

Fourth Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
Official Report
(Hansard)

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Speaker*

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
First Session—Thirty-Eighth Legislature

Member	Constituency	Political Affiliation
AGLUGUB, Cris	The Maples	N.D.P.
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
ASPER, Linda	Riel	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky, Hon.	Inkster	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean, Hon.	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	P.C.
HAWRANIK, Gerald	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George, Hon.	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
LOEWEN, John	Fort Whyte	P.C.
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MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
MURRAY, Stuart	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PENNER, Jim	Steinbach	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack	Southdale	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Carman	P.C.
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
SALE, Tim, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Wellington	N.D.P.
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
SMITH, Joy	Fort Garry	P.C.
SMITH, Scott, Hon.	Brandon West	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, November 29, 2002

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Former Manitoba MLAs Association

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of the Former Manitoba MLAs Association praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba pass an act to incorporate the Former Manitoba MLAs Association.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Eric Robinson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism): I am pleased to table the 2001-2002 Annual Report for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism, copies of which have been previously distributed, the 2001-2002 Annual Report for the Community Support Programs, the 2001-2002 Annual Report for Manitoba Sport, 2001-2002 Annual Report for the Centre culturel franco-manitobain.

I am also pleased to table the 2001-2002 Annual Report for the Manitoba Arts Council and the 2001-2002 Annual Report for the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation.

I am also pleased, finally, to table the 2001-2002 Annual Report for the Manitoba Film and Sound Recording Development Corporation.

All these reports have had copies which have previously been distributed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 2—The Civil Remedies Against Organized Crime and Liquor Control Amendment Act

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, is there

leave of the House to do first reading of Bill 2, which is on the Notice Paper?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave? [*Agreed*]

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that leave be given to introduce Bill 2, The Civil Remedies Against Organized Crime and Liquor Control Amendment Act, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

* (10:05)

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, this bill would provide police with several new civil remedies to help counter organized crime on application to the court.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. 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 morning Martin and Caroline Pasieczka, and Nicholas, Anastasia and baby Adriana from Winnipeg who are the guests of the honourable Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach).

Also, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the loge to my right where we have with us this morning Mr. Binx Remnant, who is the former Clerk of the House.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you all here today.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Care System Private/Public Agreements

Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I think it is clear that

Canadians were expecting more from the report released by the Saskatchewan New Democratic premier Roy Romanow yesterday. Canadians were looking for solutions to the health care system and challenges in the country. Instead, Mr. Romanow's solutions rely solely on the federal government providing \$15 billion to address the problem.

Mr. Romanow's report does nothing to shorten waiting lists today or tomorrow. It does not put another nurse at a bedside today or tomorrow and it does not provide another doctor in a rural community today or tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans want and deserve choice and access to timely health care, not more broken promises like we have seen from the New Democratic Party. The Doer government's approach to health care is not acceptable. Earlier this week we offered to work with the Doer government to put a plan in place to work with the regional health authorities so they can contract out health services.

I ask the Premier today: Will he work with us on that plan to ensure timely access to patient care?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, many opposition parties, in fact, almost all opposition parties across Canada appeared before the Romanow Commission. There was one leader and one party that did not present their alternative views before the commission. For that leader and that party to stand up in the House now after the report is issued and not have the intestinal fortitude to present their views to the commission ahead of time, I find quite regrettable.

For members opposite to talk about nurses at the bedside after they fired a thousand nurses, Manitobans know the truth.

Mr. Murray: Mr. Speaker, we clearly presented to Manitobans our vision of an accountable, transparent and accessible health care approach this week. In our vision the private sector can build a facility. The Government pays for the health services and patients receive timely access to care. It is exactly how the Pan Am Clinic was working for decades before the NDP decided they had to buy the bricks and mortar.

The Doer government is letting their ideology get in the way of patient care in Manitoba. I will once again ask this Premier, on behalf of all Manitobans, will he commit today to work with our plan to work within a framework with the RHAs to contract out service to provide timely access to patients in Manitoba. Will he do it today?

* (10:10)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the head of the medical association and the doctors talked about the dark days of the Conservative years. We would have thought there would have been a conversion on the road to Damascus with the alternative plan that would have been put forward. Do they have a training strategy as their plan in the so-called alternative speech? No. Do they have a training strategy for world doctors and doctors in the medical schools? No. Do they have a training strategy for more nurses at the bedside in Manitoba? No. Do they have a training strategy for more diagnostic staff in Manitoba? No.

We on this side are using a common-sense approach to building up Manitoba. Let me explain what that means to members opposite. We are using public dollars to double the number of surgeries at the Pan Am Clinic. We are using training dollars to triple the number of nurses being trained at our community colleges and our universities. We are using public dollars to move more surgeries into Steinbach and Ste. Anne. Members opposite are a one-trick pony. They want to provide public money to a doctor in British Columbia instead of putting money into Steinbach and Ste. Anne.

Mr. Murray: Well, Mr. Speaker, we just heard a litany from the Premier. I ask all Manitobans: Has he ended hallway medicine in six months? No. Have they shortened the waiting list for MRIs? No. Are there more full-time nurses? No. That is the ideology of that Premier over there. We on this side of the House want to work with the Government. We offered a plan to work with the Government. We want to ensure people like Elizabeth Silva are not left waiting for surgery month after month in agony and pain.

Mr. Speaker, why will he not work with us to ensure that people like Mrs. Silva are not suffering months and months, work with our plan and offer timely access to help Manitobans?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, yesterday, four years ago, in 1998, there were 26 patients in the hallway. There were four at the beginning of the day and none at the end of the day in hallway medicine. That is the difference between members opposite. The members opposite do not want to hire more nurses or train more nurses, or hire more doctors or train more doctors. They want to establish—get this, this is their action plan: We will establish a health care professional advisory committee. We—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. It is getting very difficult to hear the answers and I am sure we all want to hear the answers, especially the honourable member who asked the question. I ask the co-operation of all honourable members, please.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had an advisory committee in 1999. It was called the people of Manitoba. That is why we have tripled the number of nurses that are being trained. We do not need an advisory committee for that. That is why we are increasing the number of doctors. You know what? The Western clinic still provides private procedures. The Pan Am Clinic has now doubled under public ownership, the procedures and the cataract private surgery costs have gone down from \$1,000 under the model the member opposite supports, the ideology he supports, down to \$700.

*(10:15)

The members opposite were being fined for breaking the Canada Health Act. We are putting that money, those fines, back into patients and patient care.

Health Care System Out-of-Province Treatment

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn to a more serious and as the Premier has said a more common-sense approach than what we have just heard from the Premier. This is a matter which I hope the Premier and his Minister of Health will not laugh about.

Mr. Speaker, a Manitoba family, Martin and Caroline Pasieczka, are facing huge financial

burdens because of the unforeseen medical expenses in the United States after an emergency delivery of their baby daughter, Adriana, who is with us here this morning.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Health told the Pasieczka family that they would pay for the portion of care relative to the amount it would cost in a Canadian hospital. I would like to ask the minister if he can explain why a service such as obstetrician fees, which came to nearly \$3,000 American, amounts to just over \$300 in Canadian. Is this what the Minister of Health refers to as a true comparison, and is this what we refer to as a common-sense approach, as the Premier has just stated in his response?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the member has talked to me on numerous occasions about this family. We have tried to look at it. As I understand, the family was in the United States when a delivery occurred, if I recall from the facts of the situation. So they were down in the United States and a delivery occurred. The regulations that applied to it were the same regulations that the member opposite had in place when he was a member of the Cabinet. That is, the same regulations and the same standards as far as I understand it that were in place when they were in Cabinet.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister if he can explain why a total bill of \$55,000 for the Pasieczka family was only reimbursable to the amount of \$3,782 Canadian. Is this the minister's idea of paying the same amount relative to what that same emergency delivery would have cost the Pasieczka family or would have cost Manitoba Health here in Manitoba? Is this a true comparison?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the particular facts of a particular case, the rules in Manitoba have always been the same. If you are in Manitoba you get health care. If you travel to the United States you are encouraged, under the Tories, under the NDP to get insurance—*[interjection]*—under Romanow, get insurance to cover the increased costs, which is why we do not want an American system like they do, but to get the increased costs paid for in the United States and we pay the equivalent for the

Canadian costs between Canada and the United States.

That was the Tory policy when they were in government. That was the policy they advocated. That was the policy in every province. In fact, we have a more generous policy than most provinces. So the member now says, and we have tried to look at individual circumstances. We have tried to look at individual circumstances when individuals suffer catastrophic difficulties when they go to the States and have a difficulty in the States. We have done that.

In the particular case, Mr. Speaker, they were in the States. Unfortunately, there was a complicated delivery that occurred at the time. I have talked to the member about this. The rules in effect are the same as always.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, this was an unforeseen emergency, and the Government has from time to time intervened in situations where there has been extreme hardship. We have even sent ambulances out of province in extreme cases.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister, who likes to fearmonger when he talks about the American system and he knows that we do not support the American system, to explain to the Pasiczka family. Can this minister explain to the Pasiczka family why Luba Goy, CUPE Local 500 and the Ukrainian Professional Businessmen's Club have to hold a fundraising event for them because Manitoba Health will not support this family in a time of need?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the fearmongering by the individual regarding this particular case, every Canadian knows that our system covers you in Canada. If you go to the United States, it has been policy since medicare was adopted that you have extra insurance to cover United States costs.

Mr. Speaker, not only do they want us to have an American system in Canada, they want us to pay entirely for all the costs of every Canadian when they go to the States. What hypocrisy. The same policy that they had, we

have in place, and now they want us to adopt it holus-bolus.

* (10:20)

Not only do they not care about Romanow or understand it, they clearly do not understand the medicare system. Trying to say that we should cover every cost for everyone, in the United States, will get us faster to the American system they want than they are already trying to do with their friend from B.C.

