have only one thing to fear, and that, of course, is themselves. They talk about the secrecy of our government and in the same paragraph condemn the hundred committees that are reviewing health care. Yet they are saying, nothing is being done; the public should be consulted. They know not where they come from, Mr. Speaker. However, had they wanted to participate in those discussions, they were welcome to do so; yet they chose not to.

This government has been told by our constituents and by the rest of the province that we had to change the way health care was being delivered or we would lose it. Everybody in Manitoba knew that. It was becoming too costly. Cutbacks, no, Mr. Speaker, change, yes—with a lot of help and input from Manitobans.

The NDP, I believe, could learn something today besides the difference between increased cutbacks. They could also learn from this government examples of how to listen and consult with people which they represent. Evidently they did not care, and they had no ears to hear.

A community-based health care system is what Manitobans have asked for. Directing funding to where it is most needed will serve the people of Manitoba in the way that health care should be delivered. We have listened and we have acted.

Another issue of vital importance to this province's future, which endorses the government's commitment to the province, is of course the area of education. Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes that in order to sustain and develop the pride and economy of our province for the future we must act responsibly today for the citizens of our future and our children. Our youth are the building blocks of tomorrow, and the foundation is in the family of today.

Education is simply not school buildings and passing grades. Education is vital to the very prosperity of our province and the quality of life for our children today and for all tomorrows to come. Mothers and fathers throughout this province care deeply about their children and the legacy which they leave behind. We asked Manitobans to help us prepare a blueprint for future education.

Mr. Speaker, together we established a criteria for the basics and essentials of learning such as reading, writing, mathematics, communication, problem solving, human relations and technology. In order to achieve this, we were advised that we must set educational standards and evaluation. We must also take steps to ensure schools'

effectiveness, involve communities and parents, use technology for distance education and develop sound training for teachers.

Our Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) deserves a lot of credit for having taken action. In 50 or a hundred years from now some archivists are going to dust off pre-21st Century history books and make a cursory mental note of this one action by this government. In 50 or a hundred years from now, Mr. Speaker, who is going to remember—maybe a few, perhaps no one. The prosperity and the quality of life for our children and our children's future may be in the not-so-small apart due to this government's consultation, listening and action today.

Again the opposition has been critical of this process. At the same time they state in their own document that change is essential. I invite the opposition to have the courage to support our efforts in order to ensure our children's education and future. The opposition has frequently used the word "cutback" in reference to the government's administration in some very, very key areas.

Spending for Education has increased to \$990 million annually. This is an increase of 25 percent from the 1987 level, the last year the NDP formed the government, and I am sure Manitobans will remember that during the next election.

Albeit it is not how much we spend on education that is important, it is the quality of education that our children receive which is important, Mr. Speaker. The quality of education suffers when the environment in which it is delivered is not conducive to learning. That is why we are also committed to supporting teachers in maintaining discipline in the classrooms.

I want to commend our teachers and the high standards that our teachers have set. We have many, many teachers in this province that truly have education of the children at heart. We must create an atmosphere together with parents to ensure that discipline occurs in the classroom and that an educational environment is in fact encouraged in the classroom.

All of you have heard and seen the commercials run by the Manitoba Teachers' Union. If there is one thing these ads point out, it is when unions attack they damage the very heart of the system. The children and the system need and depend on co-operation and caring, not disruption and distrust. By working together with parents and teachers, by setting standards and by having the courage to measure the results, the entire Manitoba community and all of its facets will be better served, Mr. Speaker, and we will deliver.

Mr. Speaker, I take special pride in our accomplishments in the area of personnel and community security. We have taken a tough stand on youth crime and violence by introducing boot camps for serious repeat offenders. We have removed the pool tables and the television sets. What they are in today is no longer a Holiday Inn. We have continually asked the federal government to strengthen the Young Offenders Act so that young people know that when they break the law there will be a serious, serious consequence.

As part of the same effort we are working toward to make parents more responsible for the actions of their children, Mr. Speaker, and I think that is one of the most important aspects and needs to be addressed by this government and future governments.

