

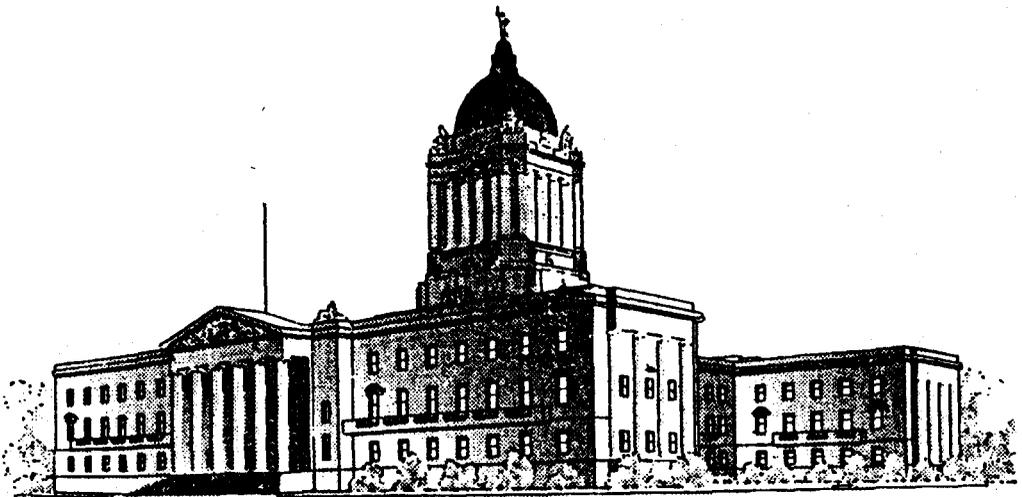


Sixth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

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.
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DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.	Riel	P.C.
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Lib.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Cliff	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
MALLOWAY, 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.
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REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	P.C.
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SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
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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

Monday, December 12, 1994

The House met at 8 p.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY
(continued)

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE
(Seventh Day of Debate)

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I was speaking about the work of the Women's Directorate and the Status of Women for which I am responsible as well. I am very pleased with the initiatives which we have been able to support over the past year.

We have offered support to Business Women's Week and also the Farm Women's Conference. I was very pleased to attend part of the Farm Women's Conference earlier this year and to have the opportunity to speak at that conference.

It is the second such conference that I have attended. I have just been so impressed by the energy and the vibrancy in that room, and the areas that were covered by the Farm Women's Conference are very important to the women of Manitoba in general. So I commend the work of the organizers for the Farm Women's Conference. I also thank them for the opportunity that they extended to me to take part in one of their evenings.

But I was pleased too that our Women's Directorate was able to provide a table of brochures during the course of the Farm Women's Conference and to use that as another opportunity to make sure that the women of Manitoba were informed about issues of great importance to them.

Mr. Speaker, we also partnered with Manitoba school guidance counsellors to support keynote speaker, Heather Jane Robertson last year. Heather Jane addressed the issues of socialization of girls and women.

The importance of her talk really focuses on one of the major issues that I think are being dealt with

by Ministers for Status of Women across Canada and certainly by the young women of Canada, and that is the whole issue of gender socialization, one in which we have taken very seriously in Manitoba. Our Directorate has taken a lead across Canada in dealing with those issues.

We also worked with the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 to co-sponsor a school-based anti-violence program called ASAP. This was a pilot program which trained teachers but also community workers in a program developed and presented by the London Family Court Clinic.

The importance of this conference was that it dealt with the whole community. People who attended the conference said that they were so pleased that it actually would train front-line workers, teachers who are front-line workers and other community people who are front-line workers.

They were very pleased that the community itself could take part in this program, because we know in the whole area of crime prevention dealing with violence within the community that it has to be a community solution, it cannot be a solution offered by a single area, by government alone, by a family alone, by school division alone, that it has to be dealt with jointly by the community, and that is exactly what that program did.

Mr. Speaker, our government has made a number of very tough decisions, but they have made those decisions according to the principles. We have taken a very principled approach in everything that we have done, and I believe that we have in all of those decisions been thoughtful of the people of Manitoba.

Our opposition is afraid. They are afraid of the future. The NDP is afraid of the future, and the Liberals are afraid of the future. Mr. Speaker, they are hiding in the past. They are parties who are looking only to maintain the status quo, and it is this government who looks to the future and who has provided an action plan. We have a track

record. We have acted on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

We as a government have created a stable environment in which people can dream their dreams and also pursue excellence. We are committed to responsible government. We have brought our province through a country-wide recession without the massive disruptions that are being felt in other provinces of Canada, and I believe that we are positioned well now to adjust and to adapt and also to confront change as a positive of opportunity. That is our record, and that is also a part of our vision.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is strong and all Manitobans are looking for stability, for safety and for security and for hope for the future. That is exactly what we saw in the throne speech. I certainly look to see that other members of the Legislature will support this government in the throne speech and will vote with this government for the very positive initiatives on behalf of Manitobans that are contained in the throne speech. Thank you very much.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to participating in debate once again in the Throne Speech Debate, because this is the opportunity we have to talk about not only specific issues—and I will be raising a number of those tonight—but the particular vision that each of us brings to this Chamber about the future of this province. I think it is particularly opportune, because we are dealing with a situation, as we all know, where an election has to be held within Manitoba within the next 12 months, whenever the government of the day can find the courage of its convictions or perhaps the numbers in an opinion poll that may persuade it to go to the people.

I would like to begin by noting, Mr. Speaker, that it is interesting to note that this government is now beyond the normal four-year extension of a mandate that has been the practice in this province. They have indicated there will not be an election till spring, so we are dealing with this government living essentially on borrowed time. I think as I talk tonight, it will be very apparent

why they are living on borrowed time, because this is a government that has run out of ideas. It is running out of steam, and it is definitely running out of political support in this province. It is hanging on by the fingernails.

In fact, it reminds me of that poster that one used to see, Mr. Speaker, of the cat hanging from its claws, except in this case, the question is, how much longer can this government hang on, because they have run out of ideas.

Let us begin by this throne speech. I read through the throne speech again. I must admit, it was something of a painful experience, because I had to sit through it first. This is a throne speech in which for the first time that I can remember in the years that I have been a member of the Legislature that a government actually Xeroxed 20 percent of the current content of this speech from the throne speech they brought in in April. They Xeroxed it.

I do not know, quite frankly, why they did not just Xerox that throne speech and Xerox the one before and Xerox the one before that, because there really is nothing new in this throne speech document, Mr. Speaker.

For what better example of how far out of touch this government is, let us look at their legislative agenda. Mr. Speaker, we did not have a lengthy session the last session of the Legislature. We did not have a lengthy legislative agenda. Now, I have heard a lot of talk from some of the Conservative members. They are born-again deficit fighters. They are born-again education reformers, health reformers, born-again job creation makers.

All of a sudden they seem to have discovered all these areas that they are now going to bring in, major initiatives. At least, that is what you believe if you listen to the rhetoric, but how many bills are currently on the Order Paper, Mr. Speaker? What do we have? Fifty? Forty? Thirty? Twenty? Ten? Seven, I believe, Mr. Speaker, seven bills. Seven bills.

