



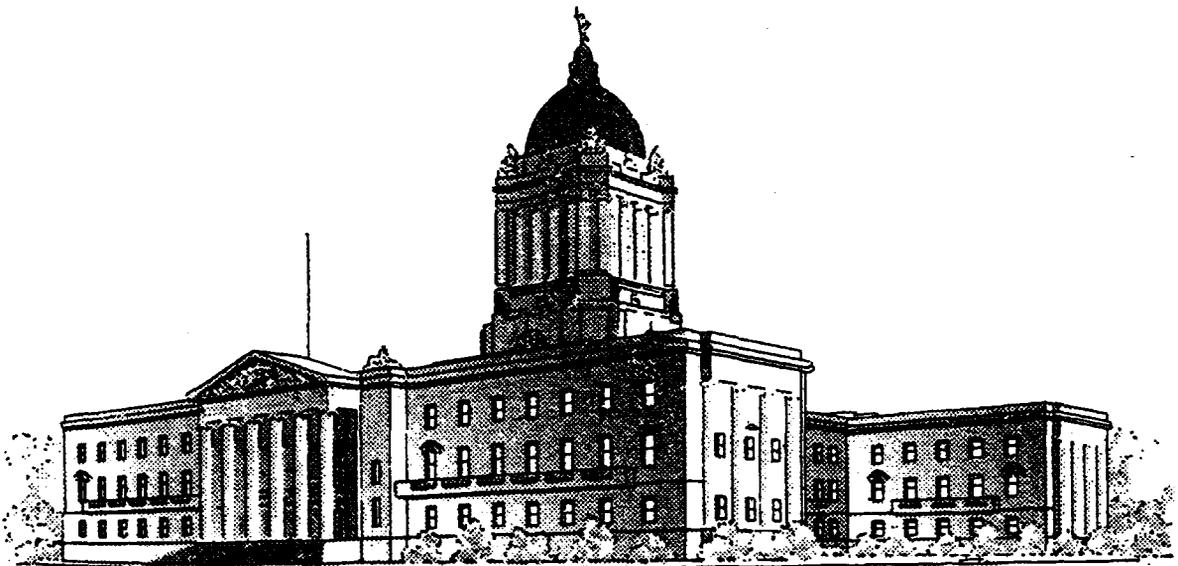
Second Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

<u>Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Party</u>
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 14, 1995

The House met at 1:30 p.m.**PRAYERS****ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS****PRESENTING PETITIONS****Emergency Health Care Services—
Concordia Hospital**

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Ken Hammersley, Lois Sterling, Tim Yaken and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba go on record requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider maintaining 24-hour access to emergency health care at Concordia Hospital, as was promised in the 1995 general election.

**Liquor Store Closure—
Winnipegosis**

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Jeannette Maniel, Michael Lynn, Ruth Carlson and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the Manitoba government instruct the Manitoba Liquor Commission to reverse the decision to close the Winnipegosis liquor store.

**Emergency Health Care Services—
Community Hospitals**

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of James Pede, Lloyd Wozny, Lorraine Wozny and others urging the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider making a commitment to the people of Manitoba that emergency health care services in Winnipeg's five community hospitals will remain open seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Eleanor Duguid, Mandy Klassen, Harold Klassen and others urging the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider making a commitment to the people of Manitoba that emergency

health care services in Winnipeg's five community hospitals will remain open seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

Immigration Policy

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Teodora I. Herrera, Felizardo Herrera and Ernesto Guevara and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Government of Canada cancel fee increases and instead institute policies that will encourage immigration to Manitoba.

**Emergency Health Care Services—
Concordia Hospital**

Mr. George Hikes (Point Douglas): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Tracy Wallbridge, John Senkiw, Sandra Munroe and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba go on record requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider maintaining 24-hour access to emergency health care at Concordia Hospital, as was promised in the 1995 general election.

**Emergency Health Care Services—
Community Hospitals**

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Maria Rossol, Marcella Demers, Terence Grabowski and others praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba go on record urging the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider making a commitment to the people of Manitoba that emergency health care services in Winnipeg's five community hospitals will remain open seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

* (1335)

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS**Emergency Health Care Services—
Community Hospitals**

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). It

complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

THAT emergency health care services are the core of Manitoba's health care system.

THAT Manitobans deserve the greatest possible access to this care.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Minister responsible for Health consider making a commitment to the people of Manitoba that emergency health care services in Winnipeg's five community hospitals will remain open seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Yes. The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned residents of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT emergency health care services are the core of Manitoba's health care system.

THAT Manitobans deserve the greatest possible access to this care.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Minister responsible for Health consider making a commitment to the people of Manitoba that emergency health care services in Winnipeg's five community hospitals will remain open seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election the Premier promised not to cut health care services; and

THAT following the election the Minister of Health promised that emergency services would not be reduced at community hospitals in Winnipeg; and

THAT the Minister of Health on October 6 announced that emergency services at these hospitals would be cut back immediately; and

THAT residents of Winnipeg and surrounding communities depend on emergency service at these community hospitals.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba go on record requesting the Premier to consider maintaining 24-hour access to emergency health care at community hospitals in Winnipeg as was promised in the 1995 general election.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election the Premier promised not to cut health care services; and

THAT following the election the Minister of Health promised that emergency services would not be reduced at community hospitals in Winnipeg; and

THAT the Minister of Health on October 6 announced that emergency services at these hospitals would be cut back immediately; and

THAT residents of Winnipeg and surrounding communities depend on emergency service at these community hospitals.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba go on record requesting the Premier to consider maintaining 24-hour access to emergency health care at community hospitals in Winnipeg as was promised in the 1995 general election.

* (1340)

Liquor Store Closure— Winnipegosis

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

WHEREAS the MLCC store has been a part of our community for many years, and

WHEREAS this store provides a good-paying job for the community, and

WHEREAS the MLCC rents a building to provide this service, and

WHEREAS the MLCC store has a much more varied selection of products than any private vendor, and

WHEREAS this store is convenient for all our residents, including our summer tourist trade, and

WHEREAS the MLCC employee is very careful to prevent sales to minors,

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the Manitoba government instruct the MLCC to reverse the decision to close the Winnipegosis liquor store.

Emergency Health Care Services— Concordia Hospital

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Yes. The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election the Premier promised not to cut health care services; and

THAT following the election the Minister of Health promised that emergency services would not be reduced at community hospitals in Winnipeg; and

THAT the Minister of Health on October 6 announced that emergency services at these hospitals would be cut back immediately; and

THAT residents of the Concordia Hospital vicinity depend upon emergency service at this hospital.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba go on record requesting the Premier to consider maintaining 24-hour access to emergency health care at Concordia community Hospital as was promised in the 1995 general election.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election the Premier promised not to cut health care services; and

THAT following the election the Minister of Health promised that emergency services would not be reduced at community hospitals in Winnipeg; and

THAT the Minister of Health on October 6 announced that emergency services at these hospitals would be cut back immediately; and

THAT residents of the Concordia Hospital vicinity depend upon emergency service at this hospital.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba go on record requesting the Premier to consider maintaining 24-hour access to emergency health care at Concordia community Hospital as was promised in the 1995 general election.

Emergency Health Care Services— Community Hospitals

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election the Premier promised not to cut health care services; and

THAT following the election the Minister of Health promised that emergency services would not be reduced at community hospitals in Winnipeg; and

THAT the Minister of Health on October 6 announced that emergency services at these hospitals would be cut back immediately; and

THAT residents of Winnipeg and surrounding communities depend on emergency service at these community hospitals.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba go on record

requesting the Premier to consider maintaining 24-hour access to emergency health care at community hospitals in Winnipeg as was promised in the 1995 general election.

* (1345)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table the Third Quarterly Report for 1995 for the Manitoba Telephone System.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have with us this afternoon forty Grade 9 students from Victor Mager School under the direction of Mr. Todd Desautels, Mr. Allen Villar and Mr. Larry Patrick. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Riel (Mr. Newman).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Faneuil ISG Inc. Agreement Michael Bessey Role

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

Yesterday, we asked some questions about the transactions between the debt of the Telephone System in terms of notes flowing through to the Manitoba Trading Corporation and flowing through to Faneuil ISG and asked whether the taxpayers would be subject through the Trading Corporation to a \$3-million shortfall.

Madam Speaker, the Provincial Auditor's office has said and I quote, that we will have to cough up the \$3 million, i.e., the taxpayers, and that we have begun to write off some of that money already in our books.

I would like to ask the Premier whether in fact Mr. Bessey advised the government and cabinet that this

would be part of the agreement and why it was not in the original press release.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, the entire process involves many, many elements to it, many of them, if not all of them, of great interest and importance to Manitoba and to its economy.

For instance, during the period of the seven-year agreement with Faneuil, we not only will receive some \$18 million in tax revenue, we will receive the entire repayment of the \$16-million loan plus interest all the way through the piece. Even though in the first year they only receive \$6 million of the debt that is being transferred from MTS, they are paying interest on \$16 million. Even though in year two they will only have received \$11 million of the debt from MTS, they will be paying interest on \$16 million, so the taxpayer receives revenues based on this net present value of the loan in excess of what they would normally receive.

So all of that taken together, plus the fact that there are jobs—240 equivalent full-time jobs, 340 total jobs today—those are people who are paying taxes. We are getting income taxes from those people. We are getting payroll taxes from those people. We are getting sales tax from the goods that Faneuil is buying in Winnipeg. We are getting corporate taxes from all of those things, Madam Speaker. All of those advantages are there as a result of this Faneuil agreement. We believe that the agreement more than compensates the people of Manitoba, the Province of Manitoba.

This is the kind of thing that I would think members opposite ought to be very excited about, to have a thousand jobs created over a seven-year period, to have \$18 million of revenue, and all they can do is knock it. All they can do is knock it. That just shows why they are on that side of the House and why they have no credibility with the people of Manitoba.

Due Diligence

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, it is interesting to watch the ethics of members opposite as they clap for an individual who negotiated this agreement and is now getting his tuition paid for by one of the financial principals. The Premier never

answered the question about the Auditor's comments today, the Auditor's office, and he obviously could not.

Madam Speaker, my further question is to the Premier. He talked about the due diligence that was conducted on behalf of BCE, Venture, Vision Capital and a number of other venture organizations, all the recipients of the public assets, the data information. The Premier never spoke about the due diligence done by the public who were ordered to sell an asset, i.e., the database, to this new Faneuil ISG through the Manitoba Trading Corporation.

I would like the Premier, on behalf of the public of Manitoba and on behalf of the Crown corporation, the Manitoba Telephone System, to table today the due diligence conducted by the Manitoba Telephone System about why they should sell their data through the Trading Corporation and through over to Faneuil ISG. Could he do that, please?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I indicated to the member opposite that this agreement was the subject of the most extensive due diligence process that has probably ever been conducted—

Some Honourable Members: Table it.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the members opposite would please indulge me to be able to respond to them.

Madam Speaker, this took place over a period of more than six months. It involved the Economic Development Board. It involved the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, the Manitoba Telephone System and six outside private sector firms in the areas of legal, technical and financial concerns, as well as BCE and Vision Capital who are major equity partners in the project. It covered people, corporate finance, auditing, legal, technical, customer satisfaction, personal background checks.

Some of the specific examples I might give him are a review of the business and marketing plans, a review of all the financial statements and pro forma, personal checks on all senior management including RCMP checks and every other type of check, review of the

agreements to acquire businesses, review of minute books, review of incorporation documents, interviews with equity investors, reviewing all intellectual properties, rights and issues, review of all technical capabilities.

There was a check and review of client satisfaction through customer contacts, check with the creditors and bankers. It reviewed the banking commitments and the banking documents from a security point of view.

Madam Speaker, I will complete the list as time goes on.

* (1350)

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, rather than take the time in Question Period, I am wondering if the Premier might be prepared to table the document he is referring to, along with the due diligence that we have requested he table as well. That might perhaps enable us to get the information required. Will the Premier please table that information he was reading from?

Mr. Filmon: You asked the question, and I am putting it on the record.

Michael Bessey Investigation—Terms of Reference

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, the Premier cannot answer the comments of the Auditor's office about a \$3-million loss. The Premier cannot table today the due diligence conducted by the Manitoba Telephone System which was the company required by the Filmon government and by Mr. Bessey to sell the data to this organization.

I did not ask the question about people buying it; I am interested in the people who were selling it, that is, the public of Manitoba. You refused to answer that, so just table the due diligence.

My further question is, the Premier has now agreed to hire Mr. Scurfield to investigate the issues raised by Mr. Bessey's tuition fee paid by Mr. Browne, his book advance paid for by Mr. Browne, negotiated apparently at a time when he was still working for the Premier and the people of Manitoba.

I would like to ask the Premier, will Mr. Scurfield be able to examine the broader ethical issues in some of the contracts that were negotiated in Mr. Bessey's capacity working for Industry, Trade and Tourism? Will Mr. Scurfield have broad terms of reference to investigate the arrangements made through the Manitoba Trading Corporation, and will they investigate Mr. Bessey's relationship as a board member on the Faneuil ISG board?

In other words, will the Premier please table today the full terms of reference, and will they please include the deals on one side of the street, as well as the personal arrangements made on the other side of the street?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, Mr. Scurfield will have the latitude to be able to respond to all of the allegations and issues that have been raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

I might say that the Leader of the Opposition gets upset when I give him all of the information that he asked for because he is not interested in the truth, he is not interested in facts. He is only interested in innuendo.

Point of Order

Mr. Doer: On a point of order, the Premier is impugning the motives of members opposite. The truth has been given by the Provincial Auditor's office and it does not coincide with the answers given in this House. I would ask the Premier to withdraw those ridiculous statements.

Madam Speaker: On the Leader of the official opposition's point of order, I did not hear the exact words that the Leader of the official opposition referred to, so as a direct result I will take the matter under advisement and report back to the Chamber, if necessary.

Department of Health Budget

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, we hear that the government is planning to cut 2 percent of

its budget across the board in the next year, and we know the Minister of Health, who has closed 500 beds so far, has adopted the Calgary model of bed closures, and the government is planning to close up to 1,500 beds in Manitoba, including 1,000 in the city of Winnipeg. I will table a government document to that effect. I will table the government document that talks about the bed closures in Winnipeg alone, 1,049 beds.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health, why have you chosen to make your budget cuts on the backs of Manitobans who have already suffered so dramatically as a result of your budget cuts, and will you advise the House today, what is the budget cut in the Department of Health that is being made for next year?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, the honourable member talks about a number of things, much of which is preamble in its nature and usually, coming from honourable members opposite, extremely questionable. He makes reference to what he calls the Calgary model when he knows full well that very often we look to what has been happening in our neighbouring province to the west, the province of Saskatchewan, where we will be doing the bed counts, as they are called there, both before they closed 52 rural hospitals and after they closed 52 rural hospitals, so that we can get an idea when we are talking about acute hospital capacity what is going on in places in the rest of the country.

We have heard about Calgary, we have heard about Vancouver, we have heard about Ontario, both before the Bob Rae government and after the Bob Rae government, and what we are trying to achieve is the appropriate mix for Manitoba. These other numbers are interesting and sometimes relevant to the discussion, but the Manitoba demographics have differences from demographics in places like Calgary, for example, where I understand in Manitoba we have an older population. That has to be taken into account, too.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Speaker, why is the minister afraid to confirm the figures in his own documents which talk about Calgary and cuts of 1,049 beds, and why is he refusing to tell us what the budget cut is in the Department of Health since we know it is going to

be at least 2 percent? Will he come clean today and tell us?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, we invited the honourable member to attend the forum discussing secondary and primary health care. I know he was there for some of it, and I know he is a busy fellow like I am and cannot be here for the whole thing, but certainly there are documents that flow from there. The member tables them on a regular basis, so, you know, he is involved in those discussions too.

We appreciate his being part of that and we appreciate his role, and we look forward to constructive input from the honourable member for Kildonan.

* (1355)

Health Care System Public Consultations

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, tomorrow at the Holiday Inn South the minister's hand-picked 12 executive committees are going to be making recommendations about the bed closures and the cuts, which include the conversion of Seven Oaks Hospital, the conversion of Misericordia Hospital, the possible transfer of the Children's Hospital to the Grace Hospital, the possible move of the Women's Pavilion to Grace Hospital.

Will the minister advise this House when the public and we in Manitoba will have an opportunity to comment on these changes prior to implementation by him and his executive hand-picked committee, Madam Speaker?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, just two or three days ago, we announced major changes with respect to emergency services and the potential for other change as well. The honourable member would be a witness to the fact that, over three months, there has been nothing but public discussion about emergency services issues.

The honourable member wants to deny the tens of thousands of petitions expressing points of view by members of the public, by newspaper, radio and

television coverage of issues related to emergency services, his own part played almost on a daily basis when the House has been in session, Madam Speaker.

There has been plenty of public discussion, and I dare say there will be plenty more as we proceed through changes to improve and make more effective our health care services.

**Lord Selkirk School Division
Senior 2 Math Curriculum**

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education.

The minister has received notification that Lord Selkirk School Division has discontinued its participation in the piloting of the new Senior 2 math. Madam Speaker, this is the first time in 20 years of experience in piloting provincial curricula that the school division has taken such a drastic step.

I want to ask the minister to confirm that the reason for this unprecedented disruption of a program is the lack of departmental support and the absence of professional development for teachers in the program.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Speaker, I indicate to the member that I have not received that word. It may have been received in the department and I will certainly check into that when I get back to my office.