This government has had the distinction of introducing the toughest drinking and driving laws in Canada, and we have come down hard on spousal abuse. We have also introduced amendments to strengthen the anti-stalking laws. Mr. Speaker, this government delivers.

* (1130)

We have just come through one of the worst recessions our province has experienced. We have all had to tighten our belts and most Manitobans have done so admirably. In spite of the fact that the opposition have continually encouraged us to throw money at problems, other Manitobans have said, you are doing the right thing, your fiscal management policies are in fact creating the kind of economy that will lead us out of this recession.

Instead of doing what the opposition has asked us to do, we have introduced sound fiscal management plans to Manitoba, applying sound economic strategies through responsible taxation and spending, creating economic growth and jobs. Nobody can argue that.

We have learned from the former NDP government that heavy borrowing and spending does not lead to creating sustainable jobs and lasting economic growth.

The 1980s was an era of high revenue growth, higher spending growth, high deficits, high inflation and high wage increases. Since 1988, spending and revenues have grown on average about 3 percent annually.

The 1990s are a time of low revenue growth, low spending, declining deficits and low inflation, which will lead us towards a balanced budget.

Throughout the 1980s, provincial deficits ranged around the \$500-million-a-year mark. Since 1988, the Filmon government's deficits have stabilized to about 1.3 percent of the gross domestic product. This is the best performance in Canada.

In the six years previous to the Filmon administration, our provincial debt tripled—tripled in just six years. Those years gone by, of irresponsible fiscal management, is choking the funding of programs needed today.

Interest costs at \$500 million annually represents about \$500 for each man, woman and child; \$2,000 for a family of four.

Translated for our opposition members, if they are listening, interest costs one loonie 500 million times. We were the second- highest-taxed province in all of Canada in 1987. Today, because of sound fiscal management, we are the third lowest.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that is quite an accomplishment.

But that is not good enough for us. We must bring our debt down and eliminate our deficit. We have made the promise and we will deliver. We cannot stop there. We must ensure that future governments do not enter into this ludicrous cycle of spending and taxing more.

Therefore, as stated in the throne speech, we will introduce balanced budget legislation. This will ensure that Manitobans will be on the leading edge of economic development and maintain its aggressive competitiveness.

As importantly, the action will help us maintain our programs such as health care, education, family services and many others.

Today I call on all my colleagues in this Legislature to support the adoption of the throne speech, and I ask all of you to work together to balance the need for stimulating more jobs and economic growth, reducing our deficit and to maintain our social programs. By living within our means, we can maintain our essential services and preserve our quality of life today and for all of us and our families in the future and for tomorrow.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to second the Speech from the Throne for the Sixth Session of the Thirty-fifth Legislature of the Province of Manitoba.

I just want to begin by commending the mover of the throne speech for his very apt comments. I think his gift of a small potato a little earlier on in his speech probably said more than any number of letters or press releases on, I guess, the apparent ignorance of some of the people on the opposite side, in the second opposition, the ignorance, their lack of understanding of the importance of "small potatoes" to food production or really just generally the importance of the rural economy. I think he expanded on this very well when he talked about the hundreds and hundreds of jobs that were created through Grow Bonds and REDI. So again I say that I think his gift of a small potato spoke volumes about the ignorance of some people here

in this Chamber about the importance of the rural economy to the overall well-being of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin really by welcoming you back in the Chair. The first time I said that some four years ago I had gone back to some of the old Hansards to find out what a member said the first time they stood up to speak on the throne speech, and all the member's speeches all started off with welcoming the Speaker back, so that is what I did.

An Honourable Member: It was a tradition.

Mrs. Render: It was a tradition, and I followed that tradition.

Now I speak with four years of experience. I have seen you sit in the Chair there, I have seen you in the committee rooms, and I have to say that this Chamber is very fortunate to have you in the Speaker's Chair. You are one of those very unique people who know when to hold tight with tradition and when not to, when to have a little bit of blurry vision and when to have your eyes wide open to ensure that strict order is kept. You know when to be stern and when to give a lecture. You know when to relax the rules because someone has inadvertently broken it. So welcome, Mr. Speaker, and I hope you are in the Chair for many more sessions.