* (2010)

Now, this government has not sat since the summer. They had July, they had August, September, October, and November. We are into December, Mr. Speaker, and we have no substantive legislation. In fact, when I look at the legislation we are dealing with—some important items, but they are essentially what would be considered housekeeping with very few matters of basic principle, very little affecting job creation, for example, very little, nothing in terms of health care, one bill in terms of education which does not really deal with the major issues that we are dealing with.

But, Mr. Speaker, this is the government's agenda? Seven bills? Well, it is interesting because if you read through the throne speech, you will find that the government has not only had a very limited agenda, at least two of the bills are bills that we had been proposing in this Legislature for quite some time.

They have actually gone and Xeroxed our agenda. Now, Mr. Speaker, we expect that from the Liberals, but I find it highly unusual when the Conservative Party, of all parties here, after having been in government for six and a half, going on seven years, with all the resources that a government has, has to Xerox some of our bills, to bring them in to have any legislative agenda at all.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there is one item in here which the Conservatives would have you believe is new, and it is this balanced budget bill. It is not on the Order Paper, but it is referenced in the Speech from the Throne. I find it very interesting that a government such as this government, which has not yet run a balanced budget, has not even been close, would talk, after six and a half, going on seven years of its mandate, fully four and a half years now of its mandate as a majority government, why it should now be talking about this balanced budget amendment.

I know a number of our members, including our Leader, have suggested it be brought in retroactively, Mr. Speaker, and I find it very entertaining to listen to the former Minister of Finance, who is a born-again deficit fighter, when

he knows that he brought in what was the largest budget deficit in Manitoba history.

Mr. Speaker, that was then and this is now. He is going to be out there challenging the opposition on the question of the deficit. Well, I find it absolutely incredible that anyone, especially the member for Morris, who is a veteran member of this Legislature—[interjection] The member for Point Douglas suggests perhaps he should have gotten a trophy to mark the occasion of the highest deficit in Manitoba history. Now he is talking about balanced budget. But you know, I suspect it has not finished there, because we are going to see over the next period of time, I bet you that Conservative Xerox machine is going to be working overtime. I bet you in January and February and March we are going to see all sorts of announcements, announcements that could not quite happen in 1988 or '89 or '90 or '91 or '92 or '93 or '94 but might just happen in '95 if, God forbid, this government was to be re-elected.

There are a lot of areas they could Xerox from, and in fact I would like to suggest that if they want to get their Xerox operating, they can start with our document, an alternative speech from the throne, Working Together, Putting People First, presented by Gary Doer, Leader of the official opposition. This was read prior to their document. They have already copied a couple of pages out of it. The Liberals copied pretty well the whole thing and brought in the Reader's Digest version within a couple of days.

They can take our agenda if they want, but you know, I would just hope they would not just do what they are currently doing, which is sort of this promise, but if they somehow were, as I said, God forbid, to be re-elected, that they might bring in changes in these important areas.

I want to deal with some of the areas, because what I like is the degree to which the public relations people with this government must have been working overtime to come up with this throne speech. I am just amazed. I will say this on the record, that anybody who is working in communications for this government should

deserve a pat on the back, if not a bonus, for having to do the most difficult thing possible.

What I like is, the Premier goes and gives the state-of-the-province address just around the same time as the tabling of the Speech from the Throne. You would think that anyone going in looking at the current circumstances might see some difficulties in Manitoba.

Last year, according to Statistics Canada, we were 10th out of 10, dead last. It is a good thing there were not 11 provinces; we would have been 11th. We were the worst province in the country in terms of growth.

Here is the way, if you are a creative communications person, you work this around. We were not only last in terms of economic growth last year. We had what some people call negative growth. In other words, our economy shrank. So what happens? We shrank last year, not the first time, by the way, because since this government was elected to its current mandate, there have been two other years where that has been the case. But what you do if you are a communications person is you turn around and say, there is renewed growth in Manitoba. That is what the Premier said in his speech outlining the state of the province. Well, yes, we have been shrinking. If we got back one-tenth of the amount we shrunk in terms of GDP, that would be renewed growth. Then you send the Premier off to the chamber of commerce to give the state-of-the-province address, you put it in the throne speech. There is renewed growth.

Mr. Speaker, how many people do they think they are going to fool with that? We were dead last. We have been lagging behind other provinces in terms of growth. Dead last. And now they expect people to buy into this idea that there is renewed growth?

You know it is not only in terms of the overall situation. I look at the many things they could have done and that we have been suggesting they do, like in terms of economic development. You just have to look at what is happening in other provinces.

By the way, I say with some interest and some pride that the two provinces that are going to have the highest growth rates this year just happen to be Ontario and British Columbia, both of which have NDP governments. In fact, the province of Saskatchewan, another NDP province, will be exceeding this province in terms of growth. I think that is important to point to because where NDP governments have had the opportunity to put in practice many of the ideas we espouse in this Chamber, we see the results. There have been a lot of dire predictions in Ontario and B.C. about the impact on the economy of a government that has a balanced view of the economy, including such aspects as community economic development. You know, these policies do work and it works because of the partnership you can build.

I will give you an example on the province right next door to us. We have heard some debate in this Throne Speech Debate about potatoes. The Liberal Leader is suggesting that the government's programs on economic development are small potatoes. We have heard the Tories suggest they are big potatoes. I would suggest that you cannot live on potatoes alone. In fact, I would go one step further and suggest—and I know this is a line that has been used politically before—but where is the beef?

Mr. Speaker, you want to see the beef, you go to Saskatchewan. I will give you one quick example, and I have more information on the kind of things they are doing in Saskatchewan. They have 300 loan circles which provide funds to microventures—300 loan circles in that province that provide funds up to \$5000. They have had a tremendous amount of success working with the community.

Do you know why, Mr. Speaker? Because in this country at the present time 23 percent of homes operate home-based businesses. Many people are increasingly finding themselves self-employed, either on a part-time or full-time basis, but a lot of those people cannot get loans from our banking system. Here is the paradox. We have a banking system that is making \$4 billion in profits. We have bank presidents making million-dollar-a-year-plus salaries, and people out there

with good ideas who need \$4000 or \$5000, in some cases need \$500 or \$1000, cannot get it.

I know people—I can give you an example of a person in my own constituency. He was laid off. His wife was on unemployment insurance. He said to me, there was a business I purchased. It cost me about \$5000 to take over the inventory of supplies, \$45,000 gross per year. He said, I am confident I can build it up to \$90,000 with my contacts and my knowledge of the community. Do you know how many banks would even look at this person? Nobody. He had to go to a family member, and that is fair ball, but the thing he said to me is, what if I did not have family who could give me the \$5000? There is a whole revolution that is going on in terms of community economic development. It starts from the grassroots up.

If this comes as a surprise to the government, and I realize that they may not want to look at Saskatchewan or Ontario where community economic developmentism is a main plank in that government's economic strategy or in British Columbia with B.C. 21, which is building that province towards the next agenda. I would suggest they look in their own backyard. The Northern Manitoba Economic Development Commission, which put a lot of work in consulting throughout the North, came up with many suggestions, and that is one of the suggestions, shifting towards a balanced approach to economic development which includes community economic development.

I am sure maybe if the members opposite want to get their Xeroxes warmed up, I have a number of articles, I have a number of proposals. If they will not do it, I can also suggest that this New Democratic Party would. The challenge is theirs. That is one example. I just talked about economic development. There is much more that can be done as well.