But I must indicate to the member, as well, that we have been having ongoing discussions and dialogue with the three organizations of MASS, MAST and MTS concerning implementation of the new blueprint and the Foundations for Excellence. With those organizations, their assistance, we are looking at professional development as one of the many aspects that are being put in place to ensure a good participation and a good understanding of New Directions and Foundations for Excellence.

Professional development, Madam Speaker, is certainly high on our list of priorities and is one we have had many discussions on with the Teachers' Society, the superintendents in particular.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Speaker, well, when the minister goes back to investigate an issue which I think has been on her desk for some time, could she then come back to the House and explain why, given her commitment to professional development, there has been no textbook prepared for this course, there has been no professional development and indeed there have been no support documents prepared for what is a new course, a very important course, Senior 2 math, important to any Minister of Education? Will she investigate that and table a report on that in this House?

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

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member knows that we have several things going on at the moment. We have frameworks for a curriculum development being prepared through the Western Protocol and here in Manitoba. We also have pilot testing going on. We have, as the member should know, testing that has been done for a number of years in various subject areas, and that testing is good preparation in readiness for the testing that will be counted when the pilot status is taken off and permanent implementation occurs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I repeat again that we have been working with school superintendents, with the Manitoba Teachers' Society and with the school trustees on implementation of testing of new curricula. The matters that she raises as concerns, if they are indeed concerns, I know they have been raised with my staff but have not been raised specifically the way she raises them with me by the major stakeholders with whom I communicate regularly.

**Education System
Funding**

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think the real issue is evident in the kinds of answers we have had today on that question.

I want the minister to tell the House what the impact of an anticipated 2 percent cut this year in provincial funds to education will be on an education system which faces the rapid introduction of many new

curricula, larger classes, fewer teachers, school boundary changes and a continuing decline in financial support from a department which has transformed itself in the history of this government from an educational ally to a bully and which has made—co-operation has gone out the window. This is a department of confrontation, and the result is being seen in the Lord Selkirk School Division.

* (1400)

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): I think the member would be well advised to inform herself better before she comes to the House as to what relations are between this department and the field.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in recent weeks I have met on several occasions with the three organizations I mentioned earlier. We are working together in a very collegial, very co-operative relationship to implement blueprints.

The member shakes her head, no. I suggest she contact the president of the school superintendents association, the president of the Teachers' Society, and the president of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, who, together with me, have formed an implementation committee to work on the implementation of the blueprints so that it goes smoothly and well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, her indications of bullying, her assumptions that she already knows the funding for this year when that has not yet been determined are really indicative of the attitude that side of the House brings to this, which is to seek, find and encourage confrontation rather than to seek, find and welcome co-operation, which is our approach.

Her approach has been made very clear; she stands for the status quo, which has not worked in this province, which has much need for improvement. We have been told that by the people clearly and loudly, and so have they.

Pedophiles Child Abuse Registry

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

During the election, the government promised that persons convicted of soliciting sex from child prostitutes would be deemed to be child abusers and treated as such. We look forward to some action.

My question to the minister is, would she explain, if children are indeed so important to this government, why the government has not deemed all convicted pedophiles to be child abusers?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Deputy Speaker, we did make a very serious election promise about how people who deal with child prostitution should in fact be noted as child abusers.

In fact, we have gone further than that with the federal government—have said those people who are procurers of child prostitution, those people who bring young women into prostitution and virtually ruin their lives, should virtually face a life sentence, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So we are working very diligently on this particular issue because we understand, too, that it takes young women and puts them into a life where there are other criminal acts available also.

Mr. Mackintosh: Well, that was not my question. My supplementary, Mr. Deputy Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member that there is no preamble.

Mr. Mackintosh: Would the minister explain the absurdity that persons only suspected of child abuse, for example, are listed on the Child Abuse Registry, but all convicted pedophiles, proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, are not on that registry?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the member knows we have a Child and Youth Secretariat. We have an opportunity now to co-operate through a very formal vehicle, the Department of Justice, the Department of Family Services, the Department of Education and the Department of Health. We are always interested in looking at examining ways to make Manitoba safer.

Community Notification

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Deputy Speaker, despite the highly touted notification committee of the minister's creation, will the minister explain why, in this justice system that purposely sends dangerous people back into the community, she has not ensured public notification about convicted pedophiles, people who are not in positions of responsibility for their victims through the Child Abuse Registry which is a proven long-term notification for schools and child care centres?

Will she bring in the needed changes? If not, we will.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the community notification committee is the only one of its kind in this country. It is a model across this country.

The member seems confused. Somehow he has the idea that it is this committee which releases people. The release is when a person has served their full sentence. This government has asked for a long-term tracking system from the federal government. That has not yet been granted. So this government took it upon itself to make Manitoba safer and to put in place a process where there was considered a risk that that person might re-offend, to make sure that the community in Manitoba would know who that person was and could protect themselves.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member across the way has continually been critical of the community notification committee in saying that it is simply not the answer. Well, we believe the safety of Manitobans is the answer.

Health Sciences Centre Emergency Services—Capacity

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

The emergency services working group detailed in a news release an opinion that would have seen yet another community hospital, either the Seven Oaks or Concordia Hospital, close its emergency services.

Can the Minister of Health indicate whether or not the Health Sciences Centre emergency services has the capability and capacity to be able to service north end residents if you closed not only the Misericordia Hospital emergency services but also the Seven Oaks Hospital? Does the Health Sciences Centre have the capacity to do that?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the honourable member will recall a couple of days ago the announcement I made respecting emergency services. I would remind him also that the emergency services team recommended that there, in future, be five emergency rooms in addition to Children's Hospital operating in the city of Winnipeg, two of them at the tertiary centres of Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface Hospital and three community hospitals, one of them in north Winnipeg.

The honourable member knows all that and I know all that and that is as much as I can tell him today because there is more work to be done before further decisions are made.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Speaker, can the Minister of Health assure north end residents and inner city residents that in fact the Health Sciences Centre would have the capacity to be able to service emergency services needs just through the Health Sciences Centre? Is that possible?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I answered the question last time in saying that the recommendation is that we need, in addition to Children's Hospital, the services of the two tertiary hospitals and three community hospitals in the city, one of those three being in north Winnipeg.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Speaker, then can the Minister of Health confirm for the House, if he can, is Misericordia used at times as a hospital? If emergency services are at capacity at Health Sciences Centre, do they in fact divert patients from emergency services at the Health Sciences Centre to Misericordia, currently or in the past?

Mr. McCrae: Well, prior to the strike, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Misericordia Hospital emergency room was a

24-hour operation. During the strike, its daytime operations were curtailed—or carried on by staff that we could make available in light of the fact we had a strike.

Since the strike was over, the emergency services of Misericordia were kept closed down during the night. However, Misericordia Hospital was used as an overflow for Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface Hospital. We are glad they were there. They were not used very many times, but they were indeed used.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the arrangement is that Misericordia Hospital emergency room will remain closed at nighttime. We now have the additional capacity of four community hospitals added to the two tertiary centres in the interim period, later to be reduced to three.

* (1410)

Justice System Northern Court

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Mr. Deputy Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Justice.

Why is this government breaking yet another major recommendation of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, page 227, by moving the court from Lac Brochet to Lynn Lake, over 200 kilometres away by air, when the residents will be forced to spend hundreds of dollars to travel to Lynn Lake, only, in many cases, to be remanded?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Deputy Speaker, as the member knows, we have been working on a strategy for northern courts. That strategy has been a co-operative strategy. It has had the judges of the Provincial Court, it has had the legal community and local communities involved.

A number of steps have been taken in order to attempt to improve the service in the northern part of Manitoba.

Mr. Jennissen: Mr. Deputy Speaker, my final supplementary question to the same minister is: Since

the purpose of the justice system is to have a culturally sensitive legal system that can be respected by the communities affected, especially First Nations communities, will this minister agree that the needs and realities of life in northern Manitoba must come before the convenience of a court party?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure the member is acquainted with a number of the initiatives which we have put forward in order to deal with culturally sensitive issues.

I will point to the Magistrates Court, the pilot project in the community of Gods Lake Narrows, Cross Lake and Norway House in which we have Cree-speaking magistrates who are holding courts in those communities once a month. We also are attempting then to—[interjection]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am surprised at the other side. They were asking for the initiatives which have been put forward which are culturally sensitive to communities in the North, so I am attempting to provide a number of the initiatives which have been put in place with co-operation of the communities, and also which are culturally sensitive and in fact are a very co-operative movement in northern communities.

Hog Industry Marketing System

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government has based their recommendation to move to dual marketing hogs on a report that we feel was prepared by a biased group and by one that stands to gain from recommendation of the report to move to dual marketing. But there were many other recommendations in the report, for example, to establish an independent livestock operations review panel, more information to educate councillors.

Why did this government move on the one recommendation to go to dual marketing of hogs and not address all the other recommendations, such as educating councillors, environmental issues? In whose interests are they acting? Why are they moving to dual marketing now when they are not addressing all the other issues?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Acting Minister of Agriculture):

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think if the member looks back in Hansard, she will find that question has been answered several times by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns). I will take the specifics as notice on behalf of the minister, but I would recommend she read Hansard.

Ms. Wowchuk: Then I want to ask this government as well, since he said he is going to put in place a committee that will deal with the move to dual marketing, why he is not also acting on the recommendation that says to put in place a committee to co-ordinate education and training related to the pork industry? Why are they rushing on the one to move to dual marketing but not addressing the very important issue of education and training for producers? Why? In whose interests are they acting to move to dual marketing right now and ignoring all the other issues?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Deputy Speaker, again, if the member checks the record, she will find that the Department of Agriculture and the minister have been deeply involved in developing guidelines for the pork industry with the involvement of councillors, through UMM. It has been an ongoing project to serve the needs of the councillors.

Provincial Roads Maintenance

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Highways.

The Minister of Highways has maintained the responsibility for provincial road maintenance for many years. It now appears, however, that the Department of Highways and the minister are in the process of planning to contract out road maintenance operations to the rural municipalities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, such a change, a dramatic shift in policy, without proper consultation with the municipalities has caused confusion and will also cause hardship for many of these municipalities, if implemented.

Will the minister tell this House, if he has not consulted with the municipalities, whom did he consult

with in order to develop these proposals, since prior to a meeting on December 6, they failed to discuss this proposal with the municipalities and with UMM? Whom did he discuss this with?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that member was present at the UMM convention in Brandon, and I believe I mentioned to him at that convention that I had meetings over two days with 35 different municipalities or delegations of municipalities. Sometimes three and four municipalities at a time were in each meeting. Each meeting was a half hour where I asked them if they were interested in taking over the gravel road maintenance, summer and winter, and the common reply was, that makes all kinds of common sense.

So because of that response, because of that consultation, we are now in a process through UMM and the councils at arriving at what we would call a reasonable tariff to pay for that maintenance activity, but I want to remind the member, this has had consultation of an incredible extent.

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Deputy Speaker, how can this minister say what he has just said?

Will the minister confirm that not even the executive and the president of UMM knew about this proposal that he was telling different municipalities during his meeting, when municipalities that attended meetings with him from my constituency were not told anything? How can he say that?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the member wants to calm down, I will remind him that I met with 35 delegations. I mentioned it to every delegation that came in. I asked them, are they interested in taking over the maintenance on some kind of contractual arrangement? I said, my door is open to discussion on that. They responded on a continuous basis.

It made all kinds of common sense because they have the equipment. They are doing 80 or 90 percent of the roads in the area anyway. They are closer to the constituents they are serving. It is a greater degree of

efficiency; it reduces overlap and duplication in the provision of those kinds of services.

The department is in the process of following up on that initial demonstration of high level of interest, very high level of interest, on behalf of municipalities.

I have talked with UMM. I have talked to the president. I told him that his municipalities are interested. He said, that is very good, proceed.

Real Estate Industry Fraud Investigation

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

Two days ago the Minister of Consumer Affairs stated that his department had known about this house-flipping ring for over a year, a year and a half, and he did not think any action was needed until the RCMP completes their investigation, which could take months and months from now.

Now, given that the ring continues to operate to this day and over a hundred families in this city have been conned by this scam at a loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars, why will this minister not act now to protect homeowners?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the other day when the member raised this issue, I told him that it was uncovered by the investigation unit of the Manitoba Securities Commission.

They were the ones who found out it was going on, not the member across the way and not the newspaper. It was the officials from the Manitoba Securities Commission who discovered that this particular activity was going on. They raised it with CMHC, who is the offended party in this instance.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they have turned the matter over to the RCMP, and the RCMP is investigating the situation. When and if there are charges laid and evidence available to be able to determine what courses of action to take, we will take those actions.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Speaker, my supplementary question to the same minister is this: Since the minister now admits that the government knew about this scam over a year ago—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member that there is no preamble necessary.

The honourable member, to pose his question now.

Mr. Maloway: Why did they not act on affidavits submitted to his department last summer from at least two homeowners who were ripped off in this scam?

I have copies of these affidavits here.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is exactly what the Manitoba Securities Commission did do. They investigated and that is how they found out about it.

* (1420)

Louisiana-Pacific Timber Allocation

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Environment.

This government has committed 900,000 cubic metres of forest per year to Louisiana-Pacific. Federal departments and staff of the Department of Natural Resources have stated that the calculation of 900,000 cubic metres is inaccurate, yet any withdrawals from this number will put the province on the hook for over \$80 million.

Over a year ago this minister's own environmental council stated in their report to this minister that the capacity of the Louisiana-Pacific plant appears to be over twice the annual allowable cut for the area.

My question to the minister is this: Why did he choose to ignore the recommendations from his own environmental council, knowing that inaccurate calculations of the AAC could result in huge compensation costs to the Manitoba taxpayer?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): First of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will never ignore advice and always make sure that we get the best possible information in terms of decision making, as does the Ministry of Natural Resources. Unfortunately, what the member for Dauphin is ignoring is that there is an awful lot of difference in the harvestable quantity available when we are looking at the harvesting of aspen.

Mr. Struthers: I want to make it clear, this is his own committee that we are talking about.

When his council stated a year ago that either prime nontimber values will be threatened or some additional land should be subject to withdrawal, thus once again affecting sustained yield calculations, why did this minister not warn his government about the problems with the AAC calculations that would cost the taxpayers millions of dollars in compensation?

Mr. Cummings: Well, frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the assumptions of the member are wrong. The information has been reviewed and, as I have said on several occasions, not only is it reviewed by Natural Resources and the experts in that department, but in the second sense, the harvesting processes are screened through the environmental process. This is a very carefully managed resource and will not be put at risk.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Condolences—John George Sioux

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupert's Land): Mr. Deputy Speaker, may I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for Rupert's Land have leave for a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Robinson: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with regret that I rise today and, on behalf of the official opposition, extend our sincere condolences to the Sioux

Family of Sioux Valley Dakota First Nation in southwestern Manitoba. The passing of John George Sioux on December 11, a couple of days ago, indeed left a vacuum in the First Nations community of this province.

Mr. Sioux was not only a credit to First Nations people but indeed to all Canadians. He served in World War II. He served in France, Belgium and also in Holland during the Second World War. He also served in the Second Division of the Essex Scottish Regiment, and while on active duty, he was wounded in action. As well, he was a prisoner of war from 1943 to 1946 in Hong Kong. He served as chief and councillor for the Sioux Valley First Nation for many, many years, and he was one of the leaders in the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, the forerunner to the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs.

It is indeed with deep regret that I make this statement in the House today. I would like to extend our extreme and most sincere condolences to his wife, Elizabeth, and members of his family and also to the leadership of the Sioux Valley First Nation, Chief Ron Hall and the other councillors.

Again, the First Nations community has indeed lost a very dear man, a very beloved man and a man who provided a lot of guidance and direction to people like the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) and myself. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Nonfiction Contest— Winnipeg Free Press/Canadian Authors Association

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I seek leave to make a nonpolitical statement.

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

Mr. Jennissen: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this year's nonfiction contest award winner of the Winnipeg Free Press/Canadian Authors Association, Manitoba Branch, nonfiction contest was Mr. Dale Seddon of Leaf Rapids.

Mr. Dale Seddon won the contest with a superb story entitled *How to Tie Your Shoe Laces*. It was published in the *Free Press* last Tuesday. I recommend all honourable members read this delightful and poignant story. All Manitobans, and especially northern Manitobans, should be proud of the literary talent of Mr. Seddon.

I am privileged to be acquainted with Mr. Seddon, and on behalf of all members here, I wish him and his family well. Above all else, Dale, keep on writing. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Street Proofing Our Kids Seminars

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): May I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement, please?

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

Mr. Reid: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the safety of our children is, and should be, of concern to all citizens. There are many hazards and dangers in our society for our children, both human and other dangers. Parents cannot be with their children at all times. Street proofing our children is an important part of ensuring their safety.

Between Sunday, December 17 and Wednesday, December 20 there will be six Street Proofing Our Kids seminars held in Winnipeg schools and youth drop-in centres. It is anticipated that approximately 100 people will attend each session. Three of the sessions will be for children nine to 13 years of age, two for youths between 13 and 18 years of age and one to acquaint adults with the program. Parents of children taking street proofing sessions are being encouraged to attend the same seminar as their children.

This Street Proofing Our Kids program is sponsored by the City of Winnipeg and the United Food and Commercial Workers Union and will be of great assistance in making our children and the family safer, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We would like to congratulate and recognize Carol Woloschuk of the City of Winnipeg, Bernard

Christophe and Don Keith of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, and Frank Olson, an instructor who will be assisting in the program. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Condolences—John George Sioux

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like leave to make a nonpolitical statement.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there leave for the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism to do a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Downey: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and thank the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) for bringing to the attention of the Assembly the loss of Mr. John George Sioux, but I would like to as well, as the member for the area of which Mr. Sioux lived, acknowledge his contribution not only to his people but to the people of Canada and to Manitoba in his wartime service.