Health Care System Out-of-Province Treatment

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): Mr. Speaker, the Pasiczka family had a Manitoba air ambulance lined up to transfer Caroline and baby Adriana home to Manitoba after this catastrophic emergency delivery took place in the U.S. They are willing to pay for the flight and it would cost less for the Manitoba air ambulance to pick them up than it would cost to hire an ambulance from the U.S. They needed that type of service to get back home. All the arrangements were made.

Can the minister explain why, at the last minute, Manitoba's air ambulance was mysteriously cancelled when in fact the backup medivac was available the entire day?

Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, much as I dislike talking about private conversations, the Member for Russell (Mr. Derkach) came to me and said: Can you do something about this and can you arrange an air ambulance? I said I would see what we could do in terms of an air ambulance for a particular instance. After that I said if it could be possible, perhaps it could be done. Then I left it to the department and officials to look into that exigency.

I do not understand members opposite. When they raise questions, we try to solve them. Now to change overstanding government policy, I think is not the appropriate forum in here to come here and raise individual cases and say blanket change of policy.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Russell, on a point of order.

Mr. Leonard Derkach (Russell): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health points me out as having a private conversation with him about this situation and that is true. He is also aware that I referenced a case where the Manitoba air ambulance was taken out of the province to pick up a family or pick up an individual to bring back to the province. That is under the terms which I approached the minister about in terms of having the ambulance pick this family up. He should tell the truth in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Health, on the same point of order.

Mr. Chomiak: That is the problem, when the member tries to take an individual case, where all the rules applied and we tried to be flexible, and tries to move it into an overall strategy that they never adopted and they never had as their policy. They want us somehow to make a case out of it. That is not an appropriate use of these kinds of situations. I do not think it is appropriate. The member opposite knows that.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Prior to making a ruling on the point of order, I would like to remind all honourable members that each and every member in this House is an honourable member.

Also I would like to remind the House of the purpose of points of order. A point of order is to be used to draw the Speaker's attention to any departure from the rules or practices of the House or to raise concerns about unparliamentary language. That is the purpose of points of order.

On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Russell, he does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Health has about 20 seconds left.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, medicare has never covered the full costs of individuals who are in the United States and have to pay for the service. That has never been the case. That has not been the case. The only people I know that are now advocating it are the members opposite, which is a complete change in policy for any government or any opposition party in the entire country, which does fit with their opposition to the Romanow report. They are against everything.

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Speaker, the plane was lined up. It was ready to go to the aid of the Pasiczka family. They had agreed to pay for it.

I would like to ask the minister if he can clarify for the House: Why was a medivac plane not used? Why did he not come to their aid? Is it his policy to cancel these flights? Why did he not help these people celebrate the birth of this child?

*(10:25)

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, it would not be appropriate policy for the Minister of Health to start ordering medivac planes where the Minister of Health thought medivac planes should go. It is a medical decision made by medical personnel on that system, and it is not the appropriate place for the Minister of Health to go around and order those planes. Members opposite know that it is not the right policy and I think they know that what they are asking us to do is not appropriate.

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Speaker, he did not order it. He cancelled it. That is what we are asking. We are asking why he cancelled it.

I want to ask this Minister of Health why he is not standing up for one of the founding principles of the medicare system and that is that families facing catastrophic medical emergencies should not have to face financial hardship. Why did he not let the plane go and why is he sitting idly by quoting arcane rules instead of coming to the aid of the Pasiczka family and helping them celebrate the birth of their child?

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, periodically Canadians travel to the United States who do not have insurance. When individuals do not have insurance or—[*interjection*]

Let me tell members opposite when individuals have insurance, often in the States, even though they have insurance, the first thing the insurer does is put him on a plane to come back to Canada because it is cheaper in Canada to provide the service. That is one of the first things the insurance companies do.

The second thing, Mr. Speaker, is sometimes Canadians go down, do not have insurance or are underinsured and do—

An Honourable Member: He cancelled the flight.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Fort Whyte, on a point of order.

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne* 417 clearly indicates that answers should be brief, they should deal with the matter raised and not provoke debate.

I was not asking the minister to recite policy. I was asking him why the plane was cancelled and I was asking him why he is not coming to the aid of this family, why he is forcing them to face financial hardship in the light of this catastrophe. Why will he not answer those questions?

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Health, on the same point of order.

Mr. Chomiak: I was explaining to the member how so inaccurate his statements were, that the policies that we were putting in place were policies that his government followed, that all Canadian governments follow with respect to insurance.

The member actually accused me of cancelling a plane flight, which was totally erroneous and wrong. If they want to have a

proper debate, if they want to extend medicare coverage to the United States, it is unbelievable that they not only want us to privatize health care in Canada but they want us to cover completely the United States policies, which has never been part of medicare, which is something they have worked against, and now they want us to extend coverage completely to the United States for every procedure. That just does not cut it.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Member for Fort Whyte, *Beauchesne* 417: Answers to questions should be brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and to not provoke debate. I would just like to remind all honourable ministers of 417.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Health, to conclude his answer.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, there are policies in place with respect to utilization of planes. I do not think it is appropriate that the Minister of Health should have the authority to intervene and order planes across. That would not be appropriate policy.

Children's Services Therapy Funding

Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, two days ago the father of an eight-year-old foster son was told by Winnipeg Child and Family Services that they had bad news for him, that they cannot fund his son's play therapy any more because there is no money left in this year's budget, that it has been overspent.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services if he can tell us if play therapy for this little boy and counselling for many other needy children have been terminated abruptly this week by a directive of the board of Winnipeg Child and Family Services who reports directly to this minister.

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Family Services and Housing): I appreciate the question from the critic. We are both new in our roles. The critic was the former critic for Health and was quite critical as a critic.

Certainly the case that is referred to by the member is one I have no knowledge about. If the member wishes to provide me with information I would be pleased to take it under advisement.

* (10:30)

Mrs. Driedger: I would like to ask this Minister of Family Services if it is true that these kids who are in horrible need of help, children who have been sexually abused, children who have been beaten, children who have seen things they should never have seen in their lives, have had their therapy abruptly cut off this week with no notice because there is no money left in this year's budget, that it has been overspent.

Mr. Caldwell: Well, as I said in my first answer, Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to take the individual case under advisement if the member provides me with information on it.

I will say that the investment—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would like to provide some information for all honourable ministers. When taking a question under advisement to bring back information, there is no postamble, preamble. You have taken it under advisement and you will come back with the answer.

Mrs. Driedger: I would like to ask this Minister of Family Services if it is true that as therapy contracts over the next few months expire they are not going to be renewed either for all of these needy children because there is no money left in this year's budget, that these children are all going to be thrown to the wolves by a heartless government.

Mr. Caldwell: Well, Mr. Speaker, the record of the Doer government is very clear when it comes to support for children. The Healthy Child Initiative undertaken by this Government is second to none in Canada. In fact, we are national leaders leading other provinces in our approach to supporting child welfare.

We need not take any lessons from members opposite who presided over massive destruction in the public education system and an abrogation of responsibility for child welfare.

Children's Services Therapy Funding

Mrs. Bonnie Mitchelson (River East): We are hearing that some of the most vulnerable children in the province of Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg are being cut off services as a result of no money in the Department of Family Services to support these children.

I know he is a new minister, but can the minister tell the House today whether his department has brought forward to him, has it come across his desk, that there is a shortage of money for services for children, that the budget has run out, and have they asked him to go back to his Treasury Board to get more money so those children do not fall through the cracks?

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Family Services and Housing): Mr. Speaker, it is more than passing strange that we hear a constant drum beat of cut taxes, cut taxes, Americanize the public health system in this province and then spend more. There was a series of questions from the member for, I am not sure what constituency he is from. There are a number of suggestions in the member's series of questions that cast more light on the record of members opposite than the record of our Government, which is one of investment in early childhood and in child welfare services in this province.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, we are not advocating cutting vulnerable children off services because this Government cannot manage its money.

A simple yes or no. Has the Department of Family Services run out of money, and is there a request on this minister's desk for more funding to ensure that the most vulnerable children who need the services of his department do not fall through the cracks and are not cut off the services they need?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, all Manitobans will remember that the member opposite when she was minister implemented a clawback of the National Child Benefit. *[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker: Order. If members wish to have a conversation, you can use the loge. You can go out in the hallway, but we need to hear the

questions and we need to hear the answers. This is time for Question Period right now.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Official Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne* 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate.

If the minister does not know the answer, he can take it under advisement and answer it later.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Family Services and Housing, on the same point of order.

Mr. Caldwell: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, I think I uttered three sentences just reminding Manitobans that the National Child Benefit was clawed back by members opposite.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader—

An Honourable Member: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have heard enough to make a ruling, so I will not entertain—because I do not want points of order to turn into debates.

On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, he does have a point of order. *Beauchesne* Citation 417: Answers to questions should deal with the matter that is raised.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Family Services and Housing, to conclude his answer.

Mr. Caldwell: There were cuts, indeed, in this province to children's welfare and children's support, to members opposite.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Workers are in tears. They are horrified by what you are doing.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for River East has the floor.

Mrs. Mitchelson: This is an extremely serious issue. Can the Minister of Family Services indicate whether the Child and Family Services board that reports directly to him has indicated to workers in the field that they are going to have to discontinue services to sexually abused children, to those most vulnerable in our community as a result of his department running out of money?

Is there a request by him before his Treasury Board and his Government to ensure that the money is there to provide the services for the most vulnerable children in our society, children who are under his watch as the Minister of Family Services?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to note that the Winnipeg Child and Family Services branch, over the 10 years, the 1990s and including the first two years we were in office, had a very modest increase in caseload but had almost a doubling of budgets including a \$20-million overexpenditure when we came into office.

I think it is important that we live within a budget. I also think it is important—

An Honourable Member: Oh, so you are going to cut kids off.

Mr. Doer: If you could let me finish, please, instead of interrupting.