I notice the degree to which we have seen a number of the government members finally catch on to some of the things that are happening in Asia. I welcome that in terms of growth markets. I would suggest as well though too that they build

on our ethnocultural links with Southeast Asia. We have a significant Filipino community, Southeast Asian community generally. Some of the growth economies in the world currently are in Southeast Asia. Philippines is beginning to grow significantly. So is India. We have many people who have connections there, including business connections. Involve them in those discussions.

* (2020)

I get to the question of Eastern Europe. We met, members of our caucus met with the Ukrainian ambassador when he was here in Winnipeg. You know, there is a whole region there in Eastern Europe, Mr. Speaker, and we have those connections, those ethnocultural connections in Winnipeg to Ukraine, to many of the areas of Eastern Europe where the economies are opening up and they are looking desperately to those kinds of connections. We have the language potential.

I would say to this government, get beyond the idea that economic development only is the turf of certain select people in society. Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that economic development is everybody's business, all one million-plus.

Mr. Speaker, at the risk of giving this tired government some more ideas, let us move to the health care side. I am glad that our Health critic is here, because we brought in a number of legislative initiatives that deal in terms of health care. But do you know what I find amazing with this government in terms of health care is that we have essentially seen this minister try and hide the true intentions of this government in terms of health care. I have no doubt what would happen if this government was to get a majority government. Look at Alberta. Look what they have done. I will give you a list, in fact, if I had time I could give you a list, but I will start by just mentioning some of the rural hospitals of which Thompson is inappropriately labelled, the number of layoffs and cuts which this government has put on hold but has not cancelled.

In August of 1993, this government announced cuts to my hospital of 22 positions and 19 hospital

beds. To the Minister of Health's (Mr. McCrae) credit, the new Minister of Health, he came to Thompson, met with people at the community. I helped arrange the meeting. It was a good meeting. The cuts were put on hold, but that was then and this is now. This is December of 1994. What has happened to those cuts? What about the cuts to the Flin Flon Hospital, to The Pas? I am concerned because I have talked to people who are part of some of the internal processes, the committees that were set up. You know what happened? On the first go round, Thompson went from losing 22 positions to going to 25. What would happen if this government was to form a majority government? Why has this government not cancelled those health care cuts? There are more than a thousand position cuts, a thousand position cuts that are hanging over our heads, and this government has not cancelled them.

Let us deal with some other issues as well, Mr. Speaker, because I found it interesting earlier that the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) who has essentially been the de facto Minister of Education since he was appointed Minister of Finance in 1988, he talked about the 15 pillars of education reform in this province. But you know it is interesting, he is talking about 15 pillars, but one thing he never talks about is the No. 1 pillar which is funding for our public school system. He does not talk about that, because this government has cut our public schools twice in a row, the first time in Manitoba history.

I want to say that if the government wants some ideas in terms of education reform we have again the proposal to establish a strong public school system with strong community support and not the kind of education vision of this minister which involves the same kind of confrontation we saw from this minister with other public servants, the kind of confrontation we are seeing now with teachers and school trustees and parents that do not happen to agree with that minister. You know, the bottom line with this government, Mr. Speaker, is six and a half years into its mandate it is now going to reform the education. Who are they kidding?

There are many other areas we can come up with ideas for them. I would suggest in terms of social policies, Mr. Speaker, that the provincial government in 1995 has got to be very aware of what is going to happen because of the federal government's attacks on social programs. Let there be no doubts that we have got to be prepared to work with our communities to provide social services in a community-based approach. Once again, something this government has failed to do as we have seen evidenced by its many cuts to community organizations.

You know, I could get into many other areas, which by the way are all in this as well, some of which are very dear to my heart. I want to talk about northern Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, because I am sick and tired of seeing this government for the past six and a half years shaft northern Manitobans at every opportunity. That is unacceptable. We have seen this. We have seen this on highways. I could not believe it the other day when the Minister of Highways (Mr. Findlay) had the nerve to stand there, and when I had the evidence provided by my colleague, the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), the Minister of Highways personally took out his pen and crossed out any commitment to a surfaced road between Thompson and Leaf Rapids.

This was the same minister, by the way, who could not find time to go up to Leaf Rapids to meet with Northerners last Friday but was at the Conservative nomination one day later. I find it rather strange that they would send this Minister of Highways, with their pathetic record on northern roads, to speak to a Conservative nomination meeting because I can say, if they are going to campaign on their record on northern roads, good luck to them. But, you know, it is not just a question of attitude, it is a question of dollars and cents. The northern roads received between 15 percent and 20 percent of the budget when the NDP was in power. What is it now—15, 10? Not even 5 percent—4.8 percent, Mr. Speaker. The average under the NDP was in the 15 percent to 20 percent range, and those are, by the way, figures provided by the Minister of Highways.

I go one step further because I also have statistics. The minister talked about safety. The Gillam road, 280 accidents since January 1993. Cross Lake, Highway 373, guess how many accidents there have been? Three hundred and seventy-three. I guess we know why it is called provincial road number 373 now, Mr. Speaker, although I think the member from The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) is correct, you have to change it to provincial trail.

But, you know, it is not just highways that this government has ignored us on, Mr. Speaker. It has been other issues where it has cut back northerners the most, whether it be in terms of the ACCESS programs that we have seen, whether it be in terms of the Flin Flon Crisis Centre, I mentioned the health care cuts earlier, that is the agenda northern Manitobans have seen. Whether it be in Ilford or Thicket Portage or Pikwitonei or Wabowden or Nelson House or Thompson or Split Lake or York Landing, the eight communities I represent, they know where this Conservative government stands.

In concluding, Mr. Speaker, I want to suggest three visions ahead of us, because I do not want to leave out the Liberals in this. I realize they have no northern plan, so I cannot talk about that. I realize they have no health plan other than supporting the government on most key initiatives. They supported them mostly on education. But I do not want to leave them out of it because their agenda, apart from their positions in this House, are probably best outlined by Paul Martin in the so-called purple document, because the purple document of the Liberal Party goes far beyond anything Brian Mulroney had put out or Michael Wilson. It blames unemployment on what? On what it calls payroll taxes. What does it mean by payroll taxes? The Canada Pension Plan and unemployment insurance. We note they are currently going after unemployment insurance. We will see where they go on pension.

An Honourable Member: Workers comp rates.

Mr. Ashton: Workers comp rates, as the member from Morris (Mr. Manness) reminds me of. This

is what is most interesting. They list workers compensation rates. They list employment standards. They list labour legislation. They even in their document talk about the degree of unionization. Think about it, Mr. Speaker. The Paul Martin vision, the corporate agenda for this country, most of it focuses on provincial issues, and I would like to know where the provincial Liberals stand. I would like to know where they stand on labour relations and employment standards. Do they support the Paul Martin vision, the corporate agenda vision for this country? Because I would suggest that is the one vision.

* (2030)

The Tory vision, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you what they are going to do in the next election. You will not hear the word "Tory." You will not hear the word "PC" You will not hear the word "Progressive Conservative." You know, I am sure the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has a prepared speech, as he did last time. Does anyone remember the first thing he said when he got his majority? A Tory is a Tory is a Tory, and a majority is a majority is a majority. If you want to see the vision for this government, look to Alberta, where they are savaging the health care system and the education system. That is the vision. Their federal Leader, Jean Charest, has already said that he wants to see Alberta transplanted to Ottawa. Do not let the warm, fuzzy sweaters that the Premier will don in this upcoming election fool anyone.

