

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, December 4, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have from the Daerwood School, twenty-two Grade 5 students, and they are under the direction of Mr. Rod Nerbas. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles).

On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

* (1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Manitoba Medical Association Collective Agreement Negotiations

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this Government is comprised of bullies. They, first of all, bully the foster parents, then they bully the child care workers, then they bully the civil servants, and now the physicians of the Province of Manitoba.

Frank Maynard, the Deputy Minister of Health, and John Laplume, the Executive Director of the Manitoba Medical Association have come to an agreement. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) had called the doctors together for what they thought was a celebration dinner. Hours before this dinner they were called to a meeting with the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), where they were told the deal was off, and a new deal was to be put on the table. Further they were told - (interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: —take it or leave it.- (interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Why did this Government break faith with their own negotiator and toss out a deal that both negotiators had agreed upon?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my answer is, for the simple reason that again my honourable friend, the Liberal Leader of the Opposition, does not have her facts straight. I cannot help my honourable friend to get her facts straight when she does not ask any questions of myself, except in this forum, and accepts information from I know not what source.

Let me tell my honourable friend that there was no deal, as my honourable friend said; there were no negotiations, as my honourable friend said; there were discussions as to what the next contract with the MMA ought to look like.

That is a perfectly normal role for the executive director of physicians and my Deputy Minister to have, because we wish to undertake with the MMA and with their co-operation and have over the last 18 months resolved a number of issues. Those discussions go on, but negotiations with Government take place in a forum where we have negotiators professionally engaged to do that.

Mrs. Carstairs: The Government, at this meeting with the doctors, said new economic indicators made it necessary for them to overrule the negotiated settlement between Frank Maynard and John Laplume.

In that this Government has consistently pointed out, despite facts to the contrary, that the economic strength of this province is better than it has ever been, would they enlighten the House today as to what new economic indicators they have which would indicate that they had to toss out this deal because the province could not afford it?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I suppose we will spend the balance of the Question Period with me correcting my honourable friend in the preamble of her statements. My honourable friend says there was a negotiated agreement. There was no negotiated agreement.

Now, I do not know what my honourable friend is using as a source for that kind of statement to be made, but her source is not a good one because there was, and I reiterate, no negotiated agreement between the MMA and Government. My honourable friend makes some case that we have reneged on a negotiated agreement that did not exist, period. I remind my honourable friend, the Liberal Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), that the current MMA contract is in force and effect until April 1, 1990. We will undertake and continue discussions with the MMA on the next agreement, whether it be one year, two years or three years.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, the only thing that the Minister has been correct about is when the contract runs out. In that it does not run out until then, why did they put at this point on the table a take-it-or-leave-it document thereby creating chaos potentially in the health care system?

Mr. Orchard: I am very, very, very pleased to answer that question. When I walked into this office some 18 months ago, the hallmark of negotiations between the medical profession and Government were fractious to say the least.

I made the point, as I have tried to do with every other professional organization in Manitoba, to open

the door so that we could begin to work together in resolving issues in the health care system. To demonstrate Government's good will, I indicated a year ago to the president and executive director of the MMA that we would attempt to have a contract negotiated by the end of this year in advance of the expiry date of the existing contract, Mr. Speaker, to do nothing else than to demonstrate Government's good will to work with the doctors in a co-operative fashion. That is why we are presenting and discussing with MMA what that proposal and offer might be.

* (1340)

Minister of Health Misinformation Provided

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, but the fractiousness is a direct result of the attitude that this Minister has taken with the medical profession. That attitude is no more clearly represented than in his own press release in which he deliberately takes the figures of the Manitoba Health Services submission which says in its Annual Report they are payments to physicians, and changes that word into salaries without any acceptance at all that there is between a 25 percent to 40 percent overhead for every doctor practising in this profession. Why would the Minister deliberately present misinformation to the media at his press conference?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I realize my honourable friend now is down to a very interesting debate, that she does not consider that Government support of physicians, taxpayers support of physicians, is as I indicated from the Annual Report of the Manitoba Health Services Commission. If my honourable friend finds any inaccuracy in those numbers, I challenge her to put those on the record because they are true.

I simply want to remind my honourable friend when she comes up with the argument that there is now a fractious relationship between the MMA and Government that has newly appeared, I remind my honourable friend, the Liberal Leader of the Opposition, that confrontation is not my style—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Health.