I can tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that anyone who has been part of a prisoner-of-war camp has certainly had extreme difficulties, but to come back and to show the leadership and be part of our community is to be commended.

I, too, want to extend my sympathy to his wife, Elizabeth and family. Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE (Seventh Day of Debate)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Resuming debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Radcliffe) and the proposed amendment of the Leader of the official opposition (Mr. Doer), standing in the name of the honourable member for Rupertsland, who has 27 minutes remaining.

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe, when I left off last night, I was doing a quick run-through on the costs of living and the differences, the variances in comparison to Winnipeg.

Last night, I believe I left off where the cost of living is 70 percent greater in Gods River than it is in the city of Winnipeg, and in Oxford House the cost of living is 71 percent more than the city of Winnipeg. As well, the cost of living in the community of Shamattawa is 75 percent greater than it is in the city of Winnipeg, and in Wasaykamak the cost of living is 76 percent more than it is here. In Tadoule Lake it is 80 percent more than southern Manitoba; Garden Hill, 84 percent; Red Sucker Lake, 87 percent. Brochet is running at 88 percent currently in comparison to the city of Winnipeg.

The comparisons that I was trying to make is—the rough times that northern Manitobans and particularly aboriginal people are experiencing with the cost of living and trying to make a life in northern communities.

As well, with respect to foster care compensation and in comparison to the cost of living expenses north of the 53rd Parallel, when we consider that 5 percent of the compensation for foster care compensation in Winnipeg, and this is province-wide, of course, we have to take into consideration the cost of living in northern Manitoba north of the 53rd Parallel.

For example, for food, it is 59 percent greater in northern communities north of the 53rd Parallel. For clothing, it is 97 percent more than it is in, let us say, the city of Winnipeg, and for bedding and linen, it is 52 percent greater in northern communities. In the area of transportation, it is 62 percent.

For the information of members, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to table some of the documents with respect to the cost of living variances that do exist in Manitoba with respect to northern communities. I will table these documents for the information of members who may want to make a comparison to what northern Manitobans have to live with in comparison to what people, let us say, in Winnipeg and some other southern communities are faced with.

Another area that is of great concern with what this government has done, or has not done, is in the area of health care in northern and First Nations communities.

We have people in the North who must apply, for example, to the Northern Transportation Program when

being transferred by a doctor to a southern doctor and health care facility in southern Manitoba. The cost is \$50, and that is deemed to be unfair for northern Manitobans by those who have to live with this on a regular and daily basis.

* (1430)

When children are involved, the parents who must look after their children are given responsibility of seeking out their own needs with respect to surviving while they accompany their children while they are in care or sick in hospitals in places like Winnipeg. Then we have to consider hotels, taxis, food and even plane fares, and it ends up costing hundreds of dollars or even thousands of dollars, in some cases, for Metis and non-Status Indians and also non-aboriginals who have to come to southern Manitoba for health care.

As well, an issue that we have raised on many occasions in this House, the roads in northern Manitoba. The North has received a much smaller percentage of money in the last seven years than years gone by. People have to recognize the additional costs of living in the North, what I just outlined, the cost of living in northern communities. The government is not using an appropriate formula, I guess we can call it, to portion out its Highways dollars to northern communities.

We want to, as well, say that roads are becoming impassable in many northern communities. People have died, cars are being wrecked, and food has to be flown in for longer periods of time because roads are unable to accommodate trucks attempting to deliver goods to many of these northern communities.

Another issue that will be raised by our side of the House in the time to come is the The Provincial-Municipal Tax Sharing Act. About \$50 million is being spent annually through this act, and the Province of Manitoba has shrunk the amount of monies available to First Nations people through this act. We have made inquiries about this to the appropriate ministers in this government.

This government has somehow, in some way, chosen to withhold some \$91,000 over the last five years. Up

to now, we have not had an appropriate response to the inquiries that we have placed before the proper ministers in this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

As well, fire protection and education are very important issues that are being faced by First Nations communities. Fire protection, people who are on the front lines fighting fires, is a very important task and a very important job. These people who are the front-line workers are perceived as being very essential people in communities, particularly when we have the housing conditions that do exist, and that is a reality in northern Manitoba. These people who do this service are indeed called upon extremely.

If I can make a comparison, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the city of Winnipeg, we have some 897 firefighters, including staff, all of whom have at least Level I training in the area of firefighting, but the First Nations firefighting association, which is known as MANFF, has only five Level I trained firefighters in the province of Manitoba.

We have asked the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) of the province of Manitoba, that there is, indeed, 1.25 percent of every insurance premium collected, and there is some \$7 million set aside from this collection for the purpose of training and also in the area of fire suppression. These monies are supposed to be used for the purpose of educating firefighters and providing supports to community services for the purpose of fire suppression. Unfortunately, we have not had an appropriate response to some of the queries that we have placed before this government in this regard.

As well, another issue that has come to the attention of northern communities and aboriginal people is fishing. It appears to be a different policy than for people in the south. Fishermen south of the 53rd Parallel can sell fish north of the 53rd, but the northern fishermen, who are mostly aboriginal people, cannot sell below the 53rd Parallel.

When my colleague the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) raised this issue in the House, he noted the policies of this government showing serious signs of racism. This was raised with us by the people that we represent. He was inappropriately, I believe, thrown

out of this House. So I believe that we have to do an examination of this issue, as well.

The government of Manitoba has also initiated closures of the manned weather stations at Norway House, Berens River and Island Lake by refusing to partner with the federal government with respect to maintaining these airports in northern communities. They are very important.

The message that appears evident to aboriginal people and northern Manitobans in general is that the loss of a few Indian lives in the North can be an acceptable alternative. That is what appears to be the message here. The federal government has used the term "manageable risks," which is a military term that we have come to understand over the last little while. The term is used to define a loss of life that would not ruffle the feathers of the masses. So we have to question the decision of the province in that respect as well.

The hospital layoffs, the closures in the North, do not account for the increased costs that northerners have to pay as well.

The new Wildlife Amendment Act has proven to be high contentious as far as aboriginal people are concerned. We are aware of one case where an innocent third party has experienced a heavy and unjust hand of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger). This man from one of our First Nations communities in Manitoba had his truck taken away from him, in addition to a rifle, I understand, and doing so in spite of a plea bargain that was made in the courts which promised that the minister would return the truck if the parties that were charged were to plead guilty.

So far the minister responsible for this department has refused to return the truck, this being in spite of a possibility of this new bill being an illegal piece of legislation. Certainly, aboriginal people will speak further on this matter in the weeks and months ahead.

This government as well has announced the creation in this past year of four new parks without consulting the First Nations communities that were directly affected. Some of these parks will directly affect these First Nations communities.

In the area of justice, the AJI produced some 294 recommendations. Over 100 relate directly to the Province of Manitoba, and very few have been implemented by this government. I have listened to the remarks of the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) with respect to the AJI. She has talked about what progress the province has made with initiating some of the recommendations.

On the other hand, I have heard the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ernst), when being asked the question of the implementation of the AJI on television, saying that these are very complex issues that require constitutional and jurisdictional considerations. So that tells me that the province has not moved on the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. It is being viewed by aboriginal people, not by me, but by aboriginal people throughout this province, that the AJI is collecting dust in this House. That is what aboriginal people have told us.

In the area of treaty land entitlement we have been told by First Nations people and the people directly affected that this province does not want to move and is stalling in settling outstanding treaty land entitlement in this province. Again, that is not me saying that. It is the aboriginal people that have held discussions with us.

* (1440)

Most recently, I am very happy, as probably all members of this House are, that the people from Pukatawagan have now made a deal. We are certainly happy that they will be home in the next day or so. But Pukatawagan and the camp that they set up in Winnipeg temporarily to give some public attention to the dire needs of First Nations people, particularly with respect to housing, was indeed an admirable cause and I believe that it was well supported by many people.

Pukatawagan also, I would like to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has the largest tuberculosis outbreak of any small community in Canada. There was a Dr. Hershfield, a medical health officer, who noted that there could be as many as 300 Pukatawagan residents at risk.

Now, tuberculosis is a disease of overcrowding, undernutrition, substance abuse and all these things

combined to make tuberculosis a threat to any community that is isolated. Again, we have to attribute that to the great housing shortages that are experienced by First Nations communities. I believe with the proper political will that this government and the national government, the federal government, could indeed engage in further dialogue in correcting the situation.

The U.N. has proclaimed Canada as being a good place to live but, for First Nations people, they are still in Third World conditions. I know that. I have experienced that first-hand, as the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hicke) can attest, and also the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin). We have experienced the Third World conditions of living in aboriginal communities in this province.

In other matters relating to health, diabetes among First Nations people in 1991, almost 20 percent of treaty Status Indian adult women in Manitoba had diabetes. In 1991, 12 percent of treaty Status Indian adult men had diabetes. The prevalence of diabetes increased by over 40 percent among women and over 50 percent among men. Each year more than 1.5 percent of adult women and approximately 1 percent of adult men are newly diagnosed with diabetes.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, while we can say that good things are being done for aboriginal people, the point is that aboriginal people are dying at a faster rate than all other Canadians.

In 1988, which is the latest stats that we have from welfare Canada, with relation to life expectancy generally, for females the Canadian average is something like 80.25 years for non-Indian people but for Indian people it was 74.3 years so, therefore, that would tell me that Indian women can expect to die a lot sooner than the average Canadian woman.

Now, for Indian men in comparison to non-Indian males in this country, the average life expectancy of non-Indian men is 72.56 years. On the other hand, for Indian men, the average life expectancy is 66.6 years, roughly six or seven years below the national average. Again, I would like to table for the information of members in this House the life expectancy at birth for

Indians as opposed to non-Indians and the latest stats that are available to us.

At the same time, I would like to talk about the whole sickness and the whole illness of HIV-AIDS. It is predicted by people like Albert McLeod, who met with the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford) and me most recently, and the people that he works with that by the year 2000 one out of four aboriginal people in northern Manitoba particularly will be infected by HIV-AIDS. This is something that we did not make up but is predicted by the AIDS task force that work on the front lines and work with people that are infected by this disease on a daily basis.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the unfortunate thing is that more aboriginal women are being tested and testing positive, meaning that the children will, without a doubt, be affected as well in the years ahead of us. The word is that nationwide and throughout North America there are three times the number of women and others who are becoming affected by the HIV-AIDS sickness. Again, the whole issue of poverty and the substandard housing that aboriginal people live in is attributed to the HIV-AIDS illness that is being experienced.

Those are some issues, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I wanted to raise today. It has always been my practice to commend this government. I certainly have had the co-operation of many of the ministers with respect to issues that we have raised, and it has been my practice as an individual to praise whenever praise is warranted, on the other hand, to be critical where I feel criticism is needed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I conclude, there is no doubt that during this upcoming holiday season, many individuals and families will be without the basics. I would like to ask all colleagues to remember that, and perhaps, whichever way people worship personally here or individually, we should offer a word of prayer for those fellow Manitobans that are less fortunate than some. In that way, we will fulfill our commitment when we assemble in this Chamber before Question Period, and what the Speaker renders in her opening prayer is that we are asking and working for the prosperity for all our people. That includes Indian people, all aboriginal people, all people in this province.

In conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to wish you and all members of this House a safe and happy holiday season, and I would like to express my sincere good wishes to all members, friends and family as they gather in this upcoming holiday season, wherever that may be but, at the same time, to not forget about those less fortunate in our province.

Thank you for the opportunity to say a few words, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): I appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak to the Speech from the Throne and to welcome the Pages and the staff and the members back to a new session and to welcome you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in your capacity in the Chair, as well as Madam Speaker.

One of the first things that was identified in the throne speech was the need to continue with the framework of a strong economy that we have as the backdrop to all our initiatives. It is recognized in the Speech from the Throne that in the absence of a prudent fiscal management plan, the province will have a very difficult time beyond its current difficulties to sustain those very important essential services that we consider so necessary to a compassionate and caring society.

I am very grateful to see that continued emphasis upon the most important thing we need to do to ensure that we continue strong in Manitoba, and that is to continue our strong efforts to build on our record of fiscal responsibility and accountability. One thing that has become so well accepted in Manitoba that it is very seldom discussed anymore is the fact that through eight years of prudent fiscal management, we have an unmatched record of no major tax increases.

* (1450)

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

If anybody had told Manitobans 10 years ago that they would be able to go through eight successive years without major tax increases, I doubt that they would have believed it was possible, and, if possible, I doubt that they believe it would have happened. Mr. Acting

Speaker, we have in fact accomplished that remarkable achievement. That is so taken for granted now that tax increases are no longer the No. 1 issue in Manitoba.

If we stopped our efforts in this regard, they would very immediately become the No. 1 issue again. People now expect that governments will exercise that kind of responsibility and that kind of attention to the needs of Manitobans to be able to retain as much of their earnings as they can. We know from our time at the doors that people repeatedly have indicated their appreciation for that particular stance.

We see now that across this nation and, indeed, with the federal government, other levels of government, other provincial governments in other jurisdictions, are following the example that was set here in Manitoba when we first took office as government. We are fortunate in that by careful fiscal management, by prudent management of our resources, that we have been able to make careful changes from the beginning of our tenure such that we have not had to shock the system, the society out there, to the extent that other provinces have had to do.

Because we have taken a slow, steady measured pace to ensuring the control of our finances, we have not had to do as they have done in other provinces and come in at the eleventh hour with very drastic measures in reacting to a near panic situation of finances gone completely out of control. We saw that happen in Ontario, where the people recognized that under the Bob Rae administration, things were deteriorating very rapidly. They looked for rescue to the government they now have, which has had to in turn go in and put in some very strong, forceful measures because there had not been the careful prudent attention paid in preceding years.

I am very pleased that we have done that here. I liken it to a household where a lot of people will say, I do not really understand government finances, government finances are so big and complex. Probably most of the members have had a chance to say that at one time or another. But if you compare it to the running of a household, and you take the example of Mr. and Mrs. Jones who married, and who were gifted to them through a legacy from a grandparent a house fully paid for, comfortable, with all the amenities. Mr.

and Mrs. Jones move into this house that they can afford because it does not have a mortgage, that they with their income can afford to sustain that house with the electricity and the water and the things that go along with it.

That is where Manitoba was, not that many years ago. That is where Canada was, not that many years ago. We are talking one, two decades for Canada to have gotten into the situation that it is in.

But Mr. and Mrs. Jones moving into their house decide that really they do have a lawnmower for the lawn, but it is a push mower, and it would be so much nicer to have a power mower.

So they buy a power mower and then decide that maybe it would be good to hire the young lad down the street to push the power mower for them. They put that in their budget and then decide that the shovel in the wintertime should go the way of the blade mower, and they really need a snowblower and maybe the lad down the other street should be hired to push the snowblower.

Then they decide that they are going to get a Visa card and a Mastercard and American Express card and an En Route card and a Zellers card and all the other cards that they can get. They go out, and they buy other things. It would be awfully nice for Mrs. Jones to have a car as well as Mr. Jones. So they buy a second car, and they put it on time. And they decide it would be awfully nice to have that bathroom renovated so it looks a little more modern. So they put that on their charge card.

They do all these things, and they go on, and they decide that they want to take a trip to Florida. I mean it is not really necessary, but rest and recreation is very important for the psyche and the social responsibility to ensure that they are at peak performance, rested, and their mental attitude is correct and so on. You know, some expert someplace probably recommended that getting away from a dreary climate in February would be the right thing to do to improve their productivity or whatever. They feel a social obligation to take that trip to Florida in February. So they end up taking out a mortgage on their house.

They go on, and eventually Mr. and Mrs. Jones come to the point where, having inherited a legacy of a fully paid-for house with amenities, although modest they could afford with their incomes, now have a mortgage on their home; their credit cards are to the maximum; their income suddenly stops, a double-digit inflationary rise, and they wake up one morning and say, oh, my goodness, by the time we make our minimum payment on the Mastercard, the Visa and the American Express and we pay our mortgage payment and pay off the bill for the very necessary trip we took to Florida and make our car payment, by the time we meet those minimum payments we really do not have enough left over to pay our gas bill. Oh, dear me. What will we do?

So they start to delay payment on one bill, so they can pay off another, and ultimately then the creditors come down on Mr. and Mrs. Jones and say, you have not been responsible with your money. You want to now take out another loan to consolidate all your debts. Well, we are not going to give you that. We are not going to accede that request because you have not been responsible with your money, and we do not see you as a good credit risk.

Suddenly Mr. and Mrs. Jones are up against the wall. Their outgo is greater than their income. The interest on the debt that they owe is an exorbitant percentage of the money that they are able to bring into the household. That scenario, I think, most Manitobans can understand.

Eventually it gets to the point where Mr. and Mrs. Jones have to say to themselves, can we afford to live in this house anymore? It is not a question anymore of, should we substitute hamburger for steak? It is a question of how nourishing is soya, because they have let their expenditures get out of control. So they begin to consider maybe they cannot afford to live in the house that they live in anymore. Maybe they cannot afford to hire the person to cut the grass and blow the snow. Maybe the first thing they have to do before they can do anything is to get some good sound financial advice as to how to dig themselves out of the hole they have put themselves in.