It is very important that we live within a budget. It is also very important that we ensure that the most vulnerable in our society are not victims of budget decisions. So the points raised by members opposite, we will definitely look at, and we appreciate the information.

Income Assistance Increase

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, the NDP government has talked about improving health and decreasing poverty. David Northcott and Rhonda Gordon's Winnipeg Harvest Poverty Challenge has highlighted the

fact that many on social assistance must get by with \$20 a week for food and entertainment.

* (10:40)

I ask the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Caldwell): When social assistance support has not been increased since 1995, why has the Government allowed for an increase in MLAs' salaries, for example, while starving the poorest of the poor?

Hon. Gary Doer (Premier): Mr. Speaker, in 1995 some Liberal members voted against the Budget that cut money for social assistance in Canada. Some Liberal members voted for a 33% cut in social assistance budgets in Canada. This member voted for a cut of 33 percent and he has a lot of nerve raising that question in the House today.

Mr. Gerrard: We are talking about the present Government's track record in the last three years.

I ask: Does the Minister of Family Services not agree that his Government is shortsighted in underspending for support on those on social assistance when more investment here would improve their health and nutrition, keep those who are poor healthier and decrease the demands on our health care system? Why is the minister not paying more attention to our most vulnerable citizens?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite voted against the Budget that reinstated the clawback on the National Child Benefit. He voted against that Budget. In each Budget we are putting more money directly into children with the clawback on the National Child Benefit being removed as we promised it. The social action agencies are talking about people living in poverty. We are raising the minimum wage every year.

We have also established a Healthy Baby program. We did not define it in terms of federal jurisdiction or provincial jurisdiction. The national minister has called the early childhood development program the best program in Canada. We would like the member opposite when he attends his next Liberal convention to get the federal Liberal government to agree to

have that Healthy Baby program supported in jurisdictions under federal jurisdiction.

We have not used jurisdictions to deny babies that coverage but we would ask if they would help us out in that regard.

Mr. Gerrard: Mr. Speaker, I am here to change the provincial government, not the federal one.

Winnipeg Harvest Poverty Challenge Minister's Participation

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): I ask the Minister of Family Services, who says he wants to decrease poverty, why he turned down the opportunity to participate in the poverty challenge issued to him by Winnipeg Harvest to try a week for \$20 for food and entertainment. Does the minister, who says one thing when he talks at least outside the House and does another thing, feel like a schizophrenic socialist? *[interjection]*

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have not recognized the honourable minister yet.

Hon. Drew Caldwell (Minister of Family Services and Housing): No, Mr. Speaker.

Kyoto Protocol Implementation Costs

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in Question Period the Opposition made reference to a study related to Kyoto. I would ask the Minister for Energy, Science and Technology if he could give the House more information about that study.

Hon. Tim Sale (Minister of Energy, Science and Technology): I find it unfortunate when an honourable member puts remarks on the record that raise anxiety among Manitobans. Without quoting from the immediately preceding paragraph, Mr. Speaker, which says that in the case of Manitoba, however, a word of caution is warranted, that the economic development of Manitoba could be boosted if Canada adopts the Kyoto-like restrictions on GHG emissions, I think it is appropriate to ask the Opposition to see the opportunities for innovation, for strengthening our economy, for strengthening

the exports of hydro, for strengthening an ethanol industry, for strengthening an agri-fibre industry, to take advantage. I urge them to be optimists about Manitoba and not the pessimists that we seem to see over there.

Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Government admitted to the House that there is no made-in-Manitoba comprehensive assessment of the costs of implementing the Kyoto accord. Will the minister now apologize for misleading Manitobans in this week's Throne Speech about the true cost of implementing the Kyoto accord?

Mr. Sale: I am sorry that the member is not more able to think on his feet and do a different question since I just answered the question that he asked. I will table for his information, Mr. Speaker, the full study that he quoted about cost drivers.

I would refer him to the Chamber of Commerce Web site where he will find this presentation on the costs and advantages to Manitoba in terms of Kyoto. I would refer him to the Kyoto plan which we released three weeks ago: *Kyoto and Beyond*. I would refer him to the CD-ROM which he received which I do not imagine he will print out, because if he printed it out it would be a stack of reports this high. I would refer him to the fact that Wilf Falk, the director of the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics for the last four years, co-chaired the federal modelling group on behalf of Manitoba which did all of those studies. I would ask him to do his homework.

Elk Population Tuberculosis Control

Mr. Glen Cummings (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, there are a number of ranchers who have an investment of several millions of dollars in their livestock herds around Riding Mountain National Park. I have a further concern, however, besides the attack on potential problems for our cattle producers. We also have a captured herd of elk that has been held within the perimeter of what is now considered a zone of concern for the transmission of TB.

I ask the Minister of Agriculture if she can tell us where that herd is today.

Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture and Food): Mr. Speaker, the herd of elk that the member refers to has been held because we were waiting for clearance of status by the CFIA. The CFIA has given that herd a clear health status, and that herd is in the process of being dispersed.

Mr. Cummings: New question, Mr. Speaker. The minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable Member for Ste. Rose, on a new question.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, the minister said that they are in the process. Is she actually aware of where they are?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, my department works very closely with CFIA with respect to these elk. When these elk were given a clear health status the process began of dispersing the elk and moving them to various locations. Some of these elk belong to First Nations, and those elk are being moved to First Nation ranches after they have gotten a clear status.

Mr. Cummings: New question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Ste. Rose, on a new question.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, the minister is refusing to answer the question. It is obvious she does not know where these elk are. Consider this: These elk were held in an area where the cattlemen of the area are on the verge of being quarantined if we do not get this problem cleaned up. We have seen almost no action on the part of this Government to push forward with dealing with the problem, and now we have a minister that cannot tell us where those captured elk are or where they are going.

I have been told that they have already been dispersed. Will she confirm that?

Ms. Wowchuk: I guess the member did not hear my first answer. I told him in the first answer that these animals that he is referring to have been held because they needed clearance from CFIA. CFIA has done all the testing. CFIA has now given approval to move the animals. I have told the member after they got the clear status

the department is working with the people who are going to be taking the animals. Some of the animals have been moved to First Nations because they now have the clear status.

* (10:50)

I would encourage the members not to try to be creating some kind of hype out there that these elk are diseased. The member should remember that he was the minister when he was given a warning not to capture wild elk because there was a risk they were diseased. This member of a previous government went ahead and captured them. Those animals have been in captivity for a long time. They now have clear status.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, this do-nothing Minister of Agriculture has not taken action to control the TB around Riding Mountain. The reason we did the test was to determine if we would find elk who were diseased. Now we have elk stored in the area, pastured in the area, where potentially they could be exposed to TB. We now have the potential of that elk herd being dispersed and we believe that this dispersal was not done by the draw that was supposed to happen.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader): Well, Mr. Speaker, I am reluctant to intervene but I did not hear the member announce and you declare that he had a new question. It is a supplementary question which requires no preamble.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Ste. Rose, on the same point of order.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I believe I clearly stated that on a new question we are not getting any action out of this minister.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, when I recognized the honourable Member for

Ste. Rose I recognized him on a supplementary question. He did not indicate he was up on a new question. *Beauchesne* 409(2) clearly states that a preamble should not exceed one carefully worded sentence.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Member for Ste. Rose, please put your question.

Mr. Cummings: On a new question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: We started. I recognized you on a supplementary question. You started it. There was a point of order. We have to deal with the supplementary question before we can get to a new question. The honourable Member for Ste. Rose, please put your question.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Agriculture: These elk were planned to be dispersed by a fair lottery and draw process that would allow as wide a spectrum as possible of Manitoba farmers who wanted to get into elk ranching to be able to participate. Did that process occur?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, when there was a dispersal of elk previous in the last year there was a lottery held for those. Some of the elk that were being held belonged to First Nations and those are being dispersed. We are in negotiations on the dispersal of the balance of the elk.

The member knows full well when he was in government they signed an agreement with the First Nations on capture of the elk. There were terms in that agreement that allowed for some of the elk to go to First Nations. Is the member now saying he made a mistake and First Nations should not have the opportunity for an elk industry? It appears that he has changed his mind.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member is rising on points of order?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: Okay. I am just getting ready for members' statements. I have not called it yet. I will call it.

An Honourable Member: We are trying to make it easy on you, George.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mrs. Janice Filmon

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River): Mr. Speaker, last night I had the pleasure of attending an event honouring Janice Filmon for her considerable volunteer contributions to the community. Mrs. Filmon was the first-ever recipient of the Inspiring Life Award. This award was presented at a dinner hosted by the Fort Garry Rotary Club.

Mrs. Filmon's contributions are well known throughout Manitoba. She has worked tirelessly on a variety of community projects and her upbeat and supportive attitude has made many a heavy task proceed more smoothly.

As someone once said, the world is divided into people who do things and people who get the credit. Janice Filmon is a member of the former camp. She knows how to get things done, yet she does not seek recognition for her selfless efforts. Her works personify the spirit of community service and others would benefit by following her positive example.

* (10:55)

The proceeds from last night's dinner will go to the Victoria General Hospital and in particular the new cancer treatment facility. Guest speakers at the event included Dr. Charles Olweny and Ray Racette, president and CEO of the Victoria General Hospital.

I would like to take a moment to congratulate the Fort Garry Rotary Club and their president, Ted Foreman, who was instrumental in the arrangements for this dinner and the creation of this award. The main objective of

Rotary is service in the community and throughout the world, and their work is well received in our community.

I would ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Janice Filmon on being the recipient of the first ever Inspiring Life Award. She is a most deserving recipient of this award and a role model for others.

100th Birthday Celebrations

Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to honour two remarkable men who recently celebrated their 100th birthdays. Logan Ayre and Charles Hastings were born on October 28, 1902. Throughout their lives, Mr. Ayre and Mr. Hastings both contributed to our country and province in different ways. They helped to build this province with their work and community service.