Mr. Orchard: The reason with good intention and good faith and close working relationship with the MMA, the president, the executive director, many of its members, we undertook without need to have negotiations commence until possibly next month or the month after. We began negotiations a long time ago in a demonstration of a new change in attitude and good will between physicians and Government.

Manitoba Medical Association Binding Arbitration

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, that good will broke down on Tuesday

night because this Minister, despite what had been negotiated, completely threw out that agreement and said, take this one or leave it.

Emmett Hall, who is considered by many to be the father of Medicare, has said disputes between doctors and Governments should be settled by binding arbitration. Why has this Government denied binding arbitration as the means by which settlements should take place between Governments and the medical profession?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): As I said earlier on, again I am going to have to correct the preamble to my honourable friend's question. There was no negotiated agreement with the MMA. Let my honourable friend know that with clarity and with honesty, there was no negotiated settlement, the allegation being that this Minister did not carry through on.

Disagreements between unions and Government, or unions and any employer group often end up with confrontation which we do not want but, more importantly, with disagreements if the management side does not accede to every demand put to them by the other side.

Clearly we have not met the demands of the physician group, the MMA, not that we do not want to, but there is a reasonable balance that must be struck throughout Government's provision of financial support. Our offer is reasonable, meets the agenda needs of physicians in terms of increasing their pay, reforming the health care system and bringing very many issues to - (interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1345)

Mrs. Carstairs: Every Manitoba citizen deserves to be treated with respect by this Government. This Government is not treating the physicians of this province with respect and regrettably it will be the patients of this province who suffer. Binding arbitration does not accept one side or the other. Why will this Government not put their case before an arbitrator? Do they think it is so weak that they cannot possibly get an arbitrator who would agree with them?

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend said the operative words in that we must respect the ability to help and assist all Manitobans. That has been the objective in this Government in terms of health care provision, wherein in two consecutive years we have increased the health care budget by almost double the inflation rate in those two years. That is why we have provided substantial increase to ambulance funding, to the Standing Committee on Medical Manpower. That is why the capital budget has been a balanced budget so those very physicians can practise medicine in quality, in modern facilities for the benefit of Manitobans.

The health care system does not exist for one individual group involved in service delivery, be they administrators, be they physicians, be they board members. The health care system exists for the benefit of all Manitobans and we are serving that benefit.

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Department of Health Administration

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):

My question is to the Premier. Has the Premier been advised of the confrontation in the Minister of Health's department and the administrative chaos in the Department of Health? Is he keeping himself informed with the Ministry of Health on the confrontation and the chaos in the department and the resignations that are taking place at the senior level of the Minister's department?

We just had a resignation for the ADM of Health Care Services. One Dr. Sharon Macdonald has just resigned in the Department of Health. That follows upon the resignation of another ADM last spring and another doctor who is the executive director of Mental Health Services just recently.

Is the Premier aware—I am asking the Premier (Mr. Filmon), not the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), because we do not believe the Premier has any control on the Minister of Health and the chaos that is in his department and the confrontation in the health care field. Is the Premier satisfied with the Department of Ministry of Health and the way it is working with all the resignations and confrontation and chaos that is taking place in that department?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer), might have appropriately used the term chaos in the Department of Health two years ago when he sat around the Cabinet Table, but he cannot use it now.

Mr. Speaker, the executive director position in mental health is currently filled by Dr. Keith Hildahl who is moving over to the Adolescent Treatment Centre, a career change, hardly a sample of chaos in the department. Before my honourable friends in the New Democrats malign the service of Dr. Hildahl to mental health reform, let them not do it because I value Dr. Hildahl's input, response, and his ideas on reform of the mental health system.

Mr. Speaker, there are two other positions that my honourable friend has referred to. The Assistant Deputy Minister in Mental Health took early retirement for medical reasons, and Dr. Macdonald I believe, although I have not received the correspondence from her, has accepted a career advancement in Calgary.

Mr. Doer: I would like to thank the Minister for confirming the chaos of resignations in his department. Two doctors have resigned in his department in the last couple of weeks.

* (1350)

Medical Profession Billing Increase Cap

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):

My question to the Premier is: did he, as head of

Treasury Board and head of Cabinet, approve the plan that is now before the public of Manitoba in terms of the proposed capping of doctors' billing increases? Did he as head of Treasury Board approve this plan and is this indeed part of Government policy?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to just refer to the Member for Concordia's (Mr. Doer) suggestions on confrontation and chaos. The only confrontation and chaos that I have recently witnessed was at the Convention Centre this past weekend.