I would also like to welcome back the Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Dacquay) because she like you has proven that she knows how to run a Chamber here.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Pages. Unfortunately, not all of them are here this morning, but I would like to welcome you into this Chamber. I know that this will be an eye opener for you, what you hear in the Chamber, what you hear in the committee rooms. It will show you how democracy is practised in the 1990s. I wish you all the best for your stay here and, of course, in your future studies.

Of course, this is traditionally the time to welcome back all members into the Chamber.

It is also traditional to say thank you to the constituents who have put the member here in this Chamber, and I do want to thank my constituents for their ongoing support. When I meet them at the door, when I meet them in town halls that I hold, when I meet them just in small community meetings, it is their comments, their suggestions, their recommendations, that I bring back to our caucus, and so many of their comments and suggestions have been reflected in past throne speeches and are reflected again in this throne speech, Mr. Speaker. That is how democracy works in this province. That is how we on this side of the House practise. We listen to the people in our riding, and we bring back those comments and insert them.

Mr. Speaker, this undoubtedly will be the last throne speech before a provincial election is called. When that happens, governments tend to pack a throne speech full of promises of masses of legislation to come. This is not the case here. Why? Well, because we have already put in place many of the mechanisms that are needed. Yes, the throne speech does introduce new ideas, but it also emphasizes the continuance of the themes that we have been talking about and acting upon since we came to government.

In 1988, when this government was first elected, we had a vision. We worked out the first steps of a plan to ensure that vision happened. Each throne speech, each budget has expanded that plan and made that vision concrete reality, not just pie-in-the-sky talk. We have been consistent with our objectives.

* (1140)

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

This throne speech again emphasizes what Manitobans want to hear. For instance, we are continuing the theme of good fiscal management, of making sure that this province has a good competitive business environment, because that brings in new business, new industry, new manufacturing. That means more jobs. That

means dollars in our pocket.

Speaking of dollars, another one of our objectives is to balance the budget. Now earlier this morning, the Leader of the second opposition said, gee, this is a fast conversion. That is not so, Madam Deputy Speaker. We have been working towards a balanced budget. This throne speech, we are stating that we are introducing balanced budget legislation. We will be putting some teeth into that legislation. We are going to make sure that there are penalties attached for not adhering to it.

As you will remember, Madam Deputy Speaker, we were one of the first, if not the first province, to really come to grips with the out-of-control spending that governments right across this country seem to be on. We recognized that had to stop and that we could not continue to be overspending. We ended the irresponsible spending that the previous administration had so unconcernedly embarked upon. We delivered on our promise to stop increasing taxes. Budget after budget, we kept our promise, and now we can say with pride that we are the only jurisdiction in North America that has not raised major taxes in seven consecutive budgets.

Now that did not happen because we just did things on an ad-hoc basis. We had a vision. We had a plan, and we worked logically and carefully to make those things happen. Consequently, we have a stable environment in Manitoba for business and, indeed, for all of us. Thus, we do not need to come out with a lot of hype about a lot of legislation. We have been putting it in place, and now is the time to monitor, to fine-tune it. That stable environment, that good business climate, that now describes Manitoba.

Of course, what has happened is that new businesses and new industry have come into Manitoba. The mover of this throne speech mentioned some of them. Rather than repeat what he mentioned, I will maybe just add a few more examples. I think all of us have heard that Monsanto chose Morden over 50 other world locations for a \$5-million plant. The Institute for

Biodiagnostics moved from Ottawa to Winnipeg. That created 70 new jobs. Vita Health added 95 jobs. Baxter Corporation created 30 new jobs.

These last examples that I have given are all in the health care industry. Under this government, investment in the health care industry has increased by approximately 300 percent. That industry alone has gone from just a handful of jobs, a handful of companies to over 1,000 jobs.

In another area, we have been also very successful. That is in making Manitoba the call centre capital of Canada. We will continue our efforts to attract information and telecommunication activities and to secure new investments and new jobs in what is undoubtedly North America's fastest growing sector. In other words, Madam Deputy Speaker, our strategy has created important new investment.