Mr. Hastings served this country as a cook for the army during World War II. He joined the South Saskatchewan Regiment and subsequently was transferred to the Army Service Corps from 1940 to 1945 in Manitoba.

Upon his return to Canada he became an outdoorsman. He worked honestly and respectfully as a farmer, trapper, fisherman, and later as a cook at a lumber camp. His love for the outdoors extended to mushing dogsleds and plowing the fields with horses. To this day his sense of adventure and love for the outdoors is detected through his vivid stories and active living.

Mr. Ayre is fiercely proud of being born, lived and worked all his life in Manitoba. Some of his achievements include working as a purchasing agent for the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting for 39 years. He first started working in 1928, two years after the company's inception. As well, Mr. Ayre was a newspaper carrier during the historic 1919 strike. Mr. Ayre takes great pride in having organized volunteers for the Muscular Dystrophy Association when Peter Liba, then manager of CKND, launched the first Jerry Lewis telethon.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ayre's son, Don, and daughter-in-law, Jean, deserve our recognition

for being extremely devoted to taking care of him. They deserve to be commended for teaching and introducing computers to Mr. Ayre. It is never too late to get connected.

Also, I would like to thank the McLean family, Mr. Charles Hastings' neighbours, for celebrating with him and keeping him so festive. Their spirits of kindness will not be forgotten.

Last but not least, I want to thank the staff at Deer Lodge Centre's Day Hospital for organizing the party on Wednesday, October 30, 2002—

Mr. Speaker: Order

Ms. Korzeniowski: —and also for helping to keep their patients healthy, vibrant and active. Their commitment and—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the honourable member have leave to conclude?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Ms. Korzeniowski: Mr. Speaker, it is only fitting that these two gentlemen celebrate their 100th birthdays on the same year of another monumental festivity, the Queen's Golden Jubilee. People like Mr. Hastings and Mr. Ayre are definitely role models in our society that teach us about giving back to the community, staying young and being proud Manitobans. Thank you.

Domain Community Hall

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a gathering place that was built by the community for the community. The place I am referring to is the Domain Community Hall in Domain, my home town.

Mr. Speaker, since 1998 Domain residents have provided their time, labour, machinery and seed in a community field project established to raise funds to help pay for the Domain Community Hall which was built in 2000 and opened last year. Many individuals have combined their talents and resources to farm a

quarter section of land, with the profits going towards paying down the debt incurred in the construction of the hall. Thanks to this project and other corporate and private donations, only \$57,000 remains unpaid on the \$400,000 hall.

* (11:00)

This year the community decided to expand the field project from 160 to 280 acres. In this added portion, volunteers planted 11 different types of Canola which could, depending on crop yield and commodity prices, come close to paying off the remaining debt.

Mr. Speaker, individuals contributing their efforts to this project have endured farming realities such as drowned crops which in turn resulted in a loss of money one year. It is my hope that this year, with the additional acreage and crop diversification, they were able to produce the profits they had been hoping for.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend all those involved in the community field project on working together for the betterment of the community. In particular, I would like to mention field project manager Ron Manness. It takes a very committed individual to organize such an undertaking.

Mr. Speaker, gathering places such as community halls are a valuable asset to the life and vibrancy of communities all throughout Manitoba. Domain's success story has set an example for communities everywhere. Thank you.

Glenlawn Collegiate

Ms. Nancy Allan (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise at this time to recognize an important initiative occurring at Glenlawn Collegiate in my constituency of St. Vital. The Clarica-Glenlawn leaders project is an innovative new approach to history in the classroom. A group of students will tell the stories of Winnipeggers who fought during the Second World War, using a variety of different media. This three-year project is a result of a partnership involving students and teachers from Glenlawn, the St. Vital Historical Society, local veterans and the financial planning company,

Clarica. The motto of the project is "respect the past, grasp the present, enlarge the future."

Students will videotape their interviews with St. Vital veterans and use editing skills learned in Glenlawn's multimedia programs to produce documentary segments which will be part of the school's Remembrance Day services next year. Furthermore, the interviews will be posted on a special, student-created Web site which can be accessed by the community at large. This project will give students an opportunity to learn lessons in history, interviewing skills, videotaping and editing and creation of multimedia sites on the Web. They will also hear first-hand the contribution made by our veterans to keep our country secure. Students will take documents and photos from the St. Vital Historical Society archives and digitize them so that these images will be available on-line. They will also include graphics that allow for historical artifacts to be viewed in 360 degrees.

This project will give students a chance to build on their leadership, teamwork, problem solving and communications skills as well as develop the technical skills required to create the on-line resources. This important project received a \$7,000 grant from Clarica, the life insurance and financial planning company as part of the firm's national supportive efforts to encourage young people to learn about leadership. I think it is important to see young people gaining this type of experience, using the technology and skills they will need to be successful in the information age. I would like to congratulate the staff and students.

Mennonite Central Committee

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): I rise today to congratulate the Mennonite Central Committee of Manitoba for having worked very diligently over the last number of years to be able to bring a meat-canning portable unit to Manitoba. I want to thank the Department of Labour for the assistance that they gave and also the Customs and Immigration at Emerson for the diligent work they did to allow this to happen.

This organization has for many years canned up to 50 head of cattle, which were all donated to the Mennonite Central Committee. It will be deboned, processed and canned in Winkler at

Winkler Meats, as we speak. It started yesterday and will continue today. Hopefully, by eleven o'clock tonight, they will have killed, deboned and canned 50 head of cattle which will be donated to all the underprivileged countries in the world. It will largely go to feed children to ensure that they will get the kind of protein and nourishment that they need to become good, healthy citizens.

The Mennonite Central Committee, as we all know, has been very involved in disaster programs all over the world, but this initiative that they have taken now to provide food for the undernourished and underprivileged of the world I think is an exemplary action that can be used all over the world. I would encourage those who sit here today, if you find time in your hearts, write a letter to the Mennonite Central Committee commending them for the work that they do and the initiative that they have taken to bring this process to Manitoba and to allow Manitobans to participate in the canning process that will see young people supported in the international scene.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(Second Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: Resumed debate on the proposed motion of the honourable Member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Official Opposition in amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen), who has 27 minutes remaining.

Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte): I appreciate this opportunity to continue my remarks. I believe where I left off yesterday was once again chastising the Government for having done nothing regarding agricultural diversification and why they decided to put that in their Throne Speech and indicate that in some shape or form they have done something concrete. They have talked about it like lots of other things.

Mr. Conrad Santos, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair

They have talked about the possibility of agricultural diversification, but they have not done anything. That is what this Throne Speech should be about. It should be about a vision. It should be about what they are going to do, not what they have not accomplished, but what they are going to do. We do not see any of that in this speech at all.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will come back to touch on the shallowness of this speech with regard to health care, but I want to move on to a few other points first. In particular the issues that strike me as I think most unusual in this speech are the areas that they have no opportunity to back up their words, particularly in the area of financial management. This is a government we have seen from day one who have been running at breakneck speed to increase spending with no measurable results. The result is we now have a government, as we predicted in early 2000 when we could see that the economy was starting to turn, who is addicted to unsustainable spending habits. As a result, they have overspent year after year after year.

That becomes evident when one starts to do an analysis of the financial statements. This is a government again that in their Throne Speech talks about transparency, talks about openness, and yet this is a government that continually, quarter after quarter, year after year, tries to hide the facts from the people of Manitoba. This is a government that stood up in its Throne Speech and said, tried to lead Manitobans to believe that they had reduced, that they have reduced the debt load that Manitobans carry. Not true.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one simply has to go back to previous budget books and look at the statement of valuation and directed guaranteed debt outstanding to see clearly that as of March 31, 2000, more than six months after this Government was voted into power, the net debt was \$13,458,000,000 and, yet, when we go to the net direct debt at March 31, 2002, some two years later, and remember this is a government that is trying to convince the people of Manitoba that they have reduced debt, what do we see the net debt, \$14,402,000,000, an increase of close to \$1 billion in two years. Now, I do not know what this Government thinks debt reduction is, but I can assure you that the people of Manitoba

understand clearly that when debt goes from \$13.4 billion to \$14.4 billion, that there has been an increase, not a decrease.

So, if there is a member on the opposite side of the House that can stand up and explain to the people of Manitoba how an increase of a billion dollars in debt translates into their claim in the Throne Speech that debt has been reduced, I will be glad to hear it. I will listen with open ears and with an open mind. I would challenge any member opposite, particularly the member responsible for energy, the member who has now taken over the responsibility for Hydro, the member who has to explain why his Government forced Manitoba Hydro to go out and borrow over \$300 million simply to pad their coffers. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be waiting anxiously on the edge of my seat for a member opposite to pick up the challenge and try to explain to the people of Manitoba just how a \$1-billion increase in their debt load in two years equals a reduction in debt.

* (11:10)

That is just the start of the chicanery that has been pulled off by this Government or attempted. They attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of Manitobans on the financial front. They claimed last year they had a surplus, and they have published statements that are right on the edge in terms of accounting protocol. The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants would have no choice but to agree. These statements are right on the edge of what they would allow.

This is a government that claims to have a surplus when in fact, in order to obtain that surplus, they have had to take \$150 million out of the rainy day fund, and why? The minister, again responsible for energy, says no. He should learn how to read the financial statements, and then maybe he would be of some benefit to the people at Manitoba Hydro as opposed to just a draw on them, just a millstone around their necks.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government clearly has had to withdraw \$150 million from the rainy day fund. They say they are only doing it on a temporary basis until they can legally

strip Hydro of \$150 million to replace it, but what it clearly shows is this Government ran a deficit. On top of that, these financial statements clearly show that the Government had to pay back the federal government for their miscalculation of personal income tax and the overpayment, the federal accounting payment. They had to pay back the government \$196 million on top of the deficit they ran, but do they stand up in a forthright way to the people of Manitoba and say, yes, we have run a deficit; yes, it was a federal accounting error? No. They tried to hide it in the back pages of the financial report for the year ended March 31, 2002.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will take the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) and his colleagues and the Premier (Mr. Doer) to task for this, to simply say that they have increased the deficit. They have increased the province's accumulated deficit from \$6.7 billion to \$6.9 billion and not recorded that \$196 million in their current financial statements. I think it is a blatant attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of the citizens of Manitoba. So for this Government in its Throne Speech to stand up and tell the people of Manitoba that they believe in openness, that they believe in transparency, and that that is what they have brought to the table in terms of their financial dealing, I think, is a definite misrepresentation of the facts.