I do want to congratulate the Member for Concordia though on moving his Party along in the Meech Lake resolution and I sincerely compliment him.

An Honourable Member: That is more than we can say for you.

Mr. Filmon: We are all united here.

An Honourable Member: Which side are you on . . . ?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have recognized the Honourable First Minister to answer the question. Order, please. The Honourable First Minister.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, there has been absolutely no proposal that has been passed by Treasury Board, Cabinet, or any area of this Government that would limit access to the health care system. We are committed to ensure accessibility to the health care system and the provision of the finest level of service that we can afford in this province to all Manitobans, regardless of their background, regardless of their walk of life, and regardless of their region in this province.

That is why we have consistently in two budgets given increases to health care that have been almost double the rate of inflation. That is why we have brought in one of the largest capital works programs in health care that this province has ever seen. That is why we have expanded areas of service in mental health. That is why at every step of the way we have improved services in health care to Manitobans, and we will continue to do that because that is our commitment to Manitobans.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, 500 nurses were out in front of this building a little while ago, an unprecedented activity, talking for partnership in the health care field

Mr. Filmon: They were out when you were in Government, too.

Mr. Doer: No, check the record.

Mr. Filmon: Yes, they picketed.

Mr. Doer: The doctors are now talking about the confrontation in the Minister of Health's (Mr. Orchard)

department. The Premier has now stated that they have not passed this plan at Treasury Board of Cabinet.

I would ask the Premier, who is managing a Government, to take the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) into his office and get him to withdraw this confrontational proposal that will reduce the accessibility of patients, that doctors will have to assess patients on the basis of where they are in this so-called cap. Rheumatologists that are leaving this province are against it, and other specialists are against it. I ask the Premier to get control of his Minister of Health and have this ridiculous plan withdrawn from the table.

Mr. Filmon: The proposal that we have been discussing with the doctors would see \$24 million of additional funding put into reform of the fee schedule so rheumatologists would not leave this province. Rheumatologists, who are a third below the national average, would see their incomes up to the national average over a period of three years so that they would not have to leave this province, Mr. Speaker.

That is the kind of measures we are taking. That is precisely what we want to do: ensure that physicians have incomes that meet their tests in terms of fairness and reasonableness, country-wide. That is the kind of thing we are doing. That is the imaginative, considerate kind of approach that we are taking.

I am glad to have the support of the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) for it because I remember what it was like when the New Democrats were in office, whether it was Minister Desjardins, they were in conflict, whether it was Minister Parasiuk, they were in conflict. They had difficulties achieving support and settlement with the doctors.

We do not want that kind of conflict. We do not want that kind of confrontation. We are out to meet a sensible solution that meets the needs of the physicians, as well as, meeting the needs of the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Doer: I can recall signing a collective agreement with the MMA, the one that is now in force. We signed agreements with the nurses.

I would then ask the Premier, in his defence of this capping system, are we going to have a situation where patients are going to be assessed against the cap because the doctors are now under an arbitrary system that has been put in place? Is patient care going to be measured against the cap in the system? If that is the Government's policy, are you going to go to the wall with it or are you going to withdraw it as most Manitobans are asking now in terms of this province?

* (1355)

Mr. Filmon: No, that is not the case, and that is not anything that has ever been discussed that the patients ought to have their services limited or capped in any way shape or form. He wants to say that the Leader of the NDP says that he did indeed negotiate and sign a collective agreement with the doctors when he was in Government.

Eleven and a half months after the expiration of their previous agreement, in the midst of an election

campaign under great public pressure, they finally arrived at an agreement with the doctors. We are talking about four months ahead of the expiration of their contract, not eleven and a half months after it expires. We are discussing principles in good faith with the doctors. We are seeking resolution of differences that the doctors have.

Let me say this, the doctors have been in conflict with previous administrations, they have been in conflict with previous NDP Ministers of Health. The doctors—the only way that might be settled is if we were prepared to open the Treasury and write a blank cheque to the doctor. We have a responsibility, which we take seriously, to the taxpayers of Manitoba, and we are going to take that responsibility seriously.