Mr. Speaker, there is another agenda. It is the New Democratic Party agenda. We have outlined it in the alternative Speech from the Throne. We are concerned about health care, maintaining medicare, not Americanizing our system. We are concerned about a public education system that is accessible to all. We are concerned about jobs. The real deficit in this country right now is a deficit of jobs. The only way to solve the fiscal deficit is to deal with it. We believe in fairness. Fairness, yes, for northerners, for rural Manitobans, for residents of all areas of this province, all areas of the city of Winnipeg as well.

I would suggest to you that there has never been a clearer choice politically, the corporate agenda of the Liberals, the Reform Party agenda of the provincial Conservative Party or the people's agenda that can take us into the 21st Century by involving all Manitobans in the political process.

Mr. Bob Rose (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure and an honour to have the opportunity to contribute to this debate, and I would like to thank our House leader (Mr. Ernst) and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) for rearranging the speaking schedule so that I might have the opportunity to participate. It has just occurred to me that it is a good time to quit because another four years and I would probably need six telephone books to be able to see my notes. One of the advantages of advancing years is that you are able to withdraw from the political wars without causing too much suspicion that the reasons might be not damaging to the governing party.

Members of the media tend to be much earlier in their careers, in other words much younger, so when we put out a news release announcing the decision not to seek re-election, they were mildly inquisitive. They were humbly quick to accept and agree that it is certainly time for someone who is 61 years old to go out to pasture.

An Honourable Member: . . . Harry Enns.

Mr. Rose: Harry may not have any trouble with the media either when his turn comes. But in case there are some lingering suspicions remaining, I just want to assure you on the record that my decision not to seek re-election in no way expresses dissatisfaction with the direction this government is heading or with the capable people at the helm and in the crew.

Mr. Speaker, I too add genuine words of appreciation to you for your contribution to the functioning of this Assembly. I did not do much research on this, in fact I did not do any research on it, but I suggest to you that no other Speaker has had to deal with a minority situation, a majority situation, a tied House and again a

majority situation.

If there has been such an individual in the past I am confident that he or she could not have gained any more respect and admiration than you have and you have earned.

I would also like to welcome the Pages and wish them the very best in this experience and hope that it is useful to them in their future lives. Thank you to the Hansard and the Hansard staff even though they have a habit of recording what I say rather than what I mean. I would like to thank the Clerk and particularly his staff as well.

Each of us have different experiences as members of this Legislature. Upper benches on the government side have the opportunity to chair committees. In those capacities we quickly learn to appreciate the capable and helpful people in the Clerk's Office. Thank you very much for your help.

I would also like to thank my family for their unwavering support despite occasional nasty phone calls, nasty letters and newspaper articles. I particularly thank my wife, Lois. I do not need to tell this audience of how important the spouses are to each of us, particularly to rural members who have the additional travel and accommodation details to deal with.

When the 1990 election was called, the Progressive Conservatives sent out a rather thick manual with an explanation on how to win the election. I never did get it all read, but there was one part which I thought was particularly interesting, the section that dealt with how the spouse should treat the candidate. Essentially it said that the spouse should make soothing noises during times of bad temper or sulking and that the candidate should not be bothered with such mundane things as the garbage or fixing the lawnmower. I thought that section had considerable merit and Lois thought it was the PC's attempt at comic relief.

I can tell you, all parties would be well advised to have Lois rewrite that section of the election

manual. She charmed her way across Turtle Mountain and the communities in Turtle Mountain during the campaign, and at the election sacrificed her own interests whenever it was necessary and sometimes when it was not. In fact, that was one of the factors in our decision, that next she might have the opportunity to follow some of her own pursuits uninterrupted.

I did not know how good an impression she was really making in the campaign until after the election. There was a letter came addressed to Lois from a disgruntled constituent who started off by saying, it is easy to see and commonly known that the brains of that marriage is yours, so would you please tell your husband to do such and such. So I thank Lois, my wife, for her support and also for letting me continue to believe that I at least have 50 percent of the brains in the marriage.

It has been interesting to watch the dynamics of this 35th Legislature from the viewpoint of a total greenhorn. You will recall the first session began in October of 1990, ending in early winter with a throne speech, a budget, Estimates, legislation, and in March we came back and we did it all over again. In July I emerged into the sunshine of Turtle Mountain to be greeted by grumblings of: it sure did not take you long to disappear after you were elected. So I tried to explain that in a government with a small majority, or razor thin as the media like to describe it, the House leader and the Whip tend to take the new members, point them to their seat with simple instructions—sit, stay.

Having a dog at home, I tried their tactics. I barked occasionally in frustration. I snarled once in a while in anger, and I wagged my tail in pleasure in hopes of getting some attention. All those tactics received a similar response. Patience. This will all become clear to you in the fullness of time. And it did, almost, partially at least. There are still a number of things about this Assembly and the entire government that I did not begin to understand, and certainly one of them is why when the bells start to ring to call all members in to vote, it is a signal for members to get up and leave.

* (2040)

All the MUPs and the points of order and the snap votes and the bell ringings in the first sessions of this Legislature were a product of three things, I think. An NDP party elevated to a position of official opposition with several feisty new members who thought because they had been elected in their own constituency that they were part of government. It was the product of the Liberal Party reduced to third party status frantically trying to protect their turf with a notion of importance that was far beyond what Manitoba voters had given them. And it was a product of a Progressive Conservative Party finally given a mandate to bring about much-needed fiscal and legislative action.

To do that without having to pussyfoot through the perils of minority government—and I am sure that problem will never occur on this side of the House again. As a matter of fact, all the early manoeuvrings of this sitting of the Legislature, this 35th, struck me as a little bit childish to begin with, but then partisan politics never has been famous for mature and thoughtful debate, and I suppose when political parties elect their players to perform in the public arena of politics, it is understandable that from time to time we do play the game.

Fortunately, the early maneuverings of this Legislature gave way to a better use of our time. Opposition members, I say sincerely, we have enjoyed, my seat mate from St. Norbert and I, a little bit like the two fellows that used to sit up in the balcony in the Muppet Show and pass comment on what was happening on the stage in front of them. I think we both observed that the opposition members have become more and more skilled in the questioning of government actions, and the government members have become more and more skilled in their response.

The dynamics of this Thirty-fifth Legislature have been interesting, but I think—[interjection] Just as an aside, I would like to recognize the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) who has been my seat mate for the last four and a half years and starting into the sixth session of this Legislature, given the fact that I was sitting to the

left of him at one time and now I am to the right of him. It is interesting that for two people from totally different backgrounds, we hold remarkably similar views on most issues. I have relied on him to explain urban issues to me and the mysteries of this House from time to time as to what we are doing and why we are doing it, and I hope that I have been able to clarify some rural issues for my friend the member for St. Norbert.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that this has been a most productive period, this Thirty-fifth Legislature, for the people of Manitoba because we have a government that is not afraid to tackle much-needed change. I think there is also room for even more improvement in the productive use of members' time, and I encourage the continued study of real changes toward that end. In fact, perhaps it is time to use the same spirit of co-operation that brought about the commission on members' indemnities. Use that same spirit of co-operation to establish another commission of former MLAs, with help from the Clerk's Office, to set out new and binding rules for future Legislatures, bearing in mind that the place and its elected inhabitants exist to serve the people of Manitoba, not the other way around.