I would challenge the Minister of Finance to come back in this debate regarding the Throne Speech. I would challenge him to explain to Manitobans how this \$196-million payment back to the federal government does not increase the debt load of the province of Manitoba. Therefore he would have to explain why that does not add up to a deficit, which of course anybody with any financial training whatsoever knows clearly that a deficit is a deficit is a deficit, and when you are spending more than you are taking in, regardless of who you are paying to it, you are creating a deficit.

So this Government can go around and brag that it is making debt repayments when in fact the debt is going up. This is a government that goes around and brags that it has balanced its books when in fact it has to take money out of the rainy day fund. This is a government that goes around and tries to brag about transparency,

and they hide important information from Manitobans on page 11 of the financial statement. Well, I say shame on them. Maybe they should think about amending their own Throne Speech to indicate how deceptive they have been to the people of Manitoba.

All throughout this Throne Speech, we have small examples of deception. They talk about reducing personal income taxes by 11.5 percent. Again, technically, that may be accurate, but they have conveniently forgotten that one of the very first things they did when in office was to delink the provincial income tax from the federal income tax, and the result of that has been clearly proven to have increased the tax burden on the people of Manitoba. As a result, their claims have been proven false. That is why today we are faced with an uncompetitive position where citizens of Manitoba pay the highest income taxes west of the province of Québec, and this Government wonders why we cannot retain our young people. This Government wonders why the numbers indicate that our young people are fleeing this province. Well, it is simple. They are fleeing it for opportunities that will not exist in Manitoba as long as our tax rates are uncompetitive with the jurisdictions that surround us. I would challenge this Government to do something about that and to do it quickly.

They talk about increasing the property tax credit and giving a benefit of \$53 million to the people of Manitoba. What they have done is cheat the education system. The previous minister has taken that and somehow tried to slide that property tax credit and tried to convince the people of Manitoba that that is an additional contribution to the Education budget. He has included it in his Estimates for Education. Imagine that. The property tax credit, the Government is trying to convince people that that is a contribution to the education system. *[interjection]*

Even their royal ally—*[interjection]* Surely the Member for St. Vital (Ms. Allan) saw the letter because I know that she keeps close watch on the publications of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. Even they indicated quite clearly that this Government's funding of the public education system has gone down in terms of

percentages. So not only has this Government starved the universities, not only have they put the University of Winnipeg in a precarious position, this is a government—[*interjection*]

Well, then, again, the Member for St. Vital says that their funding is over a billion dollars. I would ask her to confer with the Minister of Finance, to do the math and to indicate if you take the property tax credit out of education, your funding will not be over a billion dollars. In fact, it will be well less of a billion dollars.

Point of Order

Ms. Nancy Allan (St. Vital): Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, the MLA for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen) is trying to construe remarks that I made on this side of the House, and I would just like to inform him that what I said was that his previous government took \$135 million out of the public education system.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I am sorry, there is no point of order there because it is not related to the rules or the practices of the House. Differences of opinion, dispute as to facts are not points of order.

* * *

Mr. Loewen: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I appreciate your intervention. I must confess to the Member for St. Vital that it is sometimes hard to understand what she is saying when she is sitting in her seat in the back row, chewing carrots and spewing out facts at me too. So maybe we will just keep that in mind.

But the fact of the matter is that if this Government was honest and took the property tax credit out of the Education Estimates, it would clearly show that they are devoting less money to the public education system, and, in fact, that is what has gone on under this Government.

This Government talks about affordable government, and, in fact, here is the statement in their Throne Speech. They say improvements have also been made to the management of public finances, the first bullet, reducing annual debt-servicing costs due to an accelerated pay-down of long-term debt.

Again, I would challenge the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) to come to this House and indicate how debt going from \$3.4 billion to \$4.4 billion is a reduction. It is simply not true. What has happened, what the facts are is that this Government has benefited and the people of Manitoba should have benefited from a reduction in interest rates that we have seen at a historic low in terms of the latter half of the 20th century and on into this century with regard to interest rates.

* (11:20)

What has happened? Instead of the people of Manitoba benefiting from that, instead of the people benefiting from the government debt charges going down, and, therefore, the Government able to reduce its long-term debt, this is a government that has rung up the debt. That will come back to haunt the people of Manitoba, particularly as interest rates begin to rise, and they will. It is just a matter of when. They will sometime in the next 20 years. Before the debt is paid interest rates will rise and this province will be negatively impacted by this Government's mismanagement of the finances.

It would be one thing if they stood up and admitted it, but to try to hide it, to try to take credit for the fact that interest rates have fallen. There is no credit given to this Government. There is no credit they can take for that. That is completely beyond their control. For them, in this Throne Speech, to try to take credit for that, I think is deplorable.

It is true, the Government has done some good things, almost by chance more than anything else, I think more from good intentions by the hardworking bureaucrats, the hardworking individuals in the public service of the people of Manitoba that have recognized programs and run ahead of them in spite of the fact that this Government did not really understand what was going on.

I think a classic one is the immigration situation, particularly with the Provincial Nominee Program. It is a program that has been driven by the bureaucrats. It is a program that is working magnificently. It is not anywhere near where it needs to be. We are currently getting an

increased level of immigration to this province, not near what we should have. According to our population share, we should be getting 10 000 immigrants a year. We are not. I think it is time that the minister, particularly the Minister responsible for Immigration and the Minister responsible for Industry and Trade took this program to a new level. I think they are beginning to realize the potential in this program and they are going to be able to expand this program with the help of the hardworking employees of the province of Manitoba and take that to a new level.

This Government talks about disaster assistance. Yet the people who suffered through the flood of '97, those farmers in western Manitoba who suffered through the rains and the flooding in '99, were never fully compensated. As a matter of fact, this is a government that has refused to sign on for their 40% responsibility to the agreement that other provinces have signed with the federal government. The minister can stand up in her rebuttal and tell us how they have signed on to that 40 percent, because they have not, and our farmers continue to suffer. What they are doing is they continue to pull numbers out of a hat and they are continuing to say it is the federal government's responsibility. The minister responsible for emergency services says over and over again, the feds should pay, the feds should pay, little consolation to the farmers in the province of Manitoba when there is no money forthcoming simply because this minister will not sign on to that framework agreement.

There is much more in this speech that indicates that it is not altogether portraying facts as they are, maybe as the NDP sees them, maybe as this Government, through its rose-coloured glasses, sees some of the problems. Maybe this is their interpretation. I will give them that, but I would also remind them that if they really want to get busy and fix the challenges, to make a dent in some of the challenges that face this province, the first thing they have to do is stand up and admit to themselves that there are problems, that there are challenges, that maybe we need to take a different look at our approach to things.

I think there is no better example than the state of Winnipeg's core and the state of downtown. Once again we have seen this

Government embark on a path similar to what we saw in the eighties where they feel that they can solve the problem with massive infusions of government funds. They are going to go around and build buildings, build public buildings, and somehow they think that is going to solve the problem. I would just remind them to look at the over \$200 million that have been spent in downtown through government initiatives and what those initiatives have done to downtown. For the most part, they have been poorly planned. They have resulted in a deterioration of downtown.

The Premier (Mr. Doer), I believe, was the minister responsible for urban affairs when the scheme to construct Portage Place was put together. What did that do? All that did was drain Portage Avenue, drain Portage Avenue—*[interjection]*

Well, the member from Assiniboia wants to talk about the underpass. We will get to that and I will remind him that I hear regularly from his constituents trying to get to the University of Manitoba on a regular basis. That that is one of their big concerns. So we will come back to that just for his benefit. He might want to pay attention a little better at that time, but back to downtown.

It is not the infusion of public funds that is going to make the difference. It is attracting the private sector to the table. It is a simple, simple formula. Set the stage so that the private sector can come in, make the type of investments that are needed to be made in order to draw people downtown, in order to draw people to their facilities.

This Government has been responsible for the construction of Portage Place which has drained downtown of energy, drained downtown of people and turned into a complete disaster. Now they are embarking on the True North program, again, behind closed doors. The Premier knows that he has put a number of his ministers in a horrible position, because for years they argued against constructing a new arena. They argued vehemently against putting any funds into a new arena. In fact, they even argued against trying to save our NHL team. Yet this is a government under the leadership of

Premier Doer that is willing to subsidize an AHL team to the tune of \$4 million a year just to keep minor league hockey in Winnipeg, in a building that is totally unsuitable for the future.

I can understand why a number of the members opposite, a number of members of Cabinet are completely disillusioned with the Government's stance. It is unfortunate that this Government has not done more to stick to its principles, and it had some good principles in opposition.

I remember reading Hansard when members opposite, while in opposition, were talking about the need to decrease gaming, the need to put a cap on VLTs and to do some serious studying into what the ramifications are of gambling on the social development of our province. What do they do now? You know, some of those very members oversee the Manitoba Lotteries Commission, pumping millions of dollars into advertising to try to lure Manitobans into their casinos.

This will go down in the history of the province as one of the biggest blunders ever. We have a government that thinks the road to economic development is through the construction of casinos. Well, give your heads a shake, folks. I mean, surely to goodness you can put your heads together around the Cabinet table, deal with some of the people who are working daily on the social planning issues of this community and understand clearly that expanding gambling has nothing to do with economic development. Expanding gambling has everything to do with governments paying off their constituents.