Repap Manitoba Inc. Contractual Obligations

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, we are being increasingly aware, as are the people of Manitoba, that any failure of the Repap opportunity is because of the ineptness of the executive branch of Government and particularly the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). The truth is it is the anxiety of this Minister to close this deal at any cost and his inability to foresee obvious pitfalls in the long-range strategy that is jeopardizing this opportunity.

The Minister said on Thursday that he is in constant contact with Repap. On Friday we learned that Repap has no intentions of proceeding with their contractual obligations at Swan River on December 31. This leads me to wonder, either the Minister is talking to the wrong people or he is asking the wrong questions.

My question to the Minister of Finance is this: which is it? Is the Minister speaking to the wrong people, or is he asking the wrong questions?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will put my capabilities of decision-making against the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) any day of the week. Let me indicate, if the Member is using as his source—the basis for the question he has just presented—the article in the Free Press as of Friday, if that is his source, then I say to him that the contract still stands. If he has another source of information, then I would ask that he would share it with me. Today Repap has to live within the terms of the agreement that was signed in official form in May of this year.

Swan River Project Guarantee

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, how does the Minister then account for his lack of knowledge or the difference in the opinions between the company who says no and the Minister who says yes in relation to the chipboard plant in Swan River starting on December 31, 1989?

An Honourable Member: It is not a chipboard plant. Come on, read the agreement, John. It is a chipping plant.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): You know, I hearken back to the granola king from St.

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Norbert, Mr. Speaker. I withdraw that. He sometimes gets his terminologies mixed, but let me say that two parties entered into an agreement in good faith, the Government of Manitoba on behalf of the taxpayers of this province and indeed Repap Enterprises of Montreal. There was a provision within that contract that indicated there should be starting to be built, before this year-end, a facility in Swan River. I have been in contact with Repap as recently as last week. I am expecting to talk to them again in the near future, at which time I am hoping they will disclose to me specifically how it is they will carry out the provision under the contract which calls them to begin to put into place the facility in Swan River.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister negotiating behind closed doors an amendment to the agreement, and has he included any of the people who will be most adversely affected if this chipping plant does not go ahead, namely, the people of Swan River?

* (1400)

Mr. Maness: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised at the new-found interest that the Liberal Party has in rural Manitoba after a week ago when they said they wanted no aspect of decentralization. Let me say nobody is more concerned about the interests of the people in Swan River and The Pas than the Members of this Government, indeed this Government. Everything that we have done with respect to the divestiture of Manfor has been directed towards the economic well-being of that region.

Further, Mr. Speaker, I can indicate there are not discussions going on behind closed doors as to changing the contract. As of today, the contract stands.

Social Assistance Rate Increase

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): My question is to the Minister of Economic Security. Mr. Speaker, over the weekend this Minister announced immediate increases in social allowance benefits. I presume she was too ashamed of the amounts to inform this House beforehand. These Scrooge-like increases reflect a callous, uncaring Government that has no respect whatsoever for the disadvantaged in this province. They also reflect a lack of understanding of the system. The food basket is up 17 percent and yet increases were only 4.9 percent.

This lack of commitment, Mr. Speaker, was vividly illustrated once more today by this Government's lack of attendance to the housing vigil put on by seven different church denominations.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member's question?

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is this: why has the Minister not chosen to bring benefits up to at least the level recently announced by the City of Winnipeg?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, the rate that I had announced last week—

4.9, reflects a \$5.3 million increase to help the people on social assistance in this province. The Member refers to the increase by the City of Winnipeg. Even with the increase that they gave, it does not bring their level up to the same as the province.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to see that 7 percent is less than 4.9 percent. Now we know what is wrong with this Government. This is the Government that is supposed to be able to manage.

Shelter Allowance

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): To the same Minister, thousands of families, particularly single mothers, supplement their inadequate housing allowance in this province with their food allowance thereby sending untold thousands of children to school hungry. Mr. Speaker, my question is this: when will this Minister institute realistic housing allowances that reflect the true costs in this province?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): To the Member, the rent increases of 3 percent will be in effect on the 1st of January to reflect the rent regulations and that will assist in paying rent for the people on assistance. The Member should also recall that in most of the cases of social assistance, the entire rent is paid.

An Honourable Member: How is your Lincoln doing?

Mr. Rose: You would think that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) could do better than that after a weekend.