Mr. Speaker, this throne speech deserves the support of all members. It is a continuation of a solid and successful path this government has followed, and if that is a Xerox throne speech, then I applaud the Xerox machine, because once you are on the right path, it is foolish to go hurrying off in all different directions just because of an election coming up. The frustration of members opposite is understandable when they realize that this government is not inclined to follow outdated political manoeuvring in an election year by irresponsibly opening up the goodies bag. Preliminary projected estimates of federal transfer payments were quickly spent by the opposition. The second opposition was a little more responsible. They said spend half, save half. Fortunately, our Finance minister (Mr. Stefanson) was unmoved by windfall media reporting and opposition spendthrift ways, knowing that he could neither spend nor save a projected estimate of revenue.

This basic knowledge of fundamental arithmetic seems to escape the opposition parties and probably partly explains their concern for the education system. The NDP in particular must recognize the education system failed them in fundamental arithmetic. How else can you explain their dogged insistence that a \$500-million increase in health-care spending are cuts? We heard the previous speaker in his travelogue taking us across the country, the other provinces that have NDP governments, and had the nerve to come back to Manitoba and talk about cuts. Fifty-two hospital beds closed in NDP Saskatchewan—52 hospitals, pardon me. Hospitals closed in B.C., hospitals closed in Ontario. Hospitals closed in Manitoba, none. That basic misunderstanding of basic arithmetic also applies to the terms of surplus. How can you call a \$500-million-a-year interest charge as a result of a surplus?

It must also be frustrating to be in opposition when the government announces intentions to legislate balanced budgets. One would have thought this ground-breaking proposal would have encouraged some discussion in this debate on the principle behind it. But no, what we hear from benches opposite is huffing and puffing about making it retroactive or suggestions of hypocrisy that a government who has deficit-financed in the past should speak of such things. I am reminded of my agricultural background when even the best of farmers require time to bring neglected land back to full production.

An even better analogy occurred after the last world war. We are lucky this current pack of opposition members was not around then. When countries of the world formed the United Nations to fight the recurrence of armed conflict, would they have accused countries like Great Britain, Canada, the United States, just to mention a few, who had engaged in an all-out military effort for six years to bring the threatening tyrannies to their knees, would they have accused them, these countries, of hypocrisy for engaging in war and then trying to prevent it afterwards?

Because of this government's all-out battle against the tyranny of deficit finance, the window

of opportunity to deter such future management is near at hand. Certainly there are a host of different reasons why it could not or should not be. I have advanced some of those reasons myself, but such legislation should and could profoundly affect the way future governments manage.

I have no hesitation, on behalf of the people of Turtle Mountain, in wholeheartedly supporting the principle of such legislation. Constituencies represented by the opposition are left to wonder where their representatives stand.

Mr. Speaker, I have been fortunate to represent the people of Turtle Mountain. By and large, their interest in politics occurs at election time when they well perform their civic duty and opportunity. By and large, between elections they prefer to be left alone to get on with their lives and to be left alone by government.

By and large, they take their responsibility for themselves and for their communities. By and large, they recognize that governments cannot provide but only promote policies that allow their individual talents and energies to flourish.

Given this kind of a constituency, it has been an honour and a pleasure to work with them and a pleasure to work with them and for them. I look with some satisfaction on things that were not there four years ago, GRIP and NISA, for example, for the agricultural community; two decentralization projects, one in Killarney, one in Souris; privatization of rural telephone lines, albeit with the accompanying nostalgia for the disappearing party line.

It is interesting to note in passing that 50 years ago we had teleconferencing because we had eight or 10 people on the same party line. It was a simple matter to get a community meeting—Rosann will remember those days. By simply turning a little crank on the side of the telephone a certain number of times, everyone in the community came on the line.

* (2050)

We have new cellular towers that bring the cellular telephone service to all of Turtle Mountain, which were not there before. A major project has been completed to divert part of the Pembina River into Pelican Lake, restoring this lake to a pleasant recreational and tourist area and resulting in Pelican Lake being chosen for the sailing site for the 1997 Canada games, headquartered in Brandon.

We have just completed two successful Grow Bond projects, the opportunity to bring natural gas to four major communities in Turtle Mountain, the designation of two east-west highways with the attendant advantages of increased tourism and heritage recognition.

We have had literally dozens of community initiative projects completed with the help of various departments of government and their very capable personnel. A partial list and partially responsible for increased optimism despite the fact there was a violent late August storm which really damaged many of the farms and towns in Turtle Mountain.

I invite all Manitobans to visit Turtle Mountain and enjoy the many attractions of historical, recreational and natural drawing cards. You will be welcomed by the people who are proud to contribute to the many advantages of our province and who have made me proud to be their MLA.

Mr. Speaker, the subject of gun control has been an issue inside and outside the House in the last few weeks. I would like to talk about that for a few minutes, not so much in a confined manner, but as a larger example of the challenges facing future elected officials.

I believe politicians are elected to use their judgment, hired by the people for four or five years to garner as much information as possible on various issues, to identify problems, judge whether proposed solutions will be positive or negative in the long run or whether they will be effective or noneffective. That is how our government formed our conclusions and sent them to the federal Minister of Justice to try and influence federal legislation.

Follow the steps. Number one, identify the problem you are trying to solve, in this case the use of weapons in violent situations. Number two, gather as much information as possible, and this turns out to be interesting information because in 1993 only 7 percent of violent crimes involved firearms. Broadened to weapons of all kinds, 33 percent of violent crimes involved weapons. Similarly, spousal abuse data indicates that in 90 percent of the cases some weapon other than a gun was used, knives, bottles, baseball bats, cars, ash trays, et cetera.

Step No. 3, does the proposed solution of registering all guns solve the use of weapons in violent situations? Conclusion, well no, because the vast majority of cases do not even involve a firearm in the first place. In fact, will the proposed registration or the proposed solution of registering all firearms have an effect on those violent crimes committed with a firearm? Probably not. If someone is bent on violence with a weapon, the fact that it is registered will not matter or, at the most, will only cause the perpetrator to use something else. It follows then to try and solve the original problem of violent crimes committed with a weapon, it makes more sense to increase the penalties as deterrent for the use of any weapon.

Unfortunately, this recommendation, logical and courageous given the current political corrections of gun control, was deemed in some quarters to be a rural victory for the rambles of the world. I resent the implication that rural people are any less concerned with violence. There is a different attitude between people that live in the rural area and people that live in the urban centres, but it is simply because rural people are more accustomed to guns. I do not like to generalize because I know that there are people in urban centres who enjoy collecting firearms and the recreational use of them, and I know there are people in the rural areas that would be quite happy if there were no guns at all.

But generally, in the rural areas we grew up with guns. They were there. There was the wood stove, the kitchen table, the coat rack where we hung our outside clothes and the gun rack—

An Honourable Member: The teleconferencing phone.

Mr. Rose: —and the teleconferencing telephone.

Granted that the polls show support for gun registration, but we must be conscious in our task of lawmakers that people polled probably do not know the facts. I do not say that in a derogatory sense. They do not have the time or inclination to get the facts on all issues.

In this case, many are probably not aware that handguns and automatic weapons of war are already registered and controlled and, I might add, still being used in at least some of the crimes earlier described.