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

That is the state about where Manitoba was when the NDP left us as government. We came in and we have been left, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the job of trying to identify how Mr. and Mrs. Jones, i.e., Manitoba, can get itself out of the hole that the NDP put us in. I say the NDP put us in because I know when you have double-digit revenue coming in, which they did, and you do with finances what they did, you say to people, you need more and more and more, and you give them more and more and more, so they become dependent on the more and more and more until you run up against the wall, as they did in New Zealand.

* (1500)

Anybody who does not understand the analogy between Canada and New Zealand and Manitoba and New Zealand should do some serious study on what happened in New Zealand when they found themselves up against the wall because of that kind of fiscal mismanagement. When they found themselves all of a sudden in the hole so deeply that nobody wanted to help them out, they had to close 720 post offices in one morning, they had to stop all farm subsidies that same morning, and they had to put up for sale their railway at that same time because there was no more money.

We came into office, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the legacy that had been given to Mr. and Mrs. Jones totally destroyed in terms of the ability for it to offer anything to the next generation unless somebody helped the Joneses get out of debt so they could then start to make decisions as to how to spend money that was coming in.

So I am bemused and saddened to hear those new members of the NDP who were not here when their predecessors did to Manitoba what they did to Manitoba. I am bemused and saddened when I hear them get up and accuse this side of the House of doing what all responsible governments across North America are now doing, trying to salvage what is left from the havoc that they themselves wreaked upon this province, and as they went through Manitoba like a tornado weaving a path of destruction and leaving a trail of destruction behind them, they then, in their blissful ignorance as new members who do not know what their colleagues before them really did to this

province, will stand up and criticize us because the barn is lying in tatters and because the wheat is lying broken in the fields because of the path of the tornado, and they blame us for trying to get things back on track.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say that, seeing first in the throne speech our continued commitment to hold the line on taxes those eight years of unprecedented tax freezes in North America, the work that we are doing to provide incentives to bring business and industry and business expansion into Manitoba; the work that we have been doing to target emerging sectors to build upon sectors that are already here, such as agri industry; to do the work that we are doing with the aerospace industry, incredibly good work with aerospace industry, with pharmaceuticals, with agri-industries, to build on those for job creation, which will then in turn create wealth, which will then in turn have money circulating in the economy, which will help us get out of the hole dug for us by those people opposite, not by them themselves, but by their predecessors.

They truly believe, I think, these new folks on the other side what they have been told, but the people who came before them who still sit in this House know the truth. They know the truth as we know the truth about what happened to Manitoba when they were in office and about what needs to be done now to bring ourselves back out of the doldrums and get ourselves back on track.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our initiatives in job creation, in inspiring business and inspiring the emergence of new sectors and technologies, I believe, are very important to the foundation that needs to be there for anything else to happen in this province. I am sure that their children will be grateful to us, even if they themselves in their ignorance do not recognize what everybody else in the world recognizes, what their colleagues in Ontario and their colleagues in British Columbia and their colleagues in Saskatchewan recognize.

The member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) and the members for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) and Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) and Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) and Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), who are here in the House today, want to raise taxes in Manitoba, want to raise

taxes very badly. We are saying to them, no, we appreciate you wanted to raise taxes; but, when you went to the people a few months ago and asked them to raise taxes, they made it pretty clear that they did not want the raise and they asked us to come in and make sure that it would not happen.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are other things in the throne speech about management and accountability. Just the other day we were talking about accountability. We were talking about the continued need for open government. It is significant, and I know the new members across the aisle do not know this, but they brought in a Freedom of Information Act when they were in government and never had the guts or the courage to proclaim it. They were so terrified of The Freedom of Information Act that their drafters had managed to get through the House. They were so frightened of that act they did not have the guts or the courage to proclaim it. We came in and proclaimed it. We are operating—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would ask the honourable member to choose her words very carefully. Some of the words you are using have been ruled unparliamentary in the past; and, if it were to change the decorum in the House, I would be asking you to retract the statement. But, if you could just choose your words carefully, I would appreciate it. The honourable minister, to continue.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not quite sure if it is "guts" or "courage" that is not parliamentary, so I will change both. Instead of saying guts and/or courage, I will say they did not have the fortitude, the strength or the moral principles to be able to pass The Freedom of Information Act that they had drafted. They were very frightened of it. So we passed it exactly as they wrote it, and we are using it exactly as they wrote it. I find it very interesting though, using it exactly as they wrote it, they now complain that it does not give out enough information. I find it highly, highly amusing that they did not have the moral fortitude to proclaim it because they were so frightened that they might be revealed, but, when we use it exactly as they wrote it, they say, it does not go far enough. They were afraid to even use it in the first place. That has made them the laughing stock of Manitoba, as we

go about, hear people make that analogy, it is usually said with a chuckle and a cynical look because people know where they are coming from, and it is unfortunate.

The thing that is even more remarkably interesting and even more sad, and I say this is very sad, because a couple of days ago the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) was making his remarks on the throne speech and these very people who felt that The Freedom of Information Act that they wrote and did not have the fortitude to proclaim did not go far enough were then absolutely incensed that the Minister of Labour asked for the same accountability for those citizens of Manitoba who have money taken from them against their will for any purpose, that they be given the right to know where that money is spent.

The member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) and the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford) were particularly incensed that the rules of accountability that we apply to us might also be applied to others who take people's money from them without their consent.

I found that so sad. It was so sad.

We had the Status of Women critic for the New Democratic Party standing up and screeching, union busting, at the Minister of Labour because he wanted to have accountability put in so that those people who had their union dues taken from them without their consent be given the right to know what was going to happen with that money.

So the Minister of Labour said, I believe, and this is what he said: I believe that if someone has dues taken from them without their consent they have the right to know how those dues are being spent.

The member for Osborne screamed, union busting, union busting, union busting, at the same time that those very people were saying that The Freedom of Information Act that they wrote and did not have the courage to proclaim did not go far enough insofar as it pertains to MLAs.

* (1510)

So there is an inconsistency there that is extremely revealing and, as I say, so sad, so very, very sad. But

I suppose, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they do not want to see a headline that would indicate what a union boss might be spending on meals for himself out of union members' dues, even though it might be a female retail clerk who does not want to pay the dues, who would like to know what is happening to them.

I am horrified, appalled, astonished, that the Status of Women critic for the NDP opposition does not want that female retail clerk to know what happens to her union dues. I think that is appalling, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So we are saying we believe in balance and fairness, when money is taken unwillingly from a person because of a legislative rule, a legislative onus, a legislative imposition that you must have money taken from you to give to the union, by legislation, and when we say, but we think because we make you do that as government that you also should have the right to know what happens to your money, the opposition says, no, no, find in favour of the union bosses; rule against the worker.

Well, on this side we say, power to the workers. Democracy for the unions, democracy for the workers. Protect the workers from bad employers. Protect the workers from bad union bosses. Accountability is the answer.[interjection] The member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) obviously did not listen. She said, how about bad management. I just said, protect the workers from bad employers; protect the workers from bad union bosses.

They only want to protect them from bad employers. They do not want to protect them from big union bosses. Why? Because it might come out that a lot of the money that those workers have taken away from them against their will ends up in the NDP coffers by decisions made by the big union bosses, and that accountability is too frightening for them.

If this were under their control, it would be once again something they would pass so they would sound good, but would not have the courage to proclaim, as they did not have the courage to proclaim The Freedom of Information Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They play by two sets of rules. As I say, it is very sad, extremely sad. [interjection]

The member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) is asking about corporations and what they do with their money. I would indicate to the member—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I have allowed a little bit of freedom here, but it seems to be getting away on me a little bit.

The honourable minister does have this short period of time to put her remarks on the record, I would appreciate it if she was given that time.

The honourable minister, to continue.

Mrs. McIntosh: No money is forcibly taken from corporations as money is, by law, taken from union members. By virtue of the Rand Formula, money is taken from union employees whether or not they wish it to be taken, and therein lies the difference. It is taken from them by law which we have established, and because we have established that law, that they have to give their money whether they want to or not, we are saying they have a right to know what happens to their money. It seems very simple.

We will leave that portion of this debate because I do want to talk about a couple of other initiatives. I do wish to indicate for the record, though, the intense nervousness displayed by the members opposite when this topic is discussed. It is very interesting because anytime it comes up, they start to make agitated sounds from their seats.

The member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford) jumps up and starts screeching union busting as loudly as she can because we want workers to have that right. I think the workers would be very interested to know that the member for Osborne, the Status of Women member, considers that letting union members know what happens to their money to be union busting. I think that those many, many women in minimum wage jobs, in unions, would be most interested to know that that is the attitude of the NDP.

The member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) is babbling away, too, because she also is very upset that they are being revealed in this fashion. As I say, I just think it is so sad, unbelievably sad.

In terms of other initiatives in the throne speech— [interjection] See, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they are still going at it. They are all looking at each other and getting themselves all upset. I really feel sorry for them. But, I will leave that, as I say, for another day in order that I may say a little bit about education.

The throne speech makes reference, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the creation of a council for post-secondary education in Manitoba, and that initiative, I believe, is one that will be of great benefit for the future in this province in terms of the needs, in terms of the aspirations and in terms of the well-being of those members of society who contribute in a variety of ways, requiring skills over and above those they receive in kindergarten to Senior 4.

The Roblin Commission, as you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, indicated its desire for such a council, and we have already established an interim transition committee of some seven people who are past chairmen of boards of governors of colleges and universities, immediate past graduates of those same institutions and indeed past presidents and governors and chancellors of post-secondary institutions. That interim transition committee will come back to the government in the next few months and make recommendations to us and a wide variety of initiatives.

We look at the entire post-secondary education spectrum. We no longer are looking at institutions in isolation, remote and removed from one another. We are looking at an integrated system where there will be good articulation between colleges and universities and indeed between high schools and colleges. We are also looking at easier transfer of credits between educational institutions in Manitoba and are working with ministers in other provinces for that same kind of easier credit transfer between provinces.

We will be asking this group of seven to make recommendations for legislative changes that will fit with what Roblin recommends and with those things in Roblin that we agree that we need, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to have a post-secondary education system that runs the gamut from apprenticeships, from trades, from all of the technical skills learned in colleges through to the professional disciplines in universities

and the training that takes place in the workforce and through private colleges and educational institutions.

* (1520)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to ask ourselves, how can we do things differently at the post-secondary level? How can we look at the system as a whole and see creative systemic change as opposed to across-the-board change? We know that there is a need for the creation of centres of excellence, and we can identify where the germs and the impetus and the seeds for centres of excellence currently exist. We can see in the aerospace industry incredible potential for centres of excellence. We can see in the engineering aspect incredible potential for centres of excellence, Dr. Sami Rizkalla and his incredible initiatives in what is called smart technology, a prime example of a centre of excellence that as of less than two weeks ago has now been announced and is coming in place with some input from the federal government, which is very much appreciated, with industry, with the province of Manitoba and with the brilliance and dedication of a fine educator such as Dr. Rizkalla.

That is an exciting kind of concept, and there are many, many that can be identified. When you see the infrastructure lab at the University of Manitoba, for example, built entirely and completely with donations of money from various segments of the construction industry, built entirely and completely with donations of money from various segments of the construction industry, built entirely without money from the public, a state-of-the-art infrastructure lab which has made it possible for a wide variety of things to come to Manitoba, when you couple that with the new smart technology and the new way of constructing bridges and roads that will incorporate the fibres into the construction materials and you know that that has the potential to build for a market that has multimillion-dollar ability, that is extremely exciting.

When you see that that is a partnership where money has been given from industry, from the province and from the federal government working together, you know that you have something that is going to have ongoing support in all kinds of ways, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that go above and beyond the simple delivery of a program.

There are many areas that can be developed for centres of excellence, they are being identified, they are being built upon to create magnet schools. When you hear the word "Juilliard" you think music. We have many places that are post-secondary institutions where the very name of the institution denotes the centre of excellence, and that is what we are trying to do with post-secondary education in Manitoba. At the same, we are looking to eliminate redundancies, we are looking to eliminate overlap, duplication. Those things come with the creation of centres of excellence. As you build on one, you make sure that you are centring your resources together.

We are looking, as well, for relevancy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We know that agri-industries are becoming a very big, big push internationally and they are an emerging sector. We are looking to see universities respond to the needs of society to identify what are the emerging sectors and what we can be doing to be more relevant to society. So we are asking the interim transition committee to look at those kinds of relevancies and make recommendations on suggested legislation for them.

We will be looking, as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the tuition policy for the province of Manitoba. That has been a long time coming. We are looking at any and all facets of post-secondary education that can be improved and enhanced, and that is a long, long, long time overdue. It is something the opposition never could come to grips with, never did have the fortitude to examine, because it is controversial.

One way that they dug that terrible hole that wrecked our economy was to just keep giving away money rather than trying to address situations. It was so much easier for money to be given away than it would be to address doing things differently. That worked for them for a while until people suddenly realized the money they were giving away was not theirs, it belonged to the people, and they were having it taken out of their pockets.

So the post-secondary education tax that they laughingly called the payroll tax that did so many bad things to this province, we are chipping away at that payroll tax. We have, in our time in office, reduced

that substantially so that only about 5 percent of businesses are left having to pay that.

As we continue our work, we would like to see that payroll tax completely gone, because it is a punitive tax that works against job creation and did not do at all what it was intended to do. It did not do at all what it was intended to do in terms of education, because the more they did what they were doing and drove jobs out of Manitoba and destroyed the economy to the extent that they did, there was not enough money left to fund a system that they now are so demanding of seeing funded.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have taken the position that as the economy grows and strengthens, and the 14,000 jobs that have been created in the last 12-month period through the private sector are a good testimony to the type of job creation we are discussing, that as people become self-sufficient, as people become able to acquire an income, able to have a job, then they can contribute to the economy, and more money is generated so that more can be done. The payroll tax, which was what they said was for education, in fact hurt education so badly, hurt education because it took money as a whole out of the system and left less to deliver everything and anything.

We know, as well, we are coping with a massive transfer cut from Ottawa, and that is real. I do not even question why. I know that over the last 15 to 20 years, governments of all stripes and at all levels across this country spent money like they were throwing confetti around at a wedding. Now every government that has come in has had to do what this government started to do so that we did not have to shock the system. We started to do it early enough so we did not have to shock the system, but now every government is having to do what we are doing, only they are having to do it with more drastic steps because they did not start in enough time.

But that happened, and the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) is quite right, I said every government of every stripe over the last 10 to 20 years spent money like there was no tomorrow. They did not look ahead to today. What I am saying is that we are here today, we are coping with it and we are going to do good

things. We are going to create good things, we are going to find the silver linings in the dark clouds left to us by the members opposite.

While you may not like it because you cannot get yourselves elected again, your children will be grateful to us. I care, quite frankly, more about your children than I do about your chances for re-election. I thank the members for their rousing applause on that one because I can see that they care as much about their children, I would hope, as I do, and they do not want them to be in debt.

I leave you with this one last thought. When my daughter is my age, if our plan of returning Manitoba to strength is followed through, when my daughter is my age, she will live in a debt-free Manitoba, and that is what I want more than I want the applause of the members opposite, who got us into this mess in the first place. Thank you.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the kind of society that the Minister of Education is talking about, her daughter would have to pay user fees for every service that is now provided, from health care, education, perhaps getting someone else to clear the streets in front of their home. I think that, as the minister is suggesting, industries that support their party would still look for the—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I hate to interrupt the honourable member, but I have some members talking to each other across the way, and I am having great difficulty hearing the honourable member.

The honourable member for Radisson, to continue, please.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was just responding to the Minister of Education's (Mrs. McIntosh), I would say, flawed vision of how we as a community can sustain ourselves. I do not know how many people she knows who can afford to pay for a home without taking out a mortgage, and that would mean being debt free. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) has pointed to himself. Perhaps that is a privilege that he or his family have enjoyed, but I do not know if there is anyone on this side of the House who has not had to incur, has not had to—

* (1530)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Deputy Speaker, with apologies, I was talking about being given a legacy of a debt-free province and using the analogy of a house. I have never been given a debt-free house either, but we did have a debt-free province at one point. This is all for clarification. She misunderstood the analogy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable minister did not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Ms. Cerilli: I am tempted, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to respond to a few other attacks on this side of the House levelled by the Minister of Education, particularly when she was trying to insinuate that we were only interested in protecting the revenue that comes from labour to the NDP.

I would suggest that they take a look at the statistics that show that our party is by and large supported by individual donations, as opposed to the two other parties which by more than 50 percent are supported by corporations. I think the labour donations to the NDP is approximately 10 percent.

I do not want to spend too much of my time on that, but I think that the disclosure provisions that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) is contemplating would not be opposed by labour or this side of the House, and we would like to see it applied equally to the public sector under this government, first of all, and then perhaps the corporate sector.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), if you have a conversation you want to carry on, you can do so out in the hallway. At this time, the honourable member for Radisson has the floor.

Order, please. The honourable Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh), the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), if you want to carry on a conversation, you can join the member for Dauphin and the member for Inkster in the hall.

The honourable member for Radisson, to continue, please.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this does segue nicely into the theme that I was dealing with when I was last debating the throne speech. This is a continuation on the new amendment to the throne speech, and I am pleased to get a few more minutes to continue my remarks.

I was talking about the partisan nature with which this government approaches the business of government, and I am only going to give one more example. I listed a few others the other day, but I think one of the final examples will be told in the tale of the hospital emergency ward closures that this government has undertaken.

I think it is one of the mistakes that this government has made, and it has now been shown to be a mistake. They have admitted it was a mistake to close the community hospitals in Winnipeg at night for emergency service, and it is going to be interesting to see if the emergency ward that continues to be closed at night or eliminated entirely from service will be the Seven Oaks Hospital.