The casinos were built in a different time and that is why we have asked this Government to look hard at what the ramifications have been. I wish they would just stick true to the principles they had in opposition and give that some serious consideration at the Cabinet table, instead of just trying to count the dollars as they flow in from the pockets of Manitobans who are caught in that ever, ever tightening web of being addicted to gambling. Some day this Government may have to answer what value they put on human life in that regard.

Again, the new Minister of Energy (Mr. Sale), as I am sure it is his input into the speech, has talked about our energy advantage. They talk about the benefits of Manitoba Hydro. We agree that Manitoba Hydro is a Crown jewel of this province, but it is also the one entity that can put this province at tremendous risk, and it does that by incurring too big of a debt load. Its debt load is already well over \$6 billion. It could escalate to over \$12 billion. That needs to be done with careful consideration, and that needs to be done with the full review of the Public Utilities Board.

So I would urge this minister and this Government, before they do anything to ensure that any plans they have for expansion in Manitoba get a full and thorough review of the Public Utilities Board and not to undertake the process they took with Manitoba Hydro when they bought Winnipeg Hydro and did it through legislation as opposed to taking it before the PUB, because it is before the PUB that we find out the real facts.

*(11:30)

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know my time is drawing to a close and I do want to touch on health care. I think it is very unfortunate for the people of Manitoba that this Government, a day before the Romanow report was released, decided to put all their hopes and aspirations for the health care system on a report they had not even seen. That just shows how blinded this Government is by their ideology. It is unfortunate, as we are seeing for the people of Manitoba, that this Government is not able to move off their ideological platform. The result is the people, the citizens of Manitoba, who need access and who were counting on the health care system being there for them are being held prisoner by this minister and this Government's ideology.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

We have people in pain, in agony, as we heard from Mrs. Silva. We have many examples of situations where the health care system is failing those citizens most vulnerable and most in need. For this Government to turn its back on collaboration with the private sector, I think, is deplorable.

The minister himself last night in a debate I had with him, and the leader of the Liberal Party was there, indicated that we all needed to put our ideology aside and we needed to collaborate to find a solution. Well, I challenge him to collaborate with all the parties, to collaborate with the front line workers, to collaborate with the doctors and the nurses and the technicians that know the system, to collaborate with them to see what can be brought to the table by the private sector to open his mind to new solutions.

This is not and should not be about what politicians believe. This should be about what Manitobans, about what patients, about what people who are suffering need. They need timely access to a health care system that is going to provide them with the relief they need in their time of illness, and I would urge this Government, as Mrs. Silva did, to quit answering with the standard lines, to quit reaching back into the past as we saw it today. The minister again tried to go back to 1995 and accuse the Liberal government and accuse the former provincial government of cutting nurses, which we know is not true. I would ask him instead to open his mind to the future, open his mind to the possibilities of what a great province this can be.

I would just close by reminding all members that in this province, while we may not have the natural beauty of some other places, we may not have the wealth and the skyscrapers that abound in other cities, we do have citizens who are compassionate and are willing to put their shoulder to the wheel to make this a better place to live. I would ask the Government to be honest with them, to open up to them, to welcome their input and to help all of us move this province ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to put a few remarks on the public record in relationship to the Speech from the Throne which we have heard recently. Let me begin by saying that the gap between the promise and the performance has never been greater.

The divide between the fancy words and the actions delivered are huge. We have a government which talks about a growth strategy

but has in many areas actions which inhibit or impede or block growth from occurring in this province. Even the document which the Minister of Energy, Science and Technology (Mr. Sale) tabled earlier today shows clearly that after the election of the NDP government, the GDP growth in Manitoba has been much less than that nationally. We have fallen behind. We continue to fall behind and yet the Government still talks about a growth strategy when, in fact, their strategy delivered is one in which we are falling behind, continually, the rest of Canada.

I want to address a number of areas that were talked about in the Throne Speech. Let me start with the discussion of post-secondary education. It is important to improve access to post-secondary education, and the Government can be credited with talking about the importance of post-secondary education. We all recognize that we live in a world where post-secondary education, college or university is increasingly important, that it is necessary for a large number of the job opportunities which are available in today's world, and that particularly when we are competing in a global environment where there is lower cost or cheap labour in many other parts of the world, that we have to do things in a higher technology-based way. We have to do things based on a knowledge economy in which those who are graduates from college and post-secondary education institutions are going to play a larger and larger role.

Yet those same post-secondary education graduates, when they graduate from universities in Manitoba, look around, they want medium or high incomes. They want opportunities, and they see in Manitoba a province that is run by a government which is as competitive when it comes to low incomes and taxes on low incomes, but when it comes to medium- or high-income earners, we are not competitive. This Government is essentially sending a message to Manitobans. If you are a medium- or a high-income earner, you may as well go away. We are really not going to compete for you. We are not so interested in you here. We do not really want this kind of growth economy. That is what this NDP government is saying with the very measures that they are undertaking, the very kind of government which they are delivering.

There has been a push on education but there has been an absence of the development of the important links with industry, the partnership with industry, the framework for the private sector which is so important in the provision of those exciting job opportunities which should be there for people who are graduates of post-secondary education institutions but all too often are not.

I can speak from personal experience. I have a daughter who graduated from the University of Manitoba and looked for opportunities here. She was not able to find them, and she is now in southeast Asia learning with a wonderful experience. Hopefully, she will come back to Manitoba someday. But what was sad was that the opportunities in her areas of environmental science were not there to the extent that they should have been there in this province.

I have a son who will graduate this coming year from electrical engineering, and I hope he will come back to Manitoba from where he is training at the moment at Carleton University, but I am not optimistic. There was an opportunity to develop, in Manitoba, an incredible place for wireless technology. We, indeed, have some wonderful opportunity, some pioneers like A-Channel, with the wireless cable, and SkyWeb that they have developed and a number of other companies which have done some very good things.

But shortly after this Government came into office Nortel Enterprise on wireless was moved out of the province. While the Premier (Mr. Doer) was going to Ottawa and to Washington on other missions, this was not on the top of his agenda, to build an exciting future in the digital economy and making sure that opportunities like this one had been preserved in Manitoba and built upon to create a critical mass in areas like wireless technology.

* (11:40)

So an opportunity there was lost, and many people who had been working with Nortel in Manitoba are gone or sought other jobs or have had to go on to other things.

The Government, in their second major section, talks about research and innovation.

This is an important area for Manitoba. Of that there is no doubt. It is important for us to build the research and the innovation activities. It is important for us to provide the framework where there will be a lot of research and innovation occurring in our post-secondary education institutions, in our industries.

This is going to be an important factor in transforming Manitoba, in improving our health care system, in making it more cost efficient. We can praise the Government for its fine words in this area, but then when we sit back and look at their performance, it is something else. Funding for one of the pivotal research funding organizations in the province, the Manitoba Health Research Council, has not changed since the NDP came into office and is essentially, I think, even lower than it was some 10 or 12 years ago. It does not show very much or say very much about the support, the real support for research by this Government.

It is time to pay more attention and to provide more action. Words themselves are not sufficient to get the job done. You need to take some actions and to show that you are going to follow up. This Government has been very poor at following up, at showing that it really is intent on improving the climate for research.

The NDP government has been important to fund a virtual reality centre, but bringing the centre by itself is not enough. There needs to be the framework, the support, funding for the research itself in a way that is going to get people working together and excited about developing this area in a major way for industries and businesses in Manitoba. There is the potential, but the performance so far has been far short of what the potential really could be and what the potential should be.

The third area that the Government talked about in its Throne Speech was the area of raising and retaining investment. Again, it is good to talk about this area. It is an area which is quite important for Manitoba to have a lot more investment in this province. One of the curious facts, though, is that when one looks at the kind of climate that the NDP has created, they are in fact taxing with a capital tax that very investment that they want to bring in. So they

are talking about bringing in the investment, but they are at the same time saying with their tax system, no, no, no, we do not really want you, go elsewhere where they provide you better conditions for investing.

It is an interesting and important phenomenon about which Manitobans should know. That is that the presence of an NDP government, a socialist government, in this province provides a grey or black cloud over the head. It impedes investment. People do not trust the NDP. Entrepreneurs do not trust the NDP, and we have seen that with good reason, why this should be so in the performance of this Government, the nature of the appointments, the nature of the emphasis, the nature of what they have actually delivered in terms of a government.

So even though this Government talks about investment, it has provided a climate which is inhibiting and preventing and blocking investment occurring. We could, in fact, be making so much more progress with a different government, with a Liberal government, than we could with this one.

The fourth area that the Government talks about is having an affordable government. The Government talks about making government affordable, and yet the NDP has done a lot in the last three years to spend more on the bureaucracy, to increase the size of government. Everywhere I turn there are people talking about these increases, these expenditures.

I was talking recently with Chris Lorenc of the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association, and he provided me with a detailed briefing on the high cost of the administration in Manitoba of transportation and highways. It is much higher than in Saskatchewan, and it means that far too little gets to the actual building and maintenance of roads in this province. It is a sad and sorry state of affairs when we have so much going to increasing bureaucracy and administration and less than we need going to the actual building of the roads.

When it comes to drainage and visiting and looking, seeing what is happening around Manitoba, we see a sad and sorry state of affairs,

that the provincial drains are poorly maintained, that many areas which need good drainage and drainage planning are not getting them and that the spending that is being done is often being made poorly.

The provincial government is taking an approach through the conservation districts which emphasizes spending on administrative overhead. That means less actually gets to making sure that there is good drainage. This is not to take away from some of the good work that conservation districts may do, but it is to say that if we want to get infrastructure looked after properly in this province, it is important to do it.