We even had the spectacle in this House of a member of the Liberal benches suggesting that registering all weapons would reduce illegal smuggling. My goodness. Reason backed by dozens of actual experiences tells us that whenever you make any commodity more difficult to obtain, the use of the black market increases one way or another.

Surely he remembers the most recent example of the federal Liberals' courageous stand on cigarette smuggling. How did they solve that? By lowering the tax so domestic production was competitive. Is that the way they will handle the legal importation of guns, by making it easier to obtain them in Canada?

Just as an aside, I look forward to the provincial Liberals standing up for Manitobans by demanding that we be treated the same as other Canadians when it comes to federal taxes on tobacco. Only in a Liberal Canada would some Canadians be required to pay \$300 to \$400 more annually in federal tax for exactly the same product.

Well, if gun registration proceeds, I hope that at least we hire some university students for the task rather than tie up the time of our law enforcement officers in registering the guns of our law abiding citizens while the criminals roam unattended.

I hope it works to reduce violence even though I fear it is governing by political correctness rather than analyzing the problem, assessing the facts and taking action that will work.

Responsible gun owners will grudgingly register their weapons, but there is a fundamental concern beyond that, a concern that registration will lead to confiscation. Absolutely not, say the proponents, and I believe them, simply because governments do not plan that far ahead, but gun owners know it has happened already.

Despite my best efforts on behalf of one of my constituents, under current legislation his automatic weapon was taken and destroyed without compensation. This weapon was legally obtained, legally owned, and the owner had not an ounce of interest or intent to use it for any other purpose than for target shooting.

Then we had the same Liberal member from the Liberal party telling us that suicides will be reduced if all guns are registered. I hope he is right, but I suspect that the suicidal mind will not care if the gun is registered, and some future politician will say, well, that did not work, better take the guns away.

A few years ago there was a rabid skunk that entered the porch of a neighbour's home and bit a small boy. A handy shotgun disposed of the problem. The boy's cure was long and painful. Well, you can take away my gun, and I will use an axe; and you can take away my axe, and I will use a club; and you can take away my club, and I will use my bare hands, but I will protect my children, my community and my country from the rabid skunks of the world, be they four-legged or two-legged.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am sure some members of the opposite benches are thinking, there he goes again, that old white guy, that member of the old boys' club, being insensitive to violence in general and violence against women in particular. In the vernacular of the times, not. Most of us males tend to be macho. We like sports with body contact. We tend to be a little loutish and crude

from time to time, and we often smell badly. Despite these endearing qualities there are many sensitive males, hundreds, thousands, millions of men that are sensitive to the feelings and viewpoints of others.

Let there be no mistake. In the minds of many, the greatest increase in violence recently in our land is violence perpetrated by women on the unborn. It is not my purpose to argue the validity of that viewpoint from either one side or the other, but rather simply to use that example to illustrate that there are inconsistent viewpoints among all of us, depending on whether we view ourselves as victims or, on the other hand, whether we view ourselves as protectors of our rights and the rights of others as individuals to choose freely.

* (2100)

I applaud the federal government for attacking the problem of violence with weapons. I fear they have not followed the second and third step of decision making, gathered information, then proposed solutions that may address the problem. Instead they are following popular misconceptions. Hopefully, their actions will at least have some effect.

Mr. Speaker, let me be the first to congratulate what I am sure are any number of current sitting members who will be successful in the next election. I hope that you will return to the Thirty-sixth Legislature with your new colleagues and govern well. I ask only that you be aware and be mindful of the awesome power we have as a group of individuals inside this Chamber, the awesome power we have to affect the lives of the people of our province. Be mindful of the awesome responsibility that goes with that.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): First of all, I would like to welcome you back as the Speaker. I have always appreciated your fairness and your guidance that you have given to all members of the House. Also I would like to welcome back the table officers and the new Pages and also our new interns. As you know, they are in all of our caucuses, two from each party. I

know that we appreciate a lot of their work and effort that they do on our behalf.

I would like to wish well the outgoing member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) and the member for Riel (Mr. Ducharme) and also the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), who will be leaving us after the next election, and whoever else who may be contemplating leaving. I wish you all the best and I know I have enjoyed my moments whenever we have had the occasion.

I know in this coming campaign and this election a lot of the issues and a lot of the discussions are going to centre around health, jobs and education, and rightfully so, because they are very important for all citizens of Manitoba. As some people have said in the past, you can have everything you want, but without your health you have nothing. I think that is so true, so I think we have to make sure that we ensure that we protect our health care system, which is the best in the world, I think.

When you look at the make-up of Manitoba and you look at the inner city, the constituency of Point Douglas, and you look at the make-up of northern Manitoba, and look at how many people are out of work right now and how many people would like the opportunity for jobs; I think that is going to be one of the most important tasks of whoever comes into government the next election, to try and create employment opportunities and give people a chance for hope and give people an opportunity to live in dignity and to provide for themselves. So jobs will be very important.

I would like to just touch a minute on education, because that is going to be very crucial for our children. I have always said that I have absolutely nothing against private schools. The only thing that I have always stated is that when my son graduates from the public school system, I want him to have the best education possible, and when he goes in for a job interview or interview to attend a university that he is going in with the same level playing field as someone who has graduated from a private school. That is all I have ever asked and that is all that I would ever ask.

When you look at education opportunities, I would like to make sure that our public system always will be maintained to be the best.

There is one important issue that is and will be affecting a lot of the constituents of Point Douglas. I was very disheartened to hear the announcement by the federal Liberals when it came to immigration policies, because there are a lot of immigrants that live in Point Douglas that have made Canada their new home. If you look even in this make-up of the Chamber, most of the members here or their families were immigrants at one time. When we look at that, a lot of times we in this Chamber and elsewhere out in public, when you hear people speaking at different events, you always hear, people always mention the importance of family, the importance of being together at occasions, whether it is a birthday or a celebration, how important it is to have family around all the time and to be with family.

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

It is no different whether you are a new Canadian or immigrant from another country; it is very important to have your family with you. A lot of the people, when they immigrate to our great country, they hope at some time in their life that they will have the means or the ability to bring their loved ones to Canada with them.

So I was very disappointed when I heard the announcement by the federal government. It is really a shame, because we sometimes lose the vision of how Canada came to be. When you look at the aboriginal people, it is a given, the aboriginal people were here, but everyone else were immigrants to Canada. When you look at that and then all of a sudden now we are seeing the more important aspects, it always comes down to dollars. If you have the dollars, you can speak English or French, you can come to Canada. But if you do not have the dollars but you are willing to work hard and at minimum wage and do whatever is possible to give to your new country, whether it is washing dishes or cooking or doing whatever, now a lot of those avenues will be

closed for a lot of people that would have made Canada their home with their families that are here now.

So I am very disappointed to see that and I am very proud that my party, the NDP, has brought resolutions forward hopefully that will deal with that and hopefully will convince the federal government to change their minds.

With that, I would just like to read into the record the Private Members' Resolutions that my colleagues have brought forward, and we will be doing what we can to hopefully convince the federal government to reverse their cruel choice.