As the former speaker said, in 1993, 6,000 jobs were delivered in the private sector. As he also I think pointed out, small business accounts for about 80 percent of new jobs. Because we recognize that, in each of our budgets we have been introducing initiatives for small business.

This throne speech again introduces some of the things that we are going to be doing for small business. One of these initiatives is a new pooled investment fund. We have a proven track record, Madam Deputy Speaker, already in this area. The previous speaker has already mentioned REDI, Grow Bonds, Crocus Fund, Business Start and Vision Capital Fund. These have all been things that have helped Manitoba businesses create jobs. We will be using these successful programs to build upon and add new ones. As the saying goes: Why invent the wheel, we have already done it. We will just simply expand on these successful programs.

Now networking, I think all of us know how important that is. The trick, of course, is to create the situation which puts the proper people together. We will be holding a major forum to put together entrepreneurs and small-business owners with potential investors. If a match can be made,

if a business can be borne and a business can thrive, that will benefit not just those business people, not just that company, it will benefit all Manitobans.

Health is something that concerns all of us. From the moment we are born until we die somewhere along the way most of us are probably in at the doctor's office at least once. So it is something that all of us have to be concerned about. Our approach of spending smarter, of making the tax dollars go farther has been applied throughout government including health care.

In July 1994, this government made health care history by becoming the first province to have a fully integrated drug information network. That new Pharmacard, I have been told by constituents who have already used it, has been wonderful, particularly for the seniors who are on a low income, because it means for them instant rebates. Of course from the other side of the fence it will help stop some of the abuse that has been going on.

We also made history in Manitoba, Madam Deputy Speaker, with our commitment to establish community nurse resource centres. This happened because our Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), this government, reached out to the nurses and said, let us work together, and it was the nurses themselves who said they wanted to have a greater say in the delivery of health care. Well, we are giving them that opportunity.

Again this is a continuation of our move to make those health care dollars go farther. It is a continuation of our move to keep people in the community, rather than thinking that the only place that health care can be delivered is in the hospitals. So I repeat again, this is a throne speech that is not full of a lot of hype. This is a throne speech that is showing the continuation of the vision and of the plans that we have been moving towards.

These community nurse resource centres will be established throughout the province, and these centres will facilitate community action and development in meeting the needs of that

particular community. Whether it is health needs or education and health needs or outreach, including home services to seniors or new moms, or providing clinical primary health care, these are some of the services that this new initiative will deliver.

Now along these lines of keeping people in the community, we put an additional \$2.6 million into the 1994 budget for home care. So when some of you on the other side of the House say that we have cut money to home care, as the Premier (Mr. Filmon) said earlier, give me a break. Since we have come into government, home care assistance has grown from \$35 million to over \$65 million in 1994-95. That is well over a 90-percent increase. Our commitment to home care is there. It is there in the bottom-line dollars. In fact, once again in this throne speech, it states that we will be strengthening the Home Care program. We will be doing that to better meet the needs of the seniors, to better meet the needs of the disabled and those patients who are just recently discharged from hospital.

Now I know that many of the members opposite like to say that our health care reform has been disastrous, that we are destroying the health care system, so I was really very interested to note just a couple of days ago in the newspaper, each of the newspapers here in this city—front page—let me just read into the record the headlines.

The Winnipeg Sun, on November 30, here is the headline: "HEALTH CARE IS A-OK. DESPITE SPENDING CUTS, SERVICE HIGH." Here is the lead sentence in the paragraph: "Despite the loss of hundreds of beds in Winnipeg hospitals the quality of health care in the province remains high, . . ."

Here is the second headline: "'Never had it so good.' Hospitals' quality high despite cuts." The lead sentence in that paragraph: "'The province's health has never been better.'"

Here is a quote from one of the authors of the study. The key thing that came out in the study was that hospitals are doing damn well, Shapiro

said. "The public doesn't need to worry."