I have some information about that particular hospital in terms of the cuts that have been levelled there, that one-third of the nurses have been eliminated, that there used to be 50 head nurses there and now there are seven. It is the kind of, I think, attack on public health care services, on public education that this government is undertaking, and, I think, in keeping with the theme of my debate, being that they are balancing the budget on the backs of those that can least afford it. I do not think that they want to acknowledge the importance of public services to those in our society who are of less means, who do not have the advantage and privilege that many of us in this House on both sides of the House enjoy, but I would suggest particularly represented by the opposite side of the House, that kind

of ability to pay for services. We have public services in the country and in the province because we are trying to have government create more equity in our society, a more fair society.

It was interesting listening to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) making comments when I was speaking earlier, that, you know, life is not fair and the world is not fair, but I would suggest to the members opposite, and I would implore them, to not agree that government's role is just that. Government's role is to try and create a fair, a just and a more equal society so that all have a decent quality of life.

Canada is one of the best countries in the world. We are one of the most wealthy countries in the world, and we have a system of public services that is under attack by an agenda, a political and economic agenda in this country that is going to create even a larger gap between those that have and those that do not. Those public services have been shown to close that gap. They ensure that those tens of thousands of children in our province that do not have a quality of life that is going to ensure them health and education and the ability to be independent and contributing citizens. We have a system that is being dismantled, but that system has closed the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

I have a chart here that demonstrates that, and it demonstrates a number of things. It shows how in Manitoba, when you take into account the social safety net and public services, that gap is eliminated. In 1981, what this chart calls the poverty gap, which is the difference between the income of low income families and then higher income families, it was \$8,387, when you took into account the social safety net, transfer of tax credits, and other services provided by the public sector. When that was not there in 1981 in Manitoba, if you only took into account the gap between the haves and the have-nots from the market, that gap is over \$14,000.

Now that gap has grown. It has grown by over \$3,000 if you do not consider the effects of government support and the public services that we enjoy here, and it is interesting to know that in Manitoba in the past that gap has been higher than the rest of Canada. So I think when we are on this side of the House and we are

trying to encourage the government to look for other ways to deal with deficit than cutting essential services, it is because this is what we are concerned about.

We are concerned about creating a more unequal society because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when that happens we have all other sorts of social problems that in turn cost the government more money, be it crime, be it alcoholism or other addictions, be it violence. All these other things are compounding the problems of deficit, and all these other things are being compounded by the economic agenda which is creating more poverty and more social problems by the government that is in power now.

So we have a government that has been dismantling public services in education and health care, in housing, in justice, in every department they have been either creating chaos or dismantling services. This is happening at the federal level as well.

I look at the fact that it is the federal government that is continuing on in the same track that the previous federal government under Mr. Mulroney got us on to, and it frightens me when I think that within 12 years we will not have any more federal transfer payments coming to Manitoba for health care.

We are going to have a post-secondary education system that is going to force students to pay a higher and higher percentage of fees, and that again is going to contribute to more and more students not being able to participate in higher education.

* (1540)

The other issue I want to deal with—I think the short answer for the members opposite trying to bait me is that we would have a fair taxation system that would get some of the profits from the banks that are making over \$5 billion a year and invest that into the health and education of the future employees and the current employees of the nation. That is in a nutshell, the direction that we would take it, and ensure that we have that strong social safety net that Canada is well known for.

But I want to talk briefly about something else. The NDP undertook a task force on violence against women

over the last year, and I participated in that. It was a wonderful opportunity to tour the province and listen to representation from individuals and groups around the province concerned about violence against women and really about violence of all kinds among any citizens.

One of the phrases that was quoted in the report from a presentation we heard was that if crime hurts, justice should heal. I think that that is such a wonderful message, and I think it fits in with what government must do in terms of justice. On this side of the House we believe very strongly in having government work towards creating more social and economic justice, and I would suggest that all the departments in the government have a mandate for justice, that kind of healing justice that has been talked about.

When we look at violence, I think that we have to look at how it is being approached. All of the things that the government is doing I think focus on one theme, that we can create a kind of society where there is going to be increased external pressure and control, and that is the kind of message, the boot camp nail 'em and jail 'em kind of message, that the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) is always talking about. I am saying this particularly in the context of youth justice and in terms of education and keeping in mind this is in terms of the violence against women report that we did.

I think what we want to do generally is ensure that people have internal values in a free society, so that they can participate in a free society based on their internal values of co-operation, fairness, equity, understanding, compassion and a sense of community. These are the best things in people that we want to appeal to because then we do not have to have that kind of investment, not only in justice, but I was concerned that there is a school in Winnipeg that wanted to deal with problems in that school by installing surveillance cameras in the school and how that is entirely the antithesis of what education must be about, about having young people develop within themselves that sense of brotherhood and sisterhood, if you will, that will mean that they can participate in a free and democratic society, so that they can feel like a valued part of the community while still maintaining a sense of their own independence, individuality, I should say, and autonomy.

That, I think, is the kind of approach that a government has to take, and that gets into dealing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with how governments use power, if government is going to be used to control, to dominate, to manipulate, which, I must say, tends to be the way that this government operates. I think it relates, too, to some of the things that we have seen across the country with how we function as a democracy.

I may be getting somewhat esoteric here, but I want to read into the record a couple of things. I want to talk a little bit more about this idea that democracy has to evolve, I believe, if our society and our world is to continue. With the style of democracy we now operate in, this idea of majority rule, where people vote for one side or the other and then that government rules them, there have been numerous examples where people feel that they have no ability to influence the decisions of government once they are elected.

We have certain parties in the country that have this idea that once you are elected, you can change your mind, you can break your promises. You have only the accountability of the next election, and you are sort of stuck with the government that is elected, and that is all there is to it. I think that Canadians are tired of this kind of political system, and many of them feel betrayed by the political system. I think that it is this win-lose orientation in democracy that we have had that needs to be changed. I think that we have to evolve past the idea of democracy being about majority rule and nothing else, to democracy being more about equality, the ability to participate equally in decisions, that you are going to be represented and your interests are going to be represented.

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

We have to acknowledge the fact that a number of people no longer participate in our democracy because they feel that it has become irrelevant, that government is so removed from their lives in a sense. Perhaps some people are so disenfranchised and cynical and apathetic, and that is shown often by the voter turnout that we have. I think we have to look seriously at making some changes, and I think that moving to a more win-win orientation is what we have to start working towards. I am saying this because I was

recently in the Legislature in Ontario, and the motto in the Legislature in Ontario is in Greek. I am sorry I cannot quote the Greek, but the translation is, listen to the other party, because we are here to represent an alternative view and we are democratically elected.

I think one of the things that upsets people when they watch the House and when they partake in our political process is that it is obvious that the government does not care what we say, does not listen to what we say and really thinks that they have the ultimate power to do what they want. When you have that much power, Mr. Acting Speaker, when you are not going to listen anymore to the dissenting voice, no matter how small the dissenting voice is, then I think we have lost what representative and parliamentary democracy is supposed to be about.

* (1550)

Now, one of the things that I want to bring up after speaking about that is an issue that is a great concern, I am sure, to all of us. That is, while we have been going about our business here in Manitoba, there has been increased activity in the area of nuclear testing. Nuclear testing is being conducted by France, and I think that the reason that I am bringing this up is, I hope, that all of us will take it as our responsibility to do what we can to understand Canada's role historically and currently in what is happening internationally in the world, particularly with something as dangerous as nuclear testing. There is a phrase that states, we have to think globally and act locally, and this is the kind of issue where I want to appeal to the members opposite to listen to the voices in the community that are giving information, that have a different point of view, and that have some ideas about how we can move away from the destructive path of nuclear arms.

I am going to read into the record now the statement of principles for the NDP. I want to put this on record.

(1) This is the first statement of principles for a party that I am very dedicated to; I feel very good about dedicating my life to working for these principles: Our society must change from one based on competition to one based on co-operation.

(2) We wish to create a society where individuals give according to their abilities and receive according to their needs.

(3) We believe present human endeavours must become environmentally sound in order to ensure that future generations must have access to an abundant and diverse biosphere.

(4) Our commitment to the electorate is to be forthright about our long-range goals as well as practical about our short-term political activities.

(5) Our purpose as a movement is to foster social change towards a more co-operative society. Our purpose as a political party is to develop a public mandate for that social change through giving individuals greater control in the economy, in their workplaces and their community.

I think that sums up rather well our opposition to free trade and the NAFTA agreements.

The final one:

(6) Our actions and words must reflect our fundamental faith in the capacity of people to live co-operatively and to work for the betterment of all.

An Honourable Member: I can agree with that.

Ms. Cerilli: I hear the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) saying that he can agree with all of those things, and, if that is the case, I am going to conclude by relating a story of a couple of constituents.

Before I get into that, I want to explain that I am going to carry on with the theme of how what the government is doing is contrary to those principles that I just read. They are, I think, dismantling a system in government that is there to support, that should be to support that kind of co-operative vision.

I am particularly going to reference what is happening in Child and Family Services and with our income security systems, with Workers Compensation, unemployment insurance and social allowance. That is the one I am going to start with.

A fellow in my constituency has worked for 20 years for a company and was unfortunate to have an accident that was documented as a workplace accident where he was paralysed. He had to work very hard to regain his ability to walk and eventually did return to work and is collecting Workers Compensation and working on—after he collected Workers Compensation, he was back at work and he was working on reduced duties. He took some courses to develop new skills because it was apparent that he would likely be able to use his trade in the future. His doctor suggested that he do as much exercise as possible and he did that. He started walking at least two to three miles to work, back and forth, and he eventually started jogging some days to work.

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

He was still on reduced duties even though he was working also at a course to upgrade his skills. He was not able to get the surgery that he needed on his back injury because doctors that do the kind of neurosurgery he needed were not willing to work on his case because he was a claimant with Workers Compensation.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

So what has happened is an injured worker was not able to get health care because the doctors feel that there is interference by the Workers Compensation Board. That is a very serious, serious situation. What happened next is the fellow was put on surveillance by the company, and he was ultimately fired because he was videotaped walking and jogging to work. He was accused of making a fraudulent claim for Workers Compensation even though there was a documented accident where I would think that there was negligence on behalf of the company.

Now, since this fellow has been fired, he has gotten the surgery that he needed. In the meantime he has become disqualified from unemployment insurance because he was fired. He is at risk of having to lose his home even though he has only seven years yet to pay on the mortgage. He is at risk of going on welfare. One of his sons has had to quit university and move away to find a job in another province, and all because systems that were put in place to support injured

workers have no longer been there to support him. It is an example of how programs that we worked very hard to develop are being dismantled, and the government would say the deficit is making us do it. What is going to happen when more people like this are forced onto social allowance?

Another example is how Child and Family Services is being overtaxed. Child and Family Services is there to try and support families when there are problems, when there are conflicts and disputes and when there is abuse or violence. In another family in my constituency when they called Child and Family Services—and I tried to explain that this is perhaps due to the fact that the workers there are overtaxed, that there are so many demands, that their caseloads are so high that they sometimes are forced to rather than do more preventative intervention they remove children from the home which in the end costs more money.

We know that there are children that are being supervised by private health care agencies and in motels in this province, because our Child and Family Services are being so stressed. But in this particular family when they moved here from Saskatchewan and they went to Child and Family Services to ask for help and said, we need support, our son, there are a number of problems—her words to me were, we were blamed; we were not supported; we knew what the problems were; we asked for support. But instead their child was put into foster care. That system is not dealing with the problems in families in a way that is going to sustain families.

* (1600)

The other issue that I wanted to raise, and I guess I should explain that a little bit more because I think that there is at times the need to, of course, remove children from their home, but I guess the point that I am making is that in the case of a family such as this, what they need is supports so that they can develop their skills so that they can have respite care, so that they can get the supports in the other areas of this child's life so he can deal with the difficulties that he is having. Now that is not inexpensive proposition for a government or a society, but I think it raises into question what we are expecting families to cope with. A family such as this

which has very low income, and as I said earlier though to their credit, they have sought out support.

The other issue I want to deal with is the issue I brought to the House the other day in terms of public transit and school busing and how, again, the government is dismantling a system, and not only the government in Manitoba but the city level as well. The public transit in the city of Winnipeg has suffered for years where I do not think we have done a very good job of planning for a system that is going to be user friendly, that is going to deal with the fact that the city has sprawled so large for such a small population and tax base.

The point is we have created a bit of a Catch-22 situation where the approach that is being taken is to eliminate services, eliminate the services that people depend on and eliminate routes and increase the fees. What ends up happening is fewer people use the service. So what happens is they have less money for the service because there are less fares being paid and so they continue to downsize the service and increase the fares, which again means that there are less people going to use the service.

This has happened at a time when this provincial government has cut back its funding for areas such as Radisson that have relied on assisted provincial government funding for school buses. So there are certain areas in my constituency that are going to have no mass transit—if the city budget passes—to ensure that students can get to school, that people can get to work, that seniors can get around and do their business. It just speaks to the approach that this government has taken.

They criticized, in the throne speech, the federal government for taking this approach. In the throne speech, they have criticized the federal government saying that the federal government's spending reductions will result in a hardship for some Manitobans, and my government will do its utmost to protect essential public services where it has the ability to do so. It also says the government will speak out where there is the threat of unfair actions and where our province is expected to carry a relatively larger burden than that faced by other provinces and regions.

Well, if they are going to say that about the federal government, they have to stop doing it to the municipalities and the school divisions in Manitoba. If they understand those concepts and apply them to the federal government, a government with integrity and a sense of fairness and equity will apply that to their actions here in Manitoba. It will look at the kind of situation I was just describing where they have contributed to a problem of ensuring that there is going to be no transportation for certain areas that do not have equality of access to mass transit services.

So unfortunately there is only one more day left in the session, and I may not get to ask the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh) in Question Period if they will look seriously at changing the funding formula for school busing so that it will take into account the availability of transit services in areas like Radisson, in the outlying regions of the city of Winnipeg.

More than that, I think they have to take on an even bigger challenge—and this is something that I think all levels of government in our country have to do, take on the bigger challenge of stop pitting one level of government against the other, stop blaming one level of government against the other, and start working together to deal with the very serious needs that are in our communities.

It is no longer good enough to say the school divisions have that problem, especially when it is this government that cuts the funding, that creates the problems in the school divisions or in the municipal governments. The municipal governments cannot be left to bear the burden of all these services, because they have the least ability to raise revenue in a fair way. They have the least ability to raise revenue in a fair way which, I have said many times in this House, is based on ability to pay. We have a government in Manitoba now that is moving more and more to offloading services and offloading responsibility onto municipal levels of government.

I last weekend participated in a workshop on the city budget and learned that the City of Winnipeg has a 20 percent deficit financing problem. I would think that part of that is because this government has done a good job of offloading and a poor job of realizing that more

than half of the citizens of the province live in the city and they have to work with the city to ensure that there is going to be an approach that is going to be efficient and effective in providing services for all of Winnipeg and all of the province. We had the member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) raise a similar issue in the House today.

I am going to conclude my remarks by saying that I am really enjoying being an MLA. I feel like it has been a wonderful opportunity, and I really hope that the quiet in the House which is really different from when I first started speaking when members opposite were baiting and carrying on—but I hope that we can have a better decorum in the House. I have talked about this with the Speaker, and I am really going to make an effort. I am really going to make an effort to listen to the other side, and I hope they too will make a real effort to start listening and hearing some of the ideas and suggestions and the vision that is brought forward from this side of the House.

Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital): Madam Speaker, I would like to take this occasion to welcome you back to the House and our Pages back to the House.

I would also like to say to the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), I enjoyed listening to your talk today. We do listen, and I enjoyed some of the points that you brought out, and even though there was a wee bit of laughter on this side of the House, the points that you read about the philosophy of the party that you are with and, as I say, I am going to—I will not say listen again, because when you use your eyes you are obviously using your eyes and not your ears—but I will make a point of reading in Hansard your speech. I took notice of some of the points. I will not say which ones at this particular moment in time, but I do want to say to the member that it was an interesting talk, and I felt a somewhat different talk from what you usually give. I think that is why I listened carefully. A wee bit of conversation going on on this side, so I did not hear it all.

At any rate, Madam Speaker, it is always a pleasure to respond to the throne speech and particularly good this time to respond to the throne speech. I say that because this throne speech reconfirms and builds upon

the basic principles of our thinking that we set out when we were first elected.

* (1610)

Some of those things that we said back in 1988, reconfirmed again in 1990, were that we have to have responsible financial management, that we must work towards providing a good competitive business environment. For only by being fiscally responsible, by strengthening our economy, will we be able to attract more business, create more jobs, and thus be able to provide the necessary social services.

Early on, Manitobans, and we agreed with them, said we must have safer communities. We think that is absolutely vital. We on this side are very interested in law and order. All of these are things that Manitobans want. Manitobans feel secure with this government because we told them what we believed in 1988, and we restated it again and again with each throne speech. More importantly, we brought in policies and legislation to carry them out.

Now I have been listening to members on the other side, and some of them have alluded to the fact that they say this throne speech is boring, you people are just saying the same things, what is interesting about that, cannot you come up with new ideas. I do not think Manitobans are bored when we make statements like, we have no interest in raising major taxes. I think Manitobans are quite pleased that eight times in a row we have stated we are not going to raise major taxes. I think Manitobans are not bored when we say time after time that we are going to work towards a balanced budget.

Madam Speaker, I do not think Manitobans are bored when we say we are going to work towards reducing the debt. I do not think Manitobans are bored when we say we are doing all of these things to be fiscally responsible and also to be able to provide the necessary social services.