So my colleague the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) brought forward the resolution in which it states:

WHEREAS Canada is a country built by immigrants; and

WHEREAS Canadians from all cultures have been able to live together in harmony and mutual tolerance; and

WHEREAS immigration has a net economic and social benefit for our society by providing labour and investment, purchasing goods and services, attending our universities and stimulating job creation; and

WHEREAS family reunification is a vital component of immigration policy because family supports allow new Canadians to settle more quickly into the community and because in many cultures there is a strong reliance and emphasis on the extended family; and

WHEREAS immigration to Manitoba has steadily declined over the last four years and now reflects only 1.8 percent of Canada's immigration instead of the 4 percent of Canada's total immigration to which Manitoba is entitled; and

WHEREAS in the 1993 federal election the Liberal Party promised to maintain a fair immigration policy, including immigration levels

set at 1 percent of Canada's population annually; and

WHEREAS the Liberal Party also promised, "a system that balances a strong enforcement and fairness and humanitarian and family values"; and

WHEREAS changes to Canada's immigration policy have been announced which will see the numbers of independent immigrants increased while family reunification is curtailed through changes in categories of immigrants making immigration levels well below the 1 percent of population target; and

WHEREAS family reunification is also threatened by strict new requirements on language and the posting of bonds; and

WHEREAS this culturally insensitive policy will leave many new Canadians with no option to sponsor their close relatives and reunite their families.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the federal government to consider keeping its promises on immigration, especially as they apply to family reunification; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the federal and provincial governments to consider making family reunification a top priority in their ongoing negotiations on immigration objectives in Manitoba; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the federal government to enter into an immigration agreement with the provincial government which is comparable to agreements in other provinces; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly direct the Clerk of the Assembly to send a copy of this resolution to the federal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and to all Manitoba members of Parliament.

* (2110)

Madam Deputy Speaker, with that you can see how important it is to myself and to my party on supporting immigrants to be reunited with their families and their loved ones to continue on with family values, their cultures and tradition.

Also, on top of that, the federal government has even created another hardship on immigrants that want to make Canada their new home. That is the \$500 fee that it is charging immigrants to even apply to immigrate to Canada.

So I am very proud that my party and the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) brought forward this private member's resolution trying to address that problem and, hopefully, would convince the federal Liberal government to rescind a cruel, cruel action on immigrants and the ability of raising the fees to bring their loved ones to Canada.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would just like to read the private member's resolution on record, and it states:

WHEREAS immigrants face many barriers before arriving in Canada; and

WHEREAS the current application fee of \$500 limits the ability of the less fortunate to apply to immigrate to Canada; and

WHEREAS the application fee of \$500 means that immigrants are subsidizing the federal Department of Immigration; and

WHEREAS there are extreme differences between average annual incomes in various countries of origin.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request the federal government to consider reviewing application fees in the country of origin; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly direct the Clerk of the Assembly to send

a copy of this resolution to the federal Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and to all Manitoba Members of Parliament.

So you can see, Madam Deputy Speaker, I and my party are very committed to work with the immigration people in Manitoba to try and undo some of the wrongs that the federal government has brought forward. We know that the citizens that it affects will have a lot to say.

Also, when new immigrants come to Canada a lot of them bring a lot of skills and a lot of qualifications with them, but what happens in most cases is that the government of Manitoba or the Government of Canada do not give recognition to these skills and degrees that immigrants bring forward. So I am also very proud of my party that has brought forward a resolution dealing with this great injustice. It was brought forward by the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), where is states:

WHEREAS human beings, considered as any country's most important resource, are not merely a material factor of production, but are instrumental to achieving nontangible values of fairness, freedom and individual self-actualization; and

WHEREAS recent immigrants to Canada and to Manitoba tend to possess higher than average levels of education and skills that contribute to the enrichment of the Canadian diversity essential to securing a position of competitiveness in a global economy; and

WHEREAS there are some new Canadians who settled in Manitoba and elsewhere in Canada who brought with them professional and technical education, skills and training which they are unable to use in Manitoba or elsewhere in Canada; and

WHEREAS there are institutionalized social structures in Manitoba and in Canada of vested self-interested and self-governing groups of professional and technical persons who collectively are exercising almost absolute

autonomy to the extent that the federal, provincial, municipal levels of government have practically abdicated the inherent public regulatory power of the Crown over the education, training, internship, admission, disciplining and other related processes connected with the creation, empowerment and operations of professional and technical associations, societies and organizations; and

WHEREAS the utilization of the professional and technical education, skills and training of new Canadians would, without many social costs, be immediately beneficial to Canada in general and to the province of Manitoba in particular.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the provincial government to consider implementing an enlightened policy of formal recognition and accreditation in meritorious cases that the professional and technical education, skills and training brought into Canada by new Canadians.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, we are very concerned and very committed to ensuring that new immigrants and new Canadians that come to Canada are given the opportunity to ensure that they can utilize the skills that they bring here.

Also, Madam Deputy Speaker, there are a lot of other issues that concern citizens of Point Douglas, and a lot of them I have raised in the past. I would like to just briefly address some of the issues.

One of the greatest issues that we have facing people in Point Douglas and that we have been trying to get corrected for at least the four and a half years I have been here is the whole issue of solvent abuse.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I was disappointed when the bill that was brought forward by the former member for St. Johns prior to being proclaimed was shelved and then watered down to only target minors, and as you know, on the police force, there are no officers who are under 18 years old who could be used to work undercover and buy the sniff products or solvent abuse products for evidence in court.

Also, when you look at constituents of Point Douglas, I know a lot of them had been going to the ACCESS program through the Winnipeg Education Centre. A lot of them were in the social work area, education area, and I was very disappointed to see the cutbacks to the ACCESS and New Careers program.

When I look at some of the negative issues that have taken place in the constituency of Point Douglas, I do not have to look further than the corner of Selkirk and Main. We see the banks making record profits, and yet one of the oldest establishments and one of the oldest banks that people have used for years and years was on the corner of Main and Selkirk, the Royal Bank. They have closed that down, and yet the seniors and the elders that used the bank there and supported that bank, through good times and bad, are now totally deprived of their banking privileges.

Also, another issue that I would like to raise is the whole increase in rents from 26 percent for a one-bedroom to 27 percent. That has hurt a lot of the seniors in Point Douglas who live in seniors blocks, and also for the first time, they have had to pay rent on their property tax rebate. That has hurt the seniors, and I think it is totally unfair to take draconian measures such as that.

Also, I have requested many times, since I have been elected, on behalf of the seniors at 817 Main Street, they have been trying to get a parking lot since I have been elected in 1990. I have asked every year for the seniors at 817 if there has been the will of the government to put in a parking lot for them, and I have been told every year, yes, it is coming, it is coming, and I hope this year, it will finally take place, and they will get their parking lot.

Also, I had a meeting with the residents of Lord Selkirk housing, and we had a very pleasant meeting with the Minister of Housing (Mrs. McIntosh). The residents had made many recommendations, and she said she would look into them after a pilot project had taken place in another area. I hope that will come to be and that the residents will be given more responsibility and

more authority that they were hoping to help screen the tenants and be responsible for some of the maintenance work and also look at some of the grass cutting and be responsible for the community. So I hope they will get a favourable response from the Housing minister. I look forward to that.

* (2120)

Also, we must ensure that we support all the small businesses. It is only a small climb from 700 and some thousand for the federal, is it not, 740,000. Also, we have to make sure that small businesses in the constituency of Point Douglas and all constituencies, whether they are rural or north, are given assistance and the support to make them successful.