That is just one newspaper, Madam Deputy Speaker. The second newspaper, the Winnipeg Free Press, here is the headline that day: "Hospitals still healthy." The next headline: "Downsizing analysis fails to find health-care decline."

Here is a quote from one of the authors of the study: "To date, we have no evidence that bed closures or fiscal restraints have negatively influenced the quality of care delivered."

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think it is very interesting that this was an independent study. You would almost think that we wrote the headlines ourselves. I understand that one of the authors of this study was an official in the former government, so I think this is independent.

Once again, I say this government took a clear look when we came in at what was happening to our health care system, and we realized that we could not continue to function in the same way because we simply did not have the ability to keep pouring more dollars into it. We had the courage, Madam Deputy Speaker, to deal with that problem. We had the courage to work with health care officials to make the changes, and we had the courage to keep on going even when the opposition was out there fearmongering.

I said earlier, in speaking about economic initiatives, that we were expanding or continuing on successful initiatives. Well, we are doing that also in the health care field. We are building on the success of the Drug Program Information Network, and we are developing a new system, a new system that is called the Provincial Health Information System. That will link all the health care stakeholders on a computer network. Needless to say, this will contribute by improving health care by helping to provide better information to consumers and to the health care professionals. Of course, it will also help because it will reduce overlap and duplication and abuse of services. This government is preserving health care.

* (1150)

I will just finish this small section by just referring to what we have done on the capital end of things. The Health-Capital Program, since 1988 completed capital projects have amounted to over \$361 million. Another \$183.2 million worth of projects was approved for construction just a short time ago. Since 1988 more than 525 personal care home beds have been added to the system, and another 500 beds have been approved or are already in construction in the '94-95 health-capital plan.

Just last week, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) announced that we will be providing \$1.2 billion from a health care budget of \$1.8 billion for the operation of hospitals, personal care homes, community health centres and the healthy community programs that we have also been working towards, because, as we all know, catching it up front, prevention is far better than treating it after the fact.

These are just a few, and I say just a few, of the good things that have been happening in health. This government is committed to providing good health care services. That commitment is reflected in the fact that we spend a greater percentage of our budget on health care than any other province in this country. Since we took office in 1988, we have put over \$500 million or 38 percent more into the health care budget. That says commitment, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Education, I have made it a point to be involved with the schools and the parent associations in my riding. I have seen first-hand the enthusiasm and the dedication and the excellence of teaching of so many of the teachers. Having taught Grades 11 and 12 French and history many, many years ago, I am pleased that this government has put education in the top three of its priorities. After health, education is the second biggest spender. Since we have come into office, spending has increased from 17.2 percent of the budget to 18.2 percent.

Just recently, the Minister of Education tabled a

document known as *Renewing Education, New Directions*. This blueprint outlines the kindergarten to Grade 12 education reform. That document was based on consultations that the ministers did with the educational stakeholders, the professionals in the area and with parents. The goals of that document, the bottom line of that document, Madam Deputy Speaker, is to ensure that our students can read and write and think and compute at a high level, because we have to be sure that our students are going to be able to cope in a global economy.

This throne speech states that we will be continuing to implement the blueprint for the renewal of our education system. One of the things that we are going to be doing very shortly is developing measures to assess student performances with test developments. We will be beginning with Grade 3 math. We will also be establishing a western institute of reading recovery in Winnipeg to support the development of literacy skills.

I think of interest to some of the young women and perhaps some of the Pages here in the Chamber is the creation of a new Training for Tomorrow scholarship award program to enable women to attend nontraditional programs at our community colleges. Speaking of community colleges, we are going to be asking the community colleges and the universities to start working together so that credits from the community college will be recognized at the university level.

Last year, the Minister of Education held a very successful parents forum. We want to do that again, because we need the input from the parents. Throughout the short time that I have been here as the member for St. Vital, I have had many parents come and speak to me about some of their concerns on education. Those parents were at the forum. They appreciated the fact that the Minister of Education took the time to hold a special meeting that was for parents.