We know that Manitobans want this. This was shown very clearly this year when we were elected for the third time and elected with a clear majority.

I say to the members on the other side, and I have said this before, we are consistent. We do not change route every time we get up with the throne speech or our budget speech. We stated what we stood for in 1988. We have restated that each time with each throne speech and with each budget. We have worked slowly and consistently along that same path. Manitobans know where they stand with us. We do not put our finger up to the wind and test and see what we should say today.

I stated earlier that we set goals, and then we followed them with concrete action. I think probably one of the most important goals we set was working towards balanced budget, and last session, just a bare month ago, we brought in balanced budget legislation.

Now, as far back as 1988, before it became politically correct or the proper thing to do in government, we said government had to get its spending under control. We were talking about ourselves, but really what we were saying pertains to any level of government in any part of this country. Since then we have been working towards this end. We have been getting our house in order, so to speak.

Some of the things that we did in those early years, and if my memory is correct, I recall a press conference that the then-Minister of Finance held. I think it was January 1991, and I think it was at that particular press conference that he talked about developing four sectors.

Up until that moment in time, when each department went to Treasury Board, each department sort of looked at themselves and thought about themselves and said, you know, here is how much money we had last year, here is how much we want this coming year. They sort of did not look left and right at all.

Our government felt that we had to start doing things differently. We had to start looking at other departments. One of the ways we went about making government more effective was by developing four different sectors. One of them was management reform; another was human services; another was economic and sustainable development; and another was community services. Like departments were put into each of these areas. For example, human services

has Health, Education, Family Services, Culture and Heritage, and I believe the Youth Secretariat is in that area also.

The ministers in those departments and the staff in those government services and the staff in those departments, instead of just thinking about their needs, think about what is also needed in Health, say that it is the Health minister. They think about what is needed in Education, in Family Services, Culture and Heritage and in Government Services. Rather than sort of a me-only kind of outlook, it is a co-operative approach and an approach that encompasses a broader spectrum, so that there is no overlapping, so that we reduce duplication in the way we provide services and in the way we look at the needs of the various departments.

Last week our Minister of Government Services (Mr. Pallister), or maybe it was just earlier this week, I believe it was last week, spoke on some of the efficiencies that the former member and this current member of Government Services are initiating in Government Services.

Probably one of the best known is the special operating services, and, as the Minister of Government Services explained last week, this is a way of making sure that Government Services operates in the most effective manner. Probably one of the best known of these special operating agencies, as this new agency is called, is the Fleet Vehicles Agency, and through the Fleet Vehicles Agency we are now operating with less than 500 vehicles.

Madam Speaker, if that is not an efficiency and a saving of money, I do not know what is. Some of the other special operating agencies are the Property Management and Materials Distribution, and I think this is just the beginning of doing things differently and more effectively, more efficiently, and more cost effectively.

One of the other things that we did in our early years, and this is not a popular one and maybe I should not remind members of it, but, as I say, this government has not been afraid to make tough decisions, has not been afraid to bring in unpopular policies because we have been doing these things, as I say, right from the

beginning. By doing these things early on, it means that we have not had to be making dramatic cuts and harsh, draconian—that is the word that the opposition likes—and taking draconian measures. One of things that we did do was bring in Filmon Fridays or, as members on this side or people who are friendly towards this side of the House would say, family Fridays.

We also, outside of government, established various councils composed of government officials, business, industry and labour leaders to help us in our strategy planning for economic growth. Some of these councils and boards are the Manitoba Round Table on Environment and Economy, the Economic Development Board, the Manitoba Economic Innovation and Technology Council.

We also targeted six sectors that we felt were going to be high-potential growth. Those sectors are the agrifood area, aerospace, environment, health care products, tourism information, and technology. We targeted those areas about four or five years ago. These are the areas that we have been very strongly focusing on as far as our economic strategy goes. In fact, talking about economic strategy, a number of years ago, the Premier released a document called Framework for Economic Growth, and that Framework for Economic Growth outlines our policy and the policy directions that we have been taking for Manitoba. Now all these initiatives, Madam Speaker, are just a few that I have mentioned, but all of these initiatives have paved the way for our balanced budget legislation which we brought in last session, and that is what Manitobans have wanted.

I have kept in touch with my constituency these past five years. I have made sure I have been out in the riding consistently, and one of the things I have heard over and over and over again is financial management, good responsible financial management. People tell me that is what they want in government. People finally have recognized that governments have just been too free with the way they gave out money, that governments cannot keep promising to be the be-all and the end-all. People also recognize that not only must we manage our money differently and we must be more prudent and more—I would say maybe stringent,

because there is just no more money. That pot of gold at the end of the rainbow has not been found by any government, and we simply must marshal resources that we have now and do things differently.

This time during the election, more than any other time before, I had young people tell me that the reason they were voting for me, for our party, was because it had finally come home to them that it was their future that was at risk. One of the young people that walked with me very, very consistently—he is a high school student—he said that it was his future. That is why he was campaigning for me because, he said, if government keeps on spending the way it has been during the '70s and the '80s and before that, then there is going to be nothing left for when he needs the services.

* (1620)

This young man was very aware of the financial picture. He knew that there is roughly \$650 million that is going right out the window in interest payments, \$650 million that was not doing any of us in Manitoba any good. He was a mathematical wizard, that young man, and he recognized that if we kept bringing in budgets that were not balanced, that debt would keep going up and up, and as long as the debt kept going up, interest payments were going to rise correspondingly. That is no good, he said to me. He said, that is why I am so happy. This young man comes from a family of three other brothers and their mom and dad. They just were so pleased that finally a government had the guts, as I say, to make the tough choices and to bring that spending under control, and more importantly, to bring in balanced budget legislation, because we may not be in government forever.

We have been re-elected for the third time, but as the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) knows, politics, you just cannot count on anything. We know that human nature being what it is, politicians like to give to people. Politicians do not want to say no to people, and it is so nice to be able to say, yes, I will give you money for that, yes, we want to put more money into here, but until we get that debt under control, we cannot afford to be one of those types of politicians that is always giving, giving, giving and giving away

without making sure that you are being fiscally responsible. So, Madam Speaker, that is why we brought in the balanced budget legislation, because whoever is in power has to have that framework to be operating under so that this province does not get further into debt.

One of the things that I heard when I was at one of the debates was, does government not create jobs? I had to say this—and this was a group of young people. No, government does not create jobs, it is the private sector which creates jobs. It is the private sector jobs which provide the revenues that government needs to put back out into the programs. But job creation and economic development occur only when the private sector is confident. It occurs only when the private sector knows that the money it invests is going to be secure. The private or new business or new company is not going to come along and invest if the government comes along and taxes it in what the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) called a punitive way.

I can remember, my husband and I started a small business at the end of the '70s. It started at our kitchen table in our house because we could not even afford rent in another building. A few years later, when the NDP came into power and brought in the payroll tax, that was certainly a disincentive for us to be hiring people. So I can remember some of those punitive measures that the other side did bring in.

So, when we came to power in 1988, I have to tell you, Manitoba was one of the highest taxed provinces. As I stated, we had very punitive taxes that did not encourage business to come into the province and that certainly did not encourage the small businesses and the medium-sized businesses that were already here in the province to expand.

Since we have been in power, our tax rate has dropped from the second highest to the third lowest. For the past number of years, the Dominion Bond Rating has said Manitoba is one of the most fiscally responsible provinces in Canada since the late '80s.

So not only have we made Manitoba friendly to business, we have—and I am a nuts-and-bolts kind of person—also put into place some nuts-and-bolts

financial assistance programs to help new businesses get going, programs such as Grow Bonds, Vision Capital Fund, the Crocus Fund, the Manitoba Industrial Opportunities fund, the Manitoba Industrial Recruitment Initiative. There were some mining initiatives that the minister brought in: the Mineral Exploration Assistance Program and the Petroleum Exploration Assistance Program.

Before I forget, I also want to mention, one of the other initiatives that we brought in was the regulatory reform committee. Again, the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Pallister) spoke about that the other day. This particular committee is chaired by the Minister of Government Services. Also serving on the committee are the member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst), the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed), and myself.

One of the things that we are trying to do with that committee is look at all the regulations that are on the books here in Manitoba. There are about 10,000 pages of regulations on the book.

I come from a small-business background. Some of the regulations, you wonder why they are there in this day and age. They were put on, likely for a good reason, but they are not necessarily vital or valid now that we are into the mid-'90s.

The problem is, governments have never looked at them. We did a survey about two years ago of businesses here in Manitoba. One of the things that small business told us after the taxation problems, after the fact that businesses do not want to be hit with taxes that are going to make them say, why should we do business here in Manitoba, we can set up shop somewhere else in a more friendly environment—the other complaint that businesses, particularly small businesses, had were the number of regulations on the books that hampered small businesses.

So we are no looking at these regulations to see whether or not they are valid, and each department is going to come under scrutiny.

Here, Madam Speaker, are some of the questions that we ask: Is this regulation needed? What will be the cost to government to implement this regulation? What

is the urgency of this regulation? What alternatives should be looked at in an attempt to achieve the same policy objective? What is the estimate of the revenues or expenditures that this regulation will have? Now, if a department decides that, yes, a regulation is absolutely needed, then we have to make sure that department has effectively consulted with all the stakeholders concerned both internally and externally.

Another question that we ask is, does that regulation overlap or duplicate other regulations? Because any of you who have been involved in businesses know quite often that you have to be juggling regulations at a municipal level, at a provincial level and at a federal level. Quite often those regulations are asking the same questions, and there is no need for two sets of regulations that are both asking the same question to be on the books.

Another question that we make sure that we ask is, will that regulation significantly impact or impede business growth and innovation? Because small business is really the engine of growth in this province. So that is what we are trying to do, is make sure that we allow small business and business to be doing what it wants to do best. We do not want that business owner to be spending his or her time filling out forms and abiding by regulations that really make no sense. So, as I say, that question—does the regulation impede or is it a useful regulation?—is a very vital question.

Something else that we ask is, is the regulation being streamlined in order to communicate the regulation in an understandable manner? Madam Speaker, we found that some of the regulations are so difficult to understand that the ordinary person cannot even answer the question. They have to go for help to find out just exactly what the question means. I think sometimes all of us have experienced that when we are filling out our income tax. We wonder exactly what we are being asked. Well, that is silly if when you are trying to be a law-abiding citizen you cannot even understand the question. So, as I say, when a regulation has to be there on the books, we look at that regulation and try to make sure that it is in plain language so that it is easily understood. Of course, that goes along with the same question, has the paperwork been minimized or have we reduced it down to the least possible effort that that person in business is going to have to do?

* (1630)

Now, I cannot remember which member on the opposite side asked the other day—I believe the member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay) was speaking to the throne speech—but our member had been challenged as to what jobs had been created. I found it very interesting, because the member for Springfield, the member responsible for Agriculture, read into the record that: Air Canada had created 198; Angus Reid, 70; AT&T Transtech said that they would create 400 jobs, and, in fact, Madam Speaker, they have created 620 jobs. He read many other numbers into the record.

But, really, what have we done? What has all of this been leading up to? It has been leading up to the fact that Manitoba's economic growth has outperformed the Canadian average for three of the last four years, and that, Madam Speaker, is good news. It has led up to the fact that exports to foreign markets grew by 29 percent last year. It has led up to the fact that private sector capital investment increased by 7.8 percent in 1994 and is expected to grow a further 5.8 percent in 1995. That is the fourth consecutive year of growth. It has also led up to an average annual manufacturing investment over the six-year period, 1989 to 1994—after discounting for inflation was 63 percent higher than over the preceding six years, and this increase equals \$100 million of investment per year.

Perhaps, most importantly, it has meant that Manitoba has gained 15,000 full-time jobs primarily in the private sector, not in government, but in the private sector over the past two years. That is the third best in Canada and Manitoba's unemployment rate was the third lowest in Canada in 1994. Those are good figures.

And another figure which I think is very vital because manufacturing is very important to this province is the fact that manufacturing increased in this province by 11 percent. That was the highest percentage in Canada.

I will just finish this section of our growth and economic activity by stating that total new capital investment in Manitoba during 1995 will surpass the \$4-billion mark for the first time in our province's

history. So I reiterate, I do not think Manitobans are tired or bored with the fact that we have stated and restated the same thing each time in our throne speech and our budget. I do not think they are bored with the fact that we have set this province back on a good financial track record, that we have brought back a good competitive environment for businesses to set up, that we have brought back responsible government. In fact we have reduced government spending, Madam Speaker.

I do not think Manitobans are tired of hearing those kinds of things. I have heard some people complain about the fact that our Premier (Mr. Filmon), our Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) sometimes take trips to far parts of the world. Well, I am just reading a news release and the Premier and the Minister of I, T and T and the Minister of Finance had—I think about a year ago, a year and a half ago—made their first trip into China. [interjection] Well, just not even a month ago, a trade delegation from the Henan province in China came here to Manitoba. As the Premier stated, this is the 11th group of Henan government and business officials to visit this province since the signing of the Henan-Manitoba co-operation agreements.

We are very pleased with the success that these agreements have brought to the agribusiness industry and we are now going to be zeroing in on aerospace, transportation, environmental products and health care. These are areas that I mentioned earlier in the throne speech. I mentioned that we had targeted six sectors that we felt were going to be high growth areas so you can see the continuum. We stated something; we worked towards it. We focused our energies and this is all coming to fruition now.

Just in today's mail, I found it very interesting to receive an excerpt from the Manitoba Business magazine of December 1995. The title of the article says, "Sounds of the Silent Boom. Manitoba's economy is responding to fiscal responsibility." This is a very interesting two-page article that says, Manitoba is held almost in awe as we are the only jurisdiction in North America that has gone eight straight years without increasing any of its major taxes.

When the Premier and the Minister of Finance were in New York last month, the lenders in New York were very impressed with our fiscal responsible kind of method of doing business. They felt that we were absolutely right on in trying to get in control of our expenditures.

I just want to quote here. This is what the Premier stated, that he said to the lenders in New York. He said, but what made them all bullish about Manitoba was our report on the strong broadly based recovery of the provincial economy. We are finally seeing the results of our many years of restrictive budget setting. The private sector is clicking in with many new projects this year or expansion of existing operations.

The lenders in New York thought that was good news because they know better than some people know that jobs are created by the private sector. That is the healthy way to create jobs. It is not through government.

Madam Speaker, what is my time?

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for St. Vital has 12 minutes remaining.

Mrs. Render: I would just like to turn very briefly to education because we are looking at doing things differently there. I think I am running out of time. I will simply state that Manitoba is not alone in identifying the need to renew education to meet the demands of the changing world in which we live. All provinces are looking at education. In fact, as the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh) talked about, we are collaborating with the western provinces because there is no point in each of us working in isolation and reinventing the wheel each time.

The minister has brought in numerous things which have been discussed in the House so, since I am running out of time, I will not zero in on them right now. I will just simply state something else that we have done too and something that St. Vitalers are most interested in are safe neighbourhoods. Our Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), who spoke very eloquently yesterday, talked about many of the initiatives that this government has brought in to ensure that Manitobans live in a safe community.

There is much more though to be done. I am not trying to say that we have solved problems. It is again like so many of the things we are doing. We are putting into place some initiatives. We have much work to do to carry them out.

I would just like to finish my comments on the throne speech by making a reference to a group that is up and running in the constituency of St. Vital, and this is a program that was initiated a couple of years ago.

It is a program that is a co-operative program with the City of Winnipeg. It is called the Manitoba-Winnipeg Community Revitalization Program. This is a 50-50 cost-shared program. The objective of the program is to improve conditions in older but deteriorating neighbourhoods, but these neighbourhoods are stable. They are residential, stable neighbourhoods. It is just that they are beginning to slide down a bit.

The money is brought in to help improve neighbourhood services, for example to improve social and recreation facilities, to improve sidewalks, lanes, boulevards, parks and playgrounds in the area. Of course, once these kinds of things are improved, and hopefully the people living in the area, this will help stimulate and encourage new investment in the rehabilitation of housing in the area.

What makes this program unique is the fact that a group of residents from the area, in this instance from the Glenwood area of the riding of St. Vital were elected at an annual meeting a couple of years ago to serve as an advisory committee on this committee.

I would just like to, I guess, pay tribute to the revitalization program that is up and running in the Glenwood area, to thank the residents, the volunteers who have put in hundreds of hours over the last number of years, and they are coming to the end of their planning. They are going to be having a major meeting to finalize some of their planning in a very short time, but they have been working very hard on behalf of the residents of Glenwood.

Again, this is once again a program that is done on a co-operative basis because, as the member for Radisson

(Ms. Cerilli) said in her speech, we must work co-operatively. This is not the time to be necessarily working with sort of a hands off, this is mine, this is yours and you do it your way and we will do it mine. We do not have the resources to do that. We have to look at different ways of doing things. We have to be innovative in the way we do things but, at all costs, we must remember that whatever we do, we be fiscally responsible.

* (1640)

Madam Speaker, I think that is what Manitobans want. That is why we were elected for a third time, because people have confidence in us. They know that we set our goals. We have proven that we keep to our goals. We have shown that we are not afraid to make the hard decisions, the unpopular decisions, because we look to the future. We do not just look to the short term to make ourselves look good, to be popular. We look to what is going to happen to our children and our grandchildren, and we want to make sure that this is a province that remains economically viable and a province that we all can be proud of.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and speak to the throne speech and especially to follow the honourable member for St. Vital. I have always had a great deal of respect for the member. In the recent election, her opponent from our party and I often had many discussions. He always said he came from the south end of Winnipeg, the rich privileged area of town, and how I came from the poor Maples area where it was always discriminated against, until he pulled out from the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics a demographic sheet that showed that St. Vital really is an economically depressed community in many ways and that the average family income in that area is much lower than that of The Maples.