Let us look and talk for a moment at the impeding of economic activity that has happened as a result of the NDP lack of investment and lack of approach to drainage. We have had much crop damage as we saw in this last season in southeastern Manitoba. I visited the area, and probably 80 percent of that crop damage could have been prevented had there been a reasonable drainage system in place at the provincial level. That is a lot of damage that could have been prevented.

Curiously, even where the provincial government has invested in drainage, they have done it rather inefficiently. I have heard of stories of one ditch which cost \$17,000 to build when a municipal drainage group could have done it for \$8,000. I have heard stories of a provincial department using three people for a month when the same job was done by one competent person from a municipality in a few hours. This is incredible inefficiency. It is a poor level of performance. It is a sad and sorry state of affairs.

We see the same difficulties in the management of health care, the increased expenditure on administration, the layers of administration that are present, the money that is spent on paperwork when we do not have electronic records, the money that is spent on all sorts of things which could be operated in a more modern fashion. The result is that doctors and nurses and the front-line workers are not supported as they should be. As one doctor I talked to not long ago said, I had to spend half my morning on the phone trying to schedule

appointments. This is hardly efficient. It is an example of the bureaucratic administrative boondoggle that operates in many areas of the health care system as it is being run sadly by the NDP government.

* (11:50)

Let me provide one specific example that I have come across recently. Into my office came a wife of a man who had died. He had died in 1999, before in fact this present Government was there. Listening to her story there is a very credible case that this man had died as a result of lack of monitoring of blood glucose. He was a diabetic. For four days he was in hospital and there were no measurements, so I am told, of his blood glucose. The net result was that he became increasingly inactive and somnolent and then comatose. The lack of monitoring of blood glucose can be traced purely and simply to a lack of provincial standards for monitoring of blood glucose. Now, it may be that they were not in place when the NDP government came to power, but they have had more than three years to put such standards and policies and procedures in place, and they have not done it.

In fact the NDP have persisted with a poor understanding of the health care system in spite of voluminous reports by Judge Murray Sinclair and Paul Thomas. In fact, Paul Thomas, in his report on the Sinclair inquiry report, said very clearly that in spite of all the time and effort that he took it was very difficult to understand what was the role of the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) and what was the role of the RHAs. There was not a clear definition of who does what.

I raised this issue with the Minister of Health when the report came out, basically that Paul Thomas was saying the minister does not know what he is doing. He does not have a clear assessment of his duties in his department and what needs to be done provincially versus what needs to be done at a regional health level. Clearly the large majority of the management should be done at the regional health level, but the standards should be set at the provincial level. There should be one standard for health care.

Romanow talked about accountability, talked about standards. It is time for action. It is

time to end the checkerboard system that the NDP are trying to run in this province. It is time to change this system which the NDP is trying to run, which is a checkerboard approach, where they do not know what the Ministry of Health should be doing and the RHAs should be doing.

As a result of the inquiry about the sorry state of affairs and the death of Mr. Poirier, I asked the question to the Department of Health and to the RHAs: What are the policies for looking after people with diabetes when they are in hospital?

One has to remember that somebody who has got a swollen knee, somebody who needs surgery, somebody who is admitted for any sort of emergency or condition who is diabetic can end up in hospital, not for their diabetes initially, but for something else. While they are in hospital, it is important that there be standards for their care and for monitoring of blood glucose and that those standards be clear.

There is a level of individualization of care, of physician orders; we accept that. That is part of how we operate, but there has to be a standard that makes sure that nobody who is in hospital goes into a diabetic coma or a hypoglycemic coma because there is not monitoring of blood glucose and blood sugar.

I will provide some of the results. What did I get in terms of replies when I put in a Freedom of Information request? Well I did not get one reply for the whole province, I got 20 replies. There are 20 different policies, or lack of policies, in this province when it comes to how somebody with diabetes should be looked after in hospital. Twenty different policies or lack of policies. What an inefficient system. There should be one standard.

Dr. Aubie Angel has talked for some time about the importance of having a centre for diabetic research, development and treatment and setting some standards, but they are not in place, and this Government is not putting those in place. What is happening is a huge extra expenditure of money because this is being done 20 times instead of once, that each RHA or each hospital is writing its own instead of having one provincial standard.

Let me give you some examples of what I got back. The Churchill RHA does not have any specific policies or procedures pertaining to the monitoring of blood glucose levels in diabetics, nor are there any regarding treatments of hypoglycemia. Some, like Brandon RHA, referred to policy or manuals or textbooks. The Interlake Regional Health Authority said that the Interlake Regional Health Authority does not have specific policies dealing with these types of patients. The South Westman RHA, now Assiniboine RHA, I would advise that the South Westman RHA to date has not developed specific clinical policies and procedures with the respect to the handling of patients who are diabetic and are admitted to the hospital for any cause.

The NOR-MAN RHA: Please be advised that the NOR-MAN Regional Health Authority does not have formal policies and procedures specific to diabetic patients in place. Grace General Hospital: The records you requested do not exist. There are no policies in place; there are no records and no standards. Deer Lodge was an example of a centre which, in fact, did provide some clear goals and some clear policy, that there be blood glucose done on a daily basis.

Replies from Seven Oaks Hospital and the Health Sciences Centre have pointed out one of the important aspects, and that is that some patients may be self-monitoring while in hospital. Indeed, it is reasonable under some circumstances to have patients self-monitoring. The Health Sciences Centre and Seven Oaks point out that they allow this. They check the standards. They make sure this is done properly. If there are any particular symptoms, they will check the blood glucose. These are appropriate, but what has to be very clear is that when somebody is in hospital, there has to be a clear dialogue with the patient so that the patient knows whether he is responsible or the hospital is responsible. This has to be very, very clear and clearly understood, and it has to be also clear that even when there is self-monitoring, there needs to be a record that those glucoses were done and that things are okay.

We have a large, extra effort of many different RHAs and hospitals. The Winnipeg RHA does not even have an RHA policy. They

have a separate policy for each hospital. There is a lot of duplication here, a lot of extra cost because there is not a single standard. That standard, certainly, can be used on an individual patient or adapted under some circumstances. This is quite common that there is the ability of a physician to override or change because there is some particular circumstance, but you need to start with a standard, an approach, a basic approach which can be used province-wide. That, clearly, is one of the important roles of the provincial government, or should be.

* (12:00)

Under the NDP, there are no provincial standards. There is no provincial accountability in our health care system. It is a sad and sorry state of affairs that we must all feel very badly about. Indeed, many do when they go into hospitals and find that there are lots of people in hallways or, I understand, they now call them avenues because you can no longer call them hallways, but there are lots of people in avenues, sadly.

I want, now, to talk briefly about the next section which is growing through immigration. I support immigration. We need immigration. We need to encourage and foster immigration. We need to be aggressive in promoting immigration, but we also need to set a context where we are going to attract young people and older people, but particularly young people from all across Canada because we can make this province an exciting place for young people. The sad and sorry state of affairs under this NDP government is that we are still having a large number of young people every year moving elsewhere because the opportunities are not here. It is particularly our post-secondary education graduates who are leaving.

This is not just the NDP. The Tories in their government before put a framework that set exactly the same direction for young people to go elsewhere. Indeed, since the last Liberal government, there have been more than 220 000 people net leave to other provinces, compared when you take those going to other provinces and subtract those coming to Manitoba, because many of those are young people; they have had children elsewhere, in Alberta or B.C. or Ontario

or Saskatchewan, so that they have, in fact, had a much larger impact. Their leaving has had a much larger impact. It is not just 220 000, a fifth of our population that we have lost. The impact is probably 400 000 or 500 000 people that we would have had in Manitoba, had we not had, in Tory and NDP years, a climate which fostered or encouraged people to leave rather than providing a climate which attracted young people to Manitoba.

The next section in the Throne Speech deals with building our communities. Let me talk about disaster assistance, which is described here. Providing disaster assistance. This is important, but the Throne Speech should have focussed on providing the infrastructure to decrease the risks so we would not have as big an impact of disasters when they occur.

Let me give you one small example on South Tobacco Creek and North Tobacco Creek. South Tobacco Creek, a Deerwood project, put in 26 small dams. It has held the water back when there is a heavy rain, as there was in June of this year. There was very little damage to the culverts and the infrastructure, the municipal infrastructure, because there was better management of flood control, or control of the heavy runoff. But on North Tobacco Creek, there were a lot of culverts which were blown out, a lot of extra expense, a lot of extra cost. It was, in effect, a significant disaster for the local area because of all the washouts of culverts. That could have been avoided from the South Tobacco Creek model had there been a strategy to put in place the same numbers of small dams to decrease the risk of having the disaster in the first place.

That, sad to say, is not being paid nearly enough attention. If we can prevent those disasters, if we can prevent the damage to our infrastructure, we can do much better for people in this province than just providing disaster assistance after the disaster has occurred because we did not prevent it.

What is striking about the building of our communities section is that there is a lack of strategy for real support of economic growth in communities. Yes, there is mention of health care and doctors, but these are public sector,

public-funded areas, important to do, but they do not provide the base for economic growth, which is private sector, and private-sector driven, and should be private-sector driven. In fact, one of the problems in understanding the last three years is that to the limited extent we have growth, quite a bit of it probably comes from public-sector spending and increased public-sector spending rather than from private-sector investment, but the lack of this emphasis on the role and the importance of the private sector—

The role and importance of industry in our province in creating enterprise and providing job opportunities is sad. It is, we know, traditional for the NDP not to care all that much or provide a framework for business or industry enterprise, but it was sad, nevertheless, to see a Throne Speech which talked all about communities, but had nothing really in terms of encouragement of private-sector economic development. No real plan.