Also, when we are on the subject of banks being cut, I would just like to read into the record of some of the contributions to the Liberal Party by the Bank of Nova Scotia, \$4,225; Bank of Montreal, \$3,500; National Bank of Canada, \$1,000; Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, \$2,500; Canada Trust Company, \$3,000. We go on and on and on, all the banks and the corporations, the Royal Bank of Canada \$3,500, National Trust, and it just goes on and on and on. So no wonder when the Royal Bank was closed down on Selkirk and Main we did not hear a whimper from the Liberals.

One of the cutbacks that really hurt a lot of the seniors trying to live in their own home was the \$75 clawback of the taxes for homeowners and also the cuts to the emergency Home Renovation Program that was totally cut out. The emergency Home Renovation Program was used there for low-income individuals.

If they ever had to do renovations in their own homes to live in their own homes that money was there for them, but now what they have to do is, they have to get a loan. It is a pay-back loan and a lot of the individuals would have a hard time getting a loan, but they are trying to maintain their own home and a lot of them are seniors who want to live in their own home.

Instead of the emergency home repair program helping low-income earners and seniors, what it was, it was changed to where you had to spend \$5,000 to get a thousand back. Well, a lot of the people in Point Douglas do not have \$5,000 to fix their house up, so I recommended at that time that it would be prorated over the amounts. If a person spent say a thousand dollars or two thousand, they would get a percentage of that back.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would just like to touch on a few of the aboriginal issues where we have seen this government drastically, drastically cut aboriginal supports and aboriginal programs. A hundred percent of the funding was cut in 1993 and there were forced layoffs at the friendships centres, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, cultural operation grants to native communications, First Natives Confederacy and MKO. Also a cutback which was an excellent program that serviced a lot of the northern people and the aboriginal children was Northern Fly-In Sports Camp, that was cut.

Northern Freight Subsidy was cut. Northern Economic Development Agreement with the federal-provincial expired in 1989, nothing was happened from that. Community Places Grants, they were funded 50-50, and it was not equal-funding anymore.

Also the Youth Justice Committee, Ste. Theresa Point, funding is running out. I hope the government will put some of that funding back in, and we have been proposing and supporting the aboriginal community for a solvent abuse treatment centre for the North but still no action. Northern Youth Core has been cut, and it goes on and on and on.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

The Urban Aboriginal Strategy that I have been asking for many, many years—almost every year that I have been here I have asked where is the Urban Aboriginal Strategy. I have heard every year it is coming. I asked again, I hear it is coming, and now it is 1994 and I am even hesitant to ask because I will probably be told it is coming. And you know that in the Urban Centre and Point

Douglas especially we need a very active Urban Aboriginal Strategy to deal with jobs and education opportunities.

While I am on the subject of aboriginal issues, I would just like to mention that I was very, very disappointed in our colleagues here to the left, the provincial Liberal Party, who were out there stating that they are for and will be working with aboriginal people in Manitoba.

How often have the members travelled up North to show that commitment to aboriginal people? Aboriginal people have told me that they were very disappointed, and some of them were supportive of the Liberal Party but will no longer be because they were totally insulted. There were great events, there were historical events that happened in the province of Manitoba—[interjection]

An Honourable Member: They were not there?

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

Mr. Hickes: No, they were not there. I was even personally insulted by that, but I should not be because, for instance, the Aboriginal Veterans Day, which was proclaimed on November 8 by the Premier of Manitoba which was a private member's resolution that was brought forward, they asked the provincial Liberal Party to lay a wreath. There was not one member of the party there to do that in honour of the aboriginal veterans who laid their lives down. There was not one member to do that. There was a letter there to be read by the Prime Minister of Canada. Darren, you were there—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): On a point of order, the member has indicated on the record that the Liberal Party did not send somebody to Veterans Day for First Nations individuals.

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

* * *

Mr. Hickes: You have five other members. You have five other—you have no other caucus members?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The committee chairperson has ruled there was no point of order.

The honourable member for Point Douglas, to continue with his remarks.

Mr. Hickes: What a cheap way to get out of it.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Point Douglas, you are on the record, sir.

Mr. Hickes: To continue on with my speech, Mr. Speaker, the member from the Conservative side was there, I was there, the member for The Pas was there, and when they announced the laying of the wreath, they did not announce the member for St. Boniface, they announced the member for Crescentwood, so you look after your own caucus.

On another note, the most historical moment for First Nations people was the signing of the agreement between the federal Liberal Party and the First Nations people. Was there a provincial Liberal member there? No, no, no. So how can you stand and say that? It was not important, I guess, the dismantling of Indian Affairs, the two most important events in aboriginal communities. Put actions to your words, do not just say you are going to do that.

That is the kind of politics, that is the kind of action that aboriginal people are fed up with, because you say one thing and yet you turn around and do something else because you do not really mean what you say. That is why. Talk about righteous. You go out there and start putting some

actions to your words. Damn right. That is enough of that crap. You cannot have it both ways. You cannot have it—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I just want to caution the honourable member for Point Douglas in your choice of words, sir. Some of them are quite unparliamentary.

Mr. Hickes: For me, it was a very important occasion, two very important occasions for aboriginal peoples, very, very important. I know some of the leadership and some of the people came to me and said they were totally insulted by it, and I tried to apologize and I should not have done that. I just hope that from now on, they will put some action to their words instead of talking one thing and doing another.

With that, I would just like to apologize for my little outburst, because that is not my normal behaviour. I apologize to you, Mr. Speaker, not to the Liberal Party. I apologize to you, Mr. Speaker.

You should apologize to the aboriginal community. That is whom you should apologize to. We are not fools anymore, Kevin.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, I wish everyone in the House, and the Liberals, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you.

* (2130)

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to Rule 35(3), I am interrupting proceedings in order to put the question on the motion of the honourable Leader of the official opposition (Mr. Doer), that is, the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Do the members wish to have the motion read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the Leader of the official opposition (Mr. Doer) in an amendment thereto as follows:

That the motion be amended by adding to it the following words:

But this House regrets:

1. that there are fewer people working today than in September of 1990 when this government received its majority; and
2. that this government has continued to enhance corporate grants and tax breaks while training programs have been cut back, in particular, ACCESS and New Careers programs; and
3. that this government, while awaiting reports from over 100 committees studying health care is reducing its investment in health care by following American consultant Connie Curran's prescription for fewer services to Manitoba patients; and
4. that this government, despite promising initiatives to address the overall health of children in Manitoba since 1991, has yet to bring forward any specific proposals, but has instead cut important programs aimed at children's health like the Children's Dental Program; and
5. that this government has failed to work in partnership with parents, students and educators in rebuilding the public education system and instead has sought to foster confrontation; and
6. that this government has expanded gaming revenues in this province, without public consultation or review, at an unprecedented pace, resulting in an accumulated surplus in the Lotteries accounts of \$140 million at the same time as health and education programs throughout Manitoba have been cut back; and

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

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

Voice Vote

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Formal Vote

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested. Call in the members.

The question before the House is the motion of the honourable Leader of the official opposition, that is, the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne as which was read.

Division

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

Yeas

Ashton, Barrett, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Gray, Hickes, Kowalski, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McCormick, Plohman, Reid, Robinson, Santos, Schellenberg, Wowchuk.

Nays

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

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 25, Nays 28.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

Is it the will of the House to call it ten o'clock?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 10 p.m., this House now adjourns and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, December 12, 1994

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