So I have respect for the member for St. Vital, because it must be difficult to be in a caucus that often I view as a caucus that represents the more affluent communities, the more affluent areas of Manitoba. Being a woman and a person who represents a less affluent community in her caucus must be very

difficult. So I have a lot of respect for the member from St. Vital.

In speaking to the throne speech, we must acknowledge that although it is difficult times that we live in, we cannot lose our optimism. In fact, I am a member of the Seven Oaks Optimist Club—

An Honourable Member: That is why you are an optimist.

Mr. Kowalski: I am an optimist, and being one of three Liberals in this Legislature, it helps to be optimistic. I try to pass that on to a number of young people I work with, as well as my own daughter, that no matter what the problems are you face, you have to be optimistic.

But a lot of people fight that optimism. Everybody wants progress, but few people like change. Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die. It is something that is ironic about human beings. As a politician and just approaching my third year in politics, I now acknowledge that sometimes people want what is best for them without considering the general aspects of what is good for everybody.

Everybody wants a police car on their street, a police station in their community, but nobody wants to pay the taxes for it. Everybody wants more hospitals, everybody wants more ambulances, everybody wants more schools, but, you know what—hey, keep our taxes down. Keep our user fees down. It is the negative side to human nature that as an optimist I sometimes have to ignore.

One of the things that brought me into the field of politics is a cause that I have had about north Winnipeg. North Winnipeg has a long history of being the landing place for newcomers and immigrants to this city.

In fact, I remember my grandmother showing me a yearbook from the Holy Ghost Church, and in this yearbook was a reprint of an article from the Manitoba Free Press. This article talked about the Galician immigrants coming to Winnipeg, the influx of Galician immigrants, and Galicians at that time was a popular expression used to describe all people of Slavic

descent, whether they be Czechoslovakian, Ukrainian, Polish. The writer wrote on how this influx of immigrants from Galicia are a welcome addition to the workforce in Winnipeg because they are hard-working, honest people. But then he went on to say, however, they are not very intelligent. They have poor hygiene, they breed in great numbers, but because they are relegating themselves to the north end of Winnipeg they will not disturb the social order of Winnipeg.

That was acceptable thinking in those days. It was acceptable to talk that way. I wish the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) was here because I think it was he who did a paper when he went to university where he took that article, redid it, took out what year it was from and what group of people, and he circulated it as a survey, saying, what year was this article written, and what group of immigrants was it about?

It was interesting that he got everything from Vietmanese boat people to natives off the reserves, to Ukrainians, to French people, to all sorts of different groups, that we always see the outsider, and we always use the same terms. They are not very intelligent. They have poor hygiene. They eat different food. They smell different. But so often in the past, the north end of Winnipeg was the landing point, and it is interesting to know that as a result of that many of the most successful people from Winnipeg come from north end Winnipeg because it instilled in them a work ethic, a strong work ethic, a strong competitive instinct—[interjection]

One of the members asks to state the reference. I believe it was the Manitoba Free Press article. My grandmother told me it was in the Holy Ghost Church yearbook. I believe the member for Kildonan did a research paper on that, and I found it very interesting. But it shows the history, and you know what? Have we really come that much further? Have we really come that much further? No matter what government is in power. We have had a socialist government in power here, we have had Conservative governments in power, and has the north end of Winnipeg really benefited under either administration?

I still look at recent examples of where the north end of Winnipeg are the losers. Recently when a pilot

project was going to be put in community policing, when it was first brought to Winnipeg, where was it put in? Was it put in the area where there is the highest crime rate, where there is the greatest need? No. It would stand to reason, but, no, the power base, the political powers in the city took it to south Winnipeg. Professor Rick Linden and the group and that is where it ended up, in south Winnipeg.

We go back to the history of where our universities have been located, where has our Pan-Am Pool been located, where is our Pan-Am stadium? Continually north end Winnipeg is discriminated against, because it is the home of the immigrant, the newcomer, the people who maybe did not have the political power that there is in the rest of the Winnipeg.

Things change. Now we have some hospital closures coming. Is there any reason for me to be cynical enough to think once again north end Winnipeg will be negatively affected? Once again the political power base of this city will pull the resources to where it is less needed. If we look at where the highest crime rate area is, the greatest poverty, the poorest nutrition, it is in north Winnipeg. [interjection] The member mentions around the Health Sciences. I have been a community police constable in almost every area of this city, and I will tell you the poverty, the crime is spreading out.

As I said, in St. Vital, it has a lower per capita income than The Maples, it is going out. But right now, north end Winnipeg, where you have the highest aboriginal population, where you have one of the lowest per capita family income and you have the worst health, because poor health goes with poverty—so where are we going to put the hospital, in the north end of the city or where the political power is? Where Conservative cabinet ministers, where their constituents want the hospital to go, is that where it is going to go?

So once again, I am very concerned. It is something that I will continue to defend, north-end Winnipeg, for fair treatment just as when I go to Ottawa in an all-party task force, I look after Manitoba's interest. In this Legislature, I will look at north-end interests.

In reviewing the throne speech, in the third paragraph, they talk about a strong mandate. Well, if I remember correctly, the percentage of popular vote going to the party in power was about 43 percent, and that is only of the people that did vote, so I would not call it an overwhelmingly strong mandate. There were more people who did not vote for them than did vote for them in Manitoba.

In the fourth paragraph of the throne speech, they talk about providing better health care, a stronger school system, ensuring safer streets. Right now, with safer streets, what is happening to the crime rate in Winnipeg? Oh, you could talk about a wonderful program, you could talk tough, but the proof of the pudding is in the tasting. Where is our crime rate going? You could put 80 police officers, you could put 120 more police officers in the city of Winnipeg, but unless you reduce the causes of crime, unless you deal with the poverty, with the social structure, with the employment issues—the money is better spent there.

Let us look at the 40 additional police officers that this government has facilitated. If you look at 40 police officers—[interjection] I believe it was 40. In the Winnipeg Police Service, they have two platoons working. When one half is on, the other half is off, so that is 20 more police officers on any given day. You have six uniformed divisions in Winnipeg, so 20 divided by six, you have three in each division. That is barely a cruiser car and a half.

Now, a division in north Winnipeg goes from the CPR tracks all the way up to the Perimeter, from the river up to St. James. Will one police car make that much difference? How many more police officers will we have to hire in order to make a visible difference, a visible presence in Winnipeg, as far as police service? Are the taxpayers willing to pay the price for that visible presence or is it show? Is it all for pretence, or is it to do something that is effective?

If we really want to do something that is effective, let us target the areas where the greatest crime is, where the greatest need is for programs, for policing, and you know what? Quite often, that ends up being in the north end of Winnipeg and the core area, and yet how many of the programs, how many of the community

service grants and so on will go to the north end of Winnipeg, or will they go to Tory held ridings? We will see.

In the throne speech, it talks about national unity, and we are talking about all members of this House working together to build a consensus. I applaud that type of language and those sentiments. We hope that this type of sentiment is carried forward in action, not only in dealing with this issue, but many issues. We could all work together for many concerns.

In another part of the throne speech it talks about, our future prosperity depends not only on the political stability of our nation but upon the economic, financial stability of our province. Well, that is sort of ironic. This government is very schizophrenic or very unstable. I do not know what word I would use to say that at one time they are saying yes, the federal government has to get the deficit in order, yes, they have to be fiscally responsible but, geez, if they cut anything, they are terrible, they are the worst thing that ever happened. As I started out in the beginning, everybody wants to get into Heaven but nobody wants to die, so if we want Manitoba to become a Heaven maybe we have to do some dying.

It talks about no major tax increases. The last time I spoke to the previous throne speech in the previous session, I talked at length about no major tax increases, so I will not say too much about it. But a shift from taxes to user fees is quite often very unfair, because it has nothing to do with ability to pay. The poor person who is making minimum wage has to pay the same user fee as the professional family with double incomes and all kind of expendable income, so user fees are not always the most equitable way to raise funds.

My ministers recognize the government of Canada must improve its financial situation. How hypocritical to say that and then the next minute be criticizing the federal government for any, any, anything that they do to reduce the deficit. The hypocrisy would be, if this federal government was not reducing the deficit, who would be screaming the loudest that the financial pressure was put on their provincial government and the hardship it would be causing them because of increasing interest rates. So how hypocritical can they

be. They want the deficit reduced but no reduction in spending.

Quite often, as a Liberal member, the finger is pointed over in this direction as being the defenders of the federal Liberal government. I could tell you that my Liberal roots are not as deep as my Manitoba roots, and I have lived in Manitoba all my life by choice and that will always come first, that will be my first consideration.

That is why I took part in the all-party task force to go to Pinawa, to protect Manitoba's interests in the reorganization of AECL, but in going to Ottawa, I went there to advocate for Pinawa, not to slam the federal Liberal government. I want to work with the Manitoba federal Liberal M.P.s, who thank goodness that we have such a strong presence in the federal Liberal caucus to advocate for Manitoba or we would not be doing as well as we have been.

And then, it is funny, later in the speech, on the bottom of page 3 of the throne speech it says, a federal provincial co-operation has also resulted in better service to business through improved procurement and bidding process—again, how inconsistent.

Later on in the throne speech they talked about an integrated structure of Winnipeg health services. It is funny how pendulums swing back and forth. Under the previous Health minister, we looked for a decentralization of health care. We looked for community-based health care delivery. [interjection] A colleague asked me if that is a member that may be working with the former member for The Maples, Gulzar Cheema, when he becomes a Health minister after the next provincial election. I am hopeful and some suggestion has been made who he would pick for his deputy minister, but I will make no comment to that.

In the Throne Speech they talk about encouragement to independent living. You know, I have watched over the years this move to integrating people with mental health problems back into the community, but I have also seen when the supports are not there, as a police officer.

At two o'clock in the morning, when you see the homeless, when you see the people who are not being

looked after, as a police officer, when no one else is there, you are looking after them.

* (1700)

When it is 30 below and they are outside in a T-shirt and a pair of shorts and they are homeless and their mental health is not sufficient that they could take care of themselves, it falls to us.

So yes, I believe in a community-based delivery of mental health services, but we have to make sure the supports are there, and the same way with the reform of the health care system.

If we move to a preventative model, if we move to a community based, we could do that but we still have to make sure that the emergency services, the primary health care needs, the tertiary health care needs go on. For a while there might be an overlap, there might be an increased need, but if you are going to make transitions sometimes you have to do both.

I applaud the provincial government about their move to make the Child and Youth Secretariat a reality. We will be looking for good things to come forward. I do a lot of work with young people and they are our future. They are looking for optimism. They are looking for a brighter future. [interjection] Yes. A member reminded me about the wonderful young people for the past eight months that worked at The Maples Youth Services Canada project. For the eight or nine months that these people were active in The Maples, these 10 young people, it showed what volunteers could do in our community.

They did everything from graffiti cover-up to creating a drop-in centre for preschoolers during the summertime to keep them occupied. That led into teaching parents to operate this activity centre that carried on after they quit the project. They instituted a sports program, alternative recreation programs. They instituted Neighbourhood Watch streets in The Maples area. The quality of life increased dramatically by the activity of these 10 young people.

It added to my optimism about the future and it added to my commitment to work hard, because if these 10 young people could still be optimistic, could

still be committed to helping their neighbourhood, then so can I and so can we all as legislators. The co-ordinator, Colleen Dowel [phonetic], still is receiving accolades from many different circles of people that have seen the work that she did as a co-ordinator of this project. I trust we are going to see her involved with many projects in the future.

We look forward to the Winnipeg Development Agreement, a federal government and provincial government and municipal program that I think can make a big difference. In particular, I am interested in the urban safety portion of that program that will fall under the Urban Affairs ministry. I am looking for good things to come out of that program, \$3.5 million to go to crime prevention and urban safety programs. Again, I hope that north Winnipeg will receive its fair share of funding under that program.

In the throne speech, personal safety is brought forward. Being a police officer in a fascist state would probably be a lot easier, but I would not want to live in a fascist state. I would not want to live in a state where punitive was harsh and quick, where people would not have rights, where bail—you would be presumed guilty until proven innocent. But you know what? For all the years I have heard, in the coffee room conversation, amongst police officers, amongst so many people in the community, that they talk that way, but it is interesting, when it is one of their own or themselves who are accused, they want all the protection that law provides.

That is what makes our system the best system in the world, and yet for political purposes we talk in the language of almost fascism, taking away people's rights, being harsh and punitive, and thinking that that will affect the crime rate. Has it? Has the crime rate in Manitoba gone down? People who have worked with young people know that for an adolescent child, the consequences of their action quite often are not thought of at the time that they are doing an offence, before they decided, so what you have to do is occupy them, give them self-esteem, make them involved in important tasks, in productive tasks, so they are not involved in crime.

You are not going to scare a young adolescent who is either in an abusive family, in a family where there

is alcoholism, in a family where he is being neglected, whether it is from rich or poor parents. Do you think the consequences, jail, the boot camp, will really be a consideration? It is not going to stop him from doing crime. It may be politically popular, but it does not work.

They talk about the victims of crime. The best thing you could do for a victim of a crime is prevent the crime, so there is no victim. If we do things that will help the people who are getting involved over and over and over again, then we will not have those victims. Rather than aim programs at restitution, let us aim programs that will prevent there from being victims. That should be the focus of the government.

They talk about parental responsibility, again, a politically popular thing to talk about, but people who have worked with young people ask this question. Some wonderful parents who have three, four, five kids, and out of them, one of them turns out bad, how is that the parents' responsibility? What, the parents were bad parents for that one child and for the other four, they were good parents?

You know, children, young people, are individuals, and they should bear the consequences. If I ever had any ambition to be in the federal Parliament—being involved in this Manitoba Legislature negates the necessity, because in the throne speech, there are 20 references to the federal government. When the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), almost on every question that is put about the justice system, says she is lobbying the federal government for this, or she is pushing the federal Liberal government for this. Well, I think maybe the Minister of Justice should go to Ottawa and become a member of Parliament if that is what she wants to concentrate on, rather than dealing with the administration of justice in Manitoba that will cause a decrease in the crime rate, instead of trying to look tough.

Now, Madam Speaker, I do not want to take up too much time that all members have agreed will be given to this throne speech. There are other things that I would like to speak of, but when we speak on the budget, there will be other opportunities, so I look forward to speaking again in this Assembly. Thank you.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Energy and Mines): Madam Speaker, I, first of all, in following the member for The Maples, his comments to this House which I listened to as he addressed us this afternoon, he opened up, I think, a few comments and observations.

Before I do that, though, I would like to personally thank, on behalf of my constituents, him as the representative of the Liberal caucus, as well as the member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk), on behalf of the official opposition for their participation and contribution to our all-party effort in Ottawa this past week in lobbying for the retention of an AECL presence in this province at the Whiteshell labs, and I want to address that issue somewhat a little later in my remarks.

But the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) throughout his speech made a couple of comments that I think demand, cry out for some comment from this side, because the member for The Maples said that when it came to hospitals and services that this government ignored the area of greatest need, the area where the poorest people work, the area where there was the greatest social need.

Then he referred to the north end, and I imagine by inference to Seven Oaks in his constituency. The last time I think most of us in this House looked at that issue, I think most of us would agree that the greatest social need, the greatest poverty, the greatest unemployment in our capital city was in the inner city, which is served by our largest hospital, the hospital that continues to offer and will offer and has always offered the largest amount of service, and that is the Health Sciences Centre. So I think the member for The Maples has stretched the area of greatest need out into the suburbs a little more than reality would support.

* (1710)

Madam Speaker, also, the member mentioned St. Boniface, one of our finest hospitals in this province, and we have not heard the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) criticizing our policy at all. It would be interesting to hear his remarks. But the member for The Maples talked about the—[interjection]

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am experiencing great difficulty hearing the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

Mr. Praznik: Madam Speaker, the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) in his address spoke about the references to the federal government in our throne speech and to a number of questions. He talked about our criticism of federal government issues and about our continual criticism of reductions to the provinces while at the same time our government and governments across this country of all stripes are calling upon the national government as the last government in Canada to get on with getting their fiscal house in order. They seem to find this somewhat hypocritical.

Well, Madam Speaker, if I may relate a story that was brought back to us by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) about what happened in the nation's capital yesterday, and it is most indicative why provincial governments of all stripes, NDP, Progressive Conservative and Liberal, are critical of Mr. Chretien's administration of Ottawa, and it is just so typical of how out of touch with reality and how out of control that national government has become.

Yesterday, while the Finance ministers of our nation were meeting in Ottawa with the national Finance minister and discussing extremely important issues about the Canada Pension Plan and its \$600-and-some-billion deficit, when they were talking about the need to get funding under control, where the federal Minister of Finance, Mr. Martin, was pleading with provincial ministers to be able to understand the critical financial issues and the reductions that were needed for the greater good of the nation, who should join them in the morning but our own senior Manitoba minister, Mr. Axworthy.

He comes into the meeting to talk about the social safety net issues and Canada Pension issues, and he sits through an entire session of discussion about the need for restraint and Mr. Martin's pleading for co-operation and where we work together and where we talk together and where we plan together, and he walks out of the door and he goes down the hall or down the street to the National Press Gallery and he announces

a \$720-million program with no consultation, all depending on matching dollars.

An Honourable Member: It is in the red book.