Let me move to the section on energy. I and, I think, most Manitobans welcomed the recognition of energy as important to our province. The importance of hydro-electric power, certainly, is significant and something that we not only need to recognize, but to build upon.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the biggest threat to energy development and hydro electric development and the future of Manitoba Hydro comes not from some external threat, but it comes from the NDP government grabbing almost \$300 million from Hydro last year, plus the water taxes. All the other increased taxes and money that the NDP government have grabbed from Hydro puts Manitoba Hydro in a much more difficult position than it was a couple of years ago. The fact that that money was grabbed in kind of an ad hoc fashion at the last minute before the Budget, or in the Budget, without much notification or planning also undermines the ability of people at Manitoba Hydro to plan well, to make sure that Manitoba Hydro is strong and is doing well.

So the Government talks a fine spin, but their actions are undermining some of the very things which are so important to Manitobans and undermining some of the things which they, in

their fancy words, are talking about trying to do. It is a sad and sorry state of affairs when the promise and the performance are so far apart. It is a sad and sorry state of affairs when the divide between the fancy word and the actions delivered is so big. It creates a credibility gap for this Government, a lack of trust in this Government that is growing and that will continue to grow when it comes to dealing with areas like poverty, the most vulnerable, the poorest in our society, those who are forced for one reason or another to survive on social assistance.

We find that this Government has in place a social assistance program which provides about \$20 a week for food and entertainment for those on social assistance. From personal experience, I can speak to the fact that that is a fair challenge, but I can also speak to the fact that having a nutritious diet and staying healthy with that sort of level of funding is a problem. I am sure that the burden on our health care system has increased very significantly by the lack of investment in people who are less well off and the lack of support for people who are less well off because you undermine their ability to make sure that they have a nutritious diet that they can stay healthy. That, of course, costs us all more, so it is very short-sighted to not support those better who are on social assistance. It is humanitarian to do so, but it is important also to be able to do so to have an adequate plan for the whole province and not part of it.

*(12:10)

This speech was a last-chance Throne Speech. It is likely the last Throne Speech before the next provincial election. It was the last chance for the NDP to show that they really had what it takes to be the Government that this province needs, and sadly they have fallen far short. We have Manitoba's gross domestic product continuing to fall relative to the national situation. We have young people continuing to leave because of the environment. Manitoba should be doing much better.

I would ask: Where is the problem here? Is it the lack of resources? We have got wonderful agricultural land, minerals, forests, fisheries. We have got incredible manufacturing industries and

businesses and opportunities in this global world. It is not the problem with our resources. Are we short of talented people? We have got some wonderful people in this province who can do incredible things. It is not a problem with not having the wonderful people. Is this the problem with the federal government? No. The federal government can be blamed for lots of things, but it cannot really be blamed for the fact that Manitoba has performed much more poorly during 40 years of Tory and NDP governments than almost any other province in Canada. The federal government, in spite of all their defects, still provides Manitoba \$1.3 billion in equalization payments every year. Quite a significant support. That is a lot more than they provide to Saskatchewan.

So we ask: Why is that? Why is Manitoba falling behind? I have come to the conclusion that the problem is in the provincial government, in the way it is being run by this NDP government. We need to change.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): It gives me great pleasure to rise on the Throne Speech that the Government has laid out for Manitobans as their agenda. I think every time a government, whether they have been in power for many years or whether they are a neophyte, as some might say, I think there are still many people in Manitoba that are giving or have, at least till now, given the benefit of the doubt to Mr. Doer and his administration. There are many people that are now starting to wonder whether what Mr. Doer portrayed himself as—

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Labour and Immigration, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Hon. Becky Barrett (Minister of Labour and Immigration): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I do not have the specific *Beauchesne* citation, but it is my understanding that members are to refer to each other either by their constituencies or, in the case of ministers or premiers, by their title, and the Member for Emerson has twice referred to the Premier by his name. I would ask you to call him to order.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I would just like to advise all members, when referring to another member, to refer to the member by constituency or ministers by their portfolios. I ask the co-operation of all honourable members.

* * *

Mr. Jack Penner: The honourable minister is correct. I did twice refer to this Government as the Doer administration, and I apologize for that. I—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order. For clarification: I have ruled in the past, when referring to the government either of the past or government of the day, I have allowed members to use Filmon government or Doer government so that it draws the attention of all honourable members to what era the speaker is referring. I have made that ruling in the past, but in general speech when referring to a member then please use the constituency or the titles of the ministers. Thank you.

Mr. Jack Penner: As I said, if I have contravened the rules, I truly apologize for that, and hopefully it will not happen again. I did so not on purpose, and I apologize.

I want to reflect on this administration, the NDP government, and the management of the economy, as has been done by a number of speakers prior to me, because I think that is wherein lies the main problem with this administration. It would appear to me that one of the main problems is that there is not enough talent in the Premier's Cabinet to be able to direct and manage the affairs of the department. That is fair ball. If there is not any more talent, that is what the Premier has to work with. We respect that because each one of us has certain abilities which others do not. This administration is faced with a situation whereby they must deal with government and governing from the talents that exist within his rank. The people of Manitoba should realize that the abilities that have been displayed and demonstrated so far, in my view, have not been adequate to make the changes that this NDP government said they would make.

I think one of the key promises that the Premier made again and again to the people of Manitoba was that we should trust him because he was going to, by spending \$15 million and we should give him six months, and he would fix hallway medicine. He would fix the long waiting lists in the hallways that we had seen previously. However, what is interesting is that if you go to the Budget and if you go to the expenditures that this Government has incurred over the last three years, it would appear to me, when I read the latest budgets in Estimates, that they have actually spent better than half a billion dollars additional money in health care. I ask you: What has changed? The waiting lists are long. The emergency departments are filled, and there are no beds, so the hallway beds get longer and longer despite what the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) said.

*(12:20)

I think people are starting to realize that this Government simply has not got the ability to manage. That is what I want to speak about today—the ability to manage. When I was first elected in 1988, there was a deficit, a very substantive deficit, that we inherited from that administration. The Pawley government had kept on borrowing and borrowing and spending and spending. It was interesting.

Under the Schreyer administration, when Mr. Schreyer was elected, he was elected during a period of time in our history when revenues shot up very dramatically. Mr. Schreyer was seen as one of the good premiers of this province. People still refer to Mr. Schreyer as a good premier in this province, but many of the departmental people who are now retired will tell you this: That administration had so much money coming in, so many increases in revenue, they did not know how to spend it fast enough. Some of the retired deputies who served in that administration will tell you that. They did not know how to spend it fast enough. Then, when the downturn came, they did not know how to manage and stop the spending. They did not know. They never made provisions in their wildest building spree that they had at that time, to set aside some revenues and funds to fix the roof when that time would come. There was no money left to fix the roof.

When Mr. Pawley took over the administration, when that NDP government took over, what did they have to do? What were they left with? Their only option was to keep the spending spree going and borrow money to backfill. That is what they did. So the legacy that was there, that the Progressive Conservative government had to deal with when they were elected in 1988, was one of debt and chaotic management—debt and chaotic management.

Well, let us just look at the budgets now and look at the increase and the interest expenditure over the last three years. Look at those numbers. How many dollars will each man, woman and child now incur in interest payments, in interest cost because of this Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), his mismanagement, because of the increased borrowing that he has incurred, in spite of the fact that the federal government has increased its spending and its transfers to the province, I understand, by better than a quarter of a billion dollars? Yet this Government keeps on borrowing and spending, borrowing and spending.

We said during the 1999 election that there would be an increase of a billion dollars in revenue over the next four years, 1999 to 2003. Well, how much revenue increase has this Government seen since they took over? Maybe the Minister of Finance would like to stand up and tell this House exactly what the increase in revenue has been. According to our information, this Government has seen a revenue increase of almost a billion dollars of increased revenue. Is that correct, Minister of Finance? I think that is correct. Where has the money gone? Where has the money gone? Well, let us look.

I was actually almost dumbfounded when I saw the Throne Speech, and agriculture was not even mentioned. What I found most interesting was that the Minister of Agriculture (Ms. Wowchuk) made a big to-do about signing on to an APF agreement, a new farm plan, a transitional farm plan. She signed the agreement, and it sounded as if we were going to be full partners with the federal government in a new agricultural framework, developing a new agricultural framework. Then a week later she said: Oh, no, no, I am not participating in the \$600 million that the federal government had put

aside—1.2 billion actually that the federal government had set aside as a transitional adjustment program that would allow people to make the changes required in the new program to help them along with that. It would have meant, I believe, that the federal government would contribute to a NISA account for the farmers. In total, it would have cost the federal government about \$60 million in Manitoba. Sixty million dollars. If 40 percent of that is cost-shared, and the equal amount is cost-shared by the province, that would have meant that the province would have been required to contribute \$40 million. The total amount would have been \$100 million that farmers would have received as a transitional program in the year 2002.

Well, lo and behold, when all the dust settled and all the to-do was made about the announcement of the APF agreement that was signed in Swan River, we found out that the Province was not participating in the transitional program. So we believe on this side of the House that this Minister of Finance has ordered his Minister of Agriculture to take \$40 million out of farmers' pockets to help him balance his budget, and that is what has happened.

So the farmers in Manitoba will take out of their own pockets \$40 million to help the Minister of Finance balance his budget. The Keystone Agricultural Producers put out a news release, and we were somewhat amazed at the Member for Selkirk's (Mr. Dewar) little letter in the newspaper contradicting inaccurately what the Keystone Agricultural Producers had put out in a news release.

They said that the farmers of this province were paying \$40 million too much in property tax levied by this Minister of Finance to help this Minister of Finance pay for education and that they could boast about having increased spending in education. Forty million dollars is what the Keystone said. The Keystone Producers said, they were being charged too much because they were paying disproportionately too much towards education. That was their line.

Well, what I found most interesting is that the Member for Selkirk, and I do not know who drafted the letter for him. I do not think he did because he would not have made those kinds of

mistakes, but somebody drafted the letter for him and said that the Province was paying 73 percent of education costs to Manitoba, for education in Manitoba.

Well, every school division, every municipality has had significant concerns about that statement.

Mr. Speaker: Order. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Member for Emerson (Mr. Jack Penner) will have 24 minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, November 29, 2002

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