The role of teachers needs to be strengthened. That is something else that teachers have spoken to me about in private. We recognize that the

teacher's role has to be strengthened, and we will be inviting them to participate in a special forum designed to get feedback directly from them. We will also be introducing legislation to give teachers more power to preserve order in the classroom. I think there are probably very few of us here in the Chamber today who have not heard a teacher talk about the violence in the classroom or the lack of authority some of them feel that they have. They feel that they cannot handle the classroom in the way that they should. So we will be working with the teachers. It is a matter of co-operation.

Justice—I think all of us have a concern with public safety. In fact, when I came into the building this morning I literally bumped into one of the members opposite and he laughingly asked what happened to my truck. I said, well, did you not know it had been stolen last year. One of the other members came up and said, well, did you know that another member's vehicle had been stolen, and he mentioned another one that had been stolen.

Well, I think all of us and many of our constituents in the past year have been very frustrated with the fact that they read about vehicles being stolen, they read about the vandalism. Yet, when these young people are apprehended, they seem to get only a slap on the wrist. They feel that consequences have to be toughened.

Personal and community security are high priorities of this government, and in this throne speech, we outlined a series of initiatives and programs to better protect Manitobans. Again I say, this is a continuance, an expansion of what we have already started.

I will remind the members opposite that it was this government, it was our Justice minister, who took the toughest stand with the federal government on the Young Offenders Act because we believe, and our constituents believe, that young people who commit crimes, particularly crimes of murder, must have consequences that reflect the seriousness of their actions.

Now our hands, Madam Deputy Speaker, were tied on doing anything more than asking the federal government to make changes to the Young Offenders Act, but where we did have the authority, we did move. We also brought in preventive measures. We brought in the youth gang and violence line. We brought in an amendment.

Here is one of the measures that my constituents were extremely pleased about was the amendment which will provide for an automatic one-year suspension of a driver's licence for people convicted of car theft or vandalism. If that person is convicted again, that would lead to a five-year suspension, and suspensions for convicted young offenders become effective on that offender's 16th birthday. So we feel that there is now some bite in the legislation.

We are trying to move in the direction of making young people accountable for their actions, but we need to do more in the sense that we have to work with the federal government and try to get them to understand that this is something that they have to deal with.

The throne speech also highlights some of the new initiatives that the minister will be bringing in, such as the introduction of night courts for young people who are charged with criminal offences.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Now these evening sessions will enable the parents to go with their child without having to take time off from work and, of course, it will enable that child, if they are in school, to also go to court.

Again we feel it is very, very important that the parents take responsibility for the actions of their child. Too often parents have been abdicating that responsibility. We want to bring parents back into the system.

Now all of you are very aware of our made-in-Manitoba boot and wilderness camps, and we will

be expanding this principle of rigorous youth confinement initiative into the adult correction system.

I found it very interesting a number of months ago when I read a newspaper article which stated that a young person who had been confined in a youth detention setting wanted to be transferred to an adult detention setting because it was easier there. Well, no longer will it be easier, Mr. Speaker. We will be toughening that up because this is not supposed to be a holiday place.

To improve community-based justice services, the community magistrate training programs will be expanded, and an additional 20 magistrates will be appointed.

One of the things that my constituents were very upset about last year was, when a dangerous sexual offender had been released, the public could not be notified. This, Mr. Speaker, will be changed. The public will be notified.

We will also be investigating mechanisms for placing the names of convicted pedophiles on the Child Abuse Registry. Another change will be notification of the victims of stalkers when the person is at large. All of these measures will provide better security for the public and for each of us as individuals.

* (1200)

Mr. Speaker, I will just finish by saying that jobs, economic development are top priorities of our government.

Economic development is not an end in itself, but is essential to creating jobs. Those jobs, the dollars that are coming in from that, we need those to sustain our health care, to sustain education, to sustain social services and, indeed, the high quality of our life here in Manitoba.

The throne speech of the Sixth Session of the Thirty-fifth Legislature of the Province of Manitoba shows this government's commitment to helping to ensure that Manitobans have a prosperous economy and a prosperous life in this province. Thank you.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I move, seconded by the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 12:30? [agreed]

The hour being 12:30, this House now adjourns and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Monday.