Mr. Praznik: Oh. The member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) says it was in the red book. Well, let us remember, Madam Speaker, nowhere in the morning session did Mr. Martin or Mr. Axworthy even give us the courtesy of saying to their provincial colleagues that he was going to go and do that.

An Honourable Member: You do not care about child care.

Mr. Praznik: The member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) says that we do not care about child care. This government in the toughest times continues to offer the most generous child care package in the country. In fact, our Premier told that to our senior Manitoba cabinet minister, Mr. Axworthy, and I would bet you that in the details of his package will be very little that will suit the needs of Manitoba. In fact, I think he has totally forgotten about Manitoba, but the point of the matter is, after all of the demands for consultation, the demands for working together, the arrogance, the absolute arrogance of Mr. Axworthy and Mr. Martin, to make that announcement yesterday is just so indicative of how out of control our national government is. They are not even sitting together to co-ordinate and plan. In fact, I would even bet you, Madam Speaker, that Mr. Martin did not even know his colleague was going out to make the announcement.

These are the people who are in charge of our national finance, who are behind every provincial government in this country, and we are supposed to have faith in that government. Well, Madam Speaker, the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), just that example, over and over again, we see their lack of consultation.

My colleagues ask me about Pinawa and AECL. Madam Speaker, let me tell you what we have witnessed in the last few days. The member for The Maples may disagree with this, because I appreciate that he has a federal party to represent, and balances, and those have been useful at times in building the provincial case. I want to recognize that.

But let us look at the fact of what we saw. A few weeks ago we had a leaked document which the Free Press brought to our attention, indicating that an option was coming forward for the closure of the Whiteshell facility. We had denials. I myself spoke to Anne McLellan, the federal minister, before I spoke to the media. She claims she told me that the review was going on; she had not seen any options; she did not know what was happening on this, certainly concerned about it. Right? We hear that.

So the interest in the media picks up; the interest in the people of Pinawa for the future picks up. What do we then see, as we see a political concern developing for our Liberal M.P.s in Manitoba? What did we see last week? As we prepared to go to Ottawa to find out facts, to talk about options, to get that kind of discourse—and we recognize that the federal government has to make reductions. We recognize that Natural Resources Canada is likely going to have a significant reduction. We recognize that AECL is probably going to have a significant reduction. We know that. All we have asked for is fairness and a chance to compete within that budget.

So going down to Ottawa on that pretext and going down to deal with that matter, what do we hear on Friday? We hear Lloyd Axworthy's office leaks out that the problem is solved; we have a one-year reprieve. Everything is okay. Some of our Manitoba M.P.s call up the local media to say, spread the word, all is saved, all is fine.

What happens when we go down to Ottawa? What do we discover? We discover firstly that this year reprieve is really only a reprieve about announcing a decision. [interjection] The member says, I am making a decision.

Well, the minister tells us that the budget dollars that she was addressing are one and two years from now. So we knew that there is no real reprieve. The facility was not going to close on March 31, 1996; it could not. But, when its programming runs out, it is on.

The minister then tells us, Ms. McLellan, that everything—she is going to have a review of the sites and everything is on the table. So we asked the question of Madam McLellan, the minister, if that means in the review, will we have access to the internal

accountability, the internal financial information of AECL to determine whether or not decisions as to where things should be located are being done on an economical basis?

Again, can we compete with other sites in other provinces? Well, everything is on the table, but not quite commitment. Then when we asked theoretically if the whole operation could be consolidated in Manitoba because it was more economical, would that be a possibility? Well, oh, no, it cannot go out of Ontario.

Then what does she tell us? She tells us that she has received a very heavy lobby from Ontario. We ask ourselves, is that from the Ontario government, because that is not what they have said to us? No, she said, not the Ontario government. Is it Ontario Hydro? Because they are quoted in The Globe and Mail saying that is not an issue with them.

No, she admits, it is the Ontario federal Liberal caucus that has been lobbying.

So now what we have come down to is, this is not a battle of efficiency. This is not a battle of where things should be best located. This is a battle of clout between Manitoba Liberals and Ontario Liberals.

Then we move on to see Mr. Reed Morton [phonetic], and Reed Morton [phonetic], who is a very tough individual and I give him full credit, I think he was the most honest with us that day. He was the most honest with us, because when we asked him about this review that we have been told where everything is supposedly on the table, he said, that is not his instruction. His only review was, what do we do with the site? What do we do with the site when we have significantly downsized it? What has AECL been doing for the last five or six years, been doing that, the Whiteshell initiative? Everything has just gotten nowhere.

It became very evident to all of us there that the plan is significant reduction for AECL, significant reduction at Whiteshell, and let us put some kind of plan together to do something else with the site.

* (1720)

Two weeks or three weeks ago when the story broke, we asked, what is going on? Oh, nothing. We do not know anything.

So I have to ask, what is going on? The only way we get told all this information is when we make a fuss about it and we demand—when the political heat hits those Liberals in Ottawa, then they respond a little bit.

So the success of our mission was two things. One, we got a sense of the facts and, two, we got some attention. I can tell you for all of us involved in this process, and I hope we will have the support of the Liberal Party here in Manitoba, because we know that if they become apologists for Ottawa, there will not be three Liberal MLAs here after the next election, there will be none, because the one thing Manitobans do not want in their provincial parties is apologists for Ottawa. Not at all.

This government was not an apologist for a federal Tory government and we would hope that the Liberal Party there will not be an apologist for the federal Liberal Party either. [interjection] Well, I tell you, I am not going to accept the member's question, because I only have a limited amount of time and I know members of this House want to deal with this issue because it is important to the province. We do not want a little Liberal exercise in a kiss-off to Whiteshell because the Ontario Liberal federal caucus has more clout than our M.P.s here.

This was a party that campaigned on national fairness, but we know exactly what it boils down to, the clout of 98 M.P.s and powerful ministers versus 12 M.P.s and ministers whose authority in Ottawa is quickly declining. Manitobans are not being well served here, but we will continue to work, and if they come with realistic options, we want to be a part of that. We have always said that, but we will not be part of just a kiss-off to get them off the hook for making a tough decision.

Madam Speaker, I just want to touch for a few minutes a matter, I think, very indicative of the kind of success this government has had over the last seven to eight years in governing the province of Manitoba, and I want to talk a little bit about the mining side now for a moment, because I think it is very important.

We have had a lot of debate and discussion in committee and in this House about mining, but mining strategies and policies are most indicative of some of the issues that divide the two major parties in this House.

This year, as we refined and developed the strategy begun by my predecessor the honourable Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) and then the former member for Pembina constituency, and as we refined it and worked towards making Manitoba the place in Canada to be in mining, and I think we are getting close to that, in dealing with a host of issues, we took our strategy and our changes on the road. I had the opportunity to visit approximately 50 mining companies personally, and our department visited some 90, and we have had over 25 new companies come to our mines conference this year, looking at exploration programs.

We are at one of the highest levels of exploration. We have opened the new mine at Photo Lake. We have opened the new Britannia mine at Snow Lake. We have seen the announcement by Cabot, at Tanco. We have seen the Rae Gold at Bissett announcement of going into construction. In total, just this year alone, coming into production are about to be some 500 new jobs in the mining sector.

But what was most amazing as I travelled across—[interjection] Well, the member for Rossmere (Mr. Toews) asks, where are they? Many of them are in northern Manitoba, and the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) who has been involved in many of these openings, the members across the way should talk to him, because he has come to realize how right we are in the strategies we are using, and I thank him for his support, although I know it is not shared by all of his colleagues.

But I have to tell members, what was most interesting as I visited companies, particularly companies that had been in Manitoba in the '60s and early '70s, I ran into companies which would not deal in Manitoba since the days of Sid Green and Ed Schreyer. They were chased out of Manitoba by the policies of a New Democratic Party government, and in their planning in 25 years, they would not even look at this province because of their bad experience.

In fact, in one particular company, the president went to his filing cabinet and came out with a letter that he had written to Sid Green in 1971 or '72, talking about how bad these policies were, and his company could not afford to be in this province, actually gave up claims that led to a gold mine, because they could not afford to maintain the investment under the regime brought in by that province. [interjection] A jackboot regime, members refer to it—exactly that, not interested in investment, not interested in the jobs, not interested in the tax dollars, ideological. And if you want more proof about it, look at their cousins in British Columbia. When they are not playing bingo, they are pushing the mines and closing them.

What is absolutely amazing is the lack of development going on in that province, people just waiting for their next provincial general election to throw them out because they are destroying the economy of that province.

So let there be no mistake about it, whether it be in mining, whether it be in manufacturing, whether it be in agriculture, whether it be in the forestry industry, the steps that this administration has taken, the work that we have done to control our own finances, to be open for business, to develop business, have led to more private-sector investment in this province than ever before. That is what it is about, investments, jobs, revenue for taxes and the strong economic base that Manitobans want.

Day after day, we hear members across the way getting up in this House whining and complaining about policies that we have embarked on that have led to jobs and development in this province, but all they have to do sometime—they do not have to listen to us, not at all. Let them go travel. Let them go and visit with people who are in the mining industry who control and make investment decisions. Let them go to talk to people in the forestry industry. Let them go to talk to manufacturers and find out what it takes to bring jobs and development to a province.

I will tell you what they will find out. The kinds of policies that they promote will push it away. What is worse, it is not the industries that leave, but the greater crime is the industries that never came, or the industries

that never developed, the jobs that did not happen, and, you know, Madam Speaker, when we talk about the highest level of capital investment this year, some \$400 million in this province this year, let us not forget that that was investment without a hydro dam, because the other large years in Manitoba's history when we had large capital investment is when you had the public investment in a hydro dam, and our achievement has been without that large public sector investment. It has been private sector dollars, by and large, investing here because we are the place to be.

Cabot is a perfect example in my own constituency in the mining industry, a company that a year and a half ago came to this province only interested in a mine. We wanted to be competitive. We said, let us compete, and on a host of factors they made their decision to build their facility in Manitoba rather than in Boyertown, Pennsylvania, a \$10-million to \$11-million capital investment in Manitoba because we are competitive.

Madam Speaker, let us make no mistake about this. The issues in this province are very clear, and the kind of moderate common-sense approach that this administration has taken to government, moving forward step by step, making government more efficient, attractive to industry, has brought where this fall the Minister of Industry (Mr. Downey) was making almost an announcement a week of capital investment in Manitoba—almost an announcement a week between mines and industry coming here, and there is more to come, because we are a good place to be, not only it being the environment, but we are out there recruiting and working to bring industry, to develop industry here in this province, the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), the Minister of Industry (Mr. Downey) and others out there bringing industry and development to this province, and that is what it is about because it is not about make-work jobs. It is not about more government spending. It is about real growth.

* (1730)

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Pursuant to Rule 35(3), I am interrupting the 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 amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: The proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the official opposition in amendment thereto as follows:

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

But this House regrets that this government has failed to meet the goals of Manitobans by:

- (a) breaking its election promise to keep community hospital emergency rooms open 24 hours a day, failing to come up with strategies to address the shortages of rural and northern doctors, and refusing to implement a number of community-based cost-saving measures that would better serve the public interest; and
- (b) failing to implement a plan for post-secondary education in the 21st Century, as promised in the recent election campaign, as well as failing to provide access to distance education to a majority of schools outside of Winnipeg; and
- (c) refusing to act while Manitoba lost 5,000 jobs last month, hundreds of other job losses were announced and future opportunities, like the relocation of CP Rail headquarters, were ignored; and
- (d) showing contempt for their promised consultation on rural concerns by unilaterally introducing dual marketing to the hog industry despite the opposition of the farmers concerned; and
- (e) demonstrating its lack of respect for aboriginal peoples through continued inaction on the AJI and treaty land entitlement issues; and
- (f) failing to implement previous promises to improve the safety of Manitobans; and
- (g) government actions in the Louisiana-Pacific deal that make a mockery of sustainable development

after two successive throne speeches promised to introduce an act to institutionalize sustainable development practices; and

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

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Voice Vote

Madam Speaker: All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Formal Vote

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Yeas and Nays, Madam Speaker.

Madam 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 (Mr. Doer), that is, the amendment to the motion for an address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Division

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

Yeas

Ashton, Barrett, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Hickes, Jennissen, Kowalski, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Mackintosh,

Maloway, Martindale, McGifford, Mihychuk, Reid, Robinson, Sale, Santos, Struthers, Wowchuk.

Nays

Cummings, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Dyck, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Newman, Pallister, Penner, Pitura, Praznik, Radcliffe, Reimer, Render, Rocan, Stefanson, Sveinson, Toews, Tweed, Vodrey.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 25, Nays 29.

Madam Speaker: The motion is accordingly defeated.

* (1750)

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Yes, Madam Speaker, I was paired with the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns).

* * *

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I am very pleased to speak once again on the throne speech and address what I think is probably a very interesting time politically, and I think it is something that should be of note to members opposite, because we, Madam Speaker, in this province and many people in the western world have had close to a decade now, some countries more, of the right-wing agenda.

We have seen, Madam Speaker, the kind of policies of greed, of shortsightedness, the kinds of policies of confrontation and division, and until even a few months ago, it appeared that that right-wing agenda was going perhaps to triumph even more.

As I watched elections in such countries as France, when I watched the elections in the United States, even I began to wonder if we were in for even more years in terms of that right-wing agenda that has struck so much of the western world.

But, you know, Madam Speaker, I am struck today as I see the government pass yet another throne speech with yet another bankrupt, right-wing agenda upon this province. But that tide ebbs and flows, of politics.

I say, as I look throughout the world today, and I see such countries as France—and, boy, are the political winds shifting in that country—and the United Kingdom, where the Labour Party is sitting at 61 percent in the opinion polls; even the United States, where things like book deals are starting to tear away those so-called values, the family values, of the right wing.

I look to this province. What do I see? Yes, I see book deals; I see a Premier that sees no difficulty with saying one thing in an election on such a major issue as the Winnipeg Jets, and within a few days change his mind, change his tune publicly. I see a Premier who, only a few days ago in this House, accused us of McCarthy tactics, McCarthyite tactics, for asking questions about improper dealings and of conflicts between a former senior official of this government. That was Monday. On Tuesday, the Premier appointed an independent inquiry—some McCarthy tactics.

But, you know, I see some of the similar things happening in this province that are happening elsewhere. There is disarray in the ranks of this government and its kindred souls. The taxpayer federation that wrote Bill 2, that is writing the agenda of this government, is now split into two. There is the Manitoba taxpayers federation; there is the Alberta-based Canadian Taxpayers Federation. This organization that has been advising us on how to run government and on how to run our finances is now in a dispute over the finances of its own organization. I wonder if any members opposite are perhaps wondering about the advisability of following through that agenda on such issues as Bill 2.

But I go further, Madam Speaker, because the difficulty when you are dealing with this right-wing agenda the past ten years, it has thrown away much of its history. We see this so-called Conservative Party turn itself into a pretty poor imitation of the Republicans in the United States. Who in this party opposite—[interjection] That is right, the Newt Besseys of the world. I see this Conservative Party now dealing with perhaps one of the most fundamental legacies of a previous Conservative government, the Manitoba Telephone System. You know who nationalized—yes, I use that word—through an act of the Legislature? Who did it? Rodmond Roblin.

An Honourable Member: What party?

Mr. Ashton: They did not call them Progressive Conservatives; they called them straight Conservatives in those days.

An Honourable Member: How did he lose his job, Steve?

Mr. Ashton: Well, we will not talk about how he eventually lost it. It was a scandal. The Premier, the current Premier may wish to look at history. We look at this building, which is another example of that.

But, you know, Rodmond Roblin in the first part of this century brought in a bill that took over the phone company from which phone company? Bell. There were 24,000 subscribers. We had competition in those days; it was also payoffs. Tories under pressure, both here and also in Saskatchewan, brought in a publicly owned telephone system. They took over Bell, they nationalized it, they bought it out, they took it over. They took over the initial 13,000 subscribers, and they built a system that is the envy of the world.

But, you know, it was not good enough. We have had 80 years, we have had 90 years of one of the best telephone systems in the world, the lowest rates, some of the best service. You know what, Madam Speaker? We own it. Any profits stay in this province, any price for business that stays in this province. But, no, the Premier, under the directions of the right-wing agenda, I mean, the taxpayers federation, the rest—by the way, he did talk to the chamber of commerce, I must say.

By the way, Madam Speaker, we also go to the chamber of commerce. I respect the chamber of commerce, but we also go to a lot more than just the chamber of commerce, as the Premier has done, and we will do that on MTS. We will take the fight to save MTS to every corner of this province.

The bottom line is that this government, flush with success after the election, I believe is getting arrogant. It is interesting with MTS, because they made the decision but for three weeks tried to hide it. They did not put a press release out on MTS until we asked it in the Legislature.

How many members of the caucus were even part of that decision? I ask that question, Madam Speaker. How many of them knew until we raised it in the Legislature?

But, you know, I ask the members opposite who represent communities such as Boissevain and Minnedosa, the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae), what will they say to the many MTS employees in their community, if we allow history to reverse itself, if we allow, and I throw this out as a hypothetical situation, Bell Canada to take over MTS? We will then be a small component of a big company, Bell Canada.

Who on that side believes that Bell Canada or any private owner of MTS would purchase the same goods from small businesses that MTS does, would hire employees in rural communities, would provide service to rural and northern communities at bare rates? Who believes that that is the case?

The bottom line is, MTS has served us well, and we will fight to keep it, Madam Speaker. We will fight the right-wing agenda of the Conservative government.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) will have 33 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 14, 1995

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