Rate Increase

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): To the same Minister. When will -(interjection)- I think the First Minister wants to answer this.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have recognized the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

Mr. Rose: When will this Minister study the consultants' reports, the two of them of 1983, 1988, and acknowledge the recommendations therein for housing, special needs, earnings and training?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): I have just announced on Thursday of last week an increase to social allowances, but I am telling the Member today that the rent increases will be forthcoming also in January.

I also would point out to the Member that over the term of this Government, we have continued with programs for single parents on social assistance, have topped up that program, increased it. We have also introduced another program called Gateway which helps to employ social assistance recipients. I think when you consider all those things, this Government has a commitment to people on social assistance in this province.

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Pay Equity Implementation

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): My question is for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. I think it is only fitting to ask a question on women's issues following this most historic weekend that saw the election of Audrey McLaughlin, the first woman as a national political Leader anywhere in the history of this country.

My question to the Minister is this.- (interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: My question to the Minister is this: does this Minister and this Government accept the policy of pay equity, the policy of equal pay for work of equal value, or is it going to keep bullying women like nurses, as our Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is wont to do, who deserve pay equity, who have every right to receive pay equity under our present legislation? Is this Government going to implement pay equity to the full letter of the law, or is it going to keep trying to find excuses not to live up to that incredibly important principle and policy for the women of this province?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I would like to congratulate the Member for St. Johns for getting her candidate in as Leader.

As far as the question of pay equity is concerned, the Government has been following the letter of the law. One of the areas that is allowed, where there is a disagreement that they can go to the Labour Board. That is exactly what has happened with the nurses and that is exactly where the issue is.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: There is a disagreement because this Government does not believe in pay equity, is not prepared to live up to legislation to benefit nurses.

Extension Plan

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): My supplementary is straightforward: what are the plans of this Minister and this Government for pay equity in school divisions and municipalities? Will this Minister and her Government introduce legislation to extend pay equity into those sectors, or are they going to let women down once more and refuse to bring in compulsory, mandatory pay equity through legislation?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): The Government that the Member is talking about, the Government she belonged to, did not bring in pay equity legislation for those two sectors. We are currently meeting and have formed working groups with the City of Winnipeg and with the school divisions to get them on their way to implementing pay equity.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Speaker, Members of this Government will remember the date, March 8, 1988,

I am sure; that was also a significant date, because it was this Government then that introduced the extension of pay equity to school divisions.

My final supplementary to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Hammond) is: what are the plans of this Government? I want to hear the concrete plans of this Government when it comes to the extension of pay equity into school divisions and municipalities as was promised in their Speech from the Throne, as has been promised to the women of this province. What are the plans? What is the timetable? How are they going to move on pay equity in all sectors of Manitoba's economy?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Labour, I would like to indicate what I have said before. We have begun with the City of Winnipeg who has a working group working on that with the Pay Equity Bureau. We are working with the school divisions as well, and they will be working towards implementing pay equity.

* (1410)

Low-Income Housing Indexing

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). I have just come from a housing vigil where seven church denominations were represented.- (interjection)- Vigil is correct. It is unfortunate, not one Member of this Government was there. It goes to show their concern about the inadequate housing in this province.

Mr. Speaker, my question is: after months of pressure from the official Opposition, this Government has finally increased SAFER and SAFFR allowances. Why did this Government, this Minister in particular, the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme), not increase or make a commitment to increase these two programs on an annual index according to the cost of living?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, first of all, if the Member looked at the complex formula, it not only deals with the rent increases that are on an annual basis but you also deal with salary increases. This Government felt in its way that with these increases that we are having for 1990, 9 percent, an increase of \$621,000 affecting 5,000 low-income seniors and families, we felt we did our job with a 9 percent increase, and we should be respected for that particular increase.

Landlord Monitoring

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, every month millions of taxpayers' dollars are given to landlords through social allowance payments toward rent. What is this Minister doing to ensure that this money is not being squandered away to inadequate accommodations or shelters?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I think the legislation that we are putting

forward after the long wait from their previous administration will handle those concerns. Also I must say that about 92 percent of seniors and 97 percent of family clients will receive increases and will deal with the slum landlords in our legislation coming forward in Bill No. 42.

Housing Programs Funding

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, we have a Government here that created a \$200 million slush fund while the housing in our province, in Winnipeg Regional Housing alone, could use \$20 million in order to bring it up to par.

My question is: what is this Government doing other than setting up Tory slush funds to ensure that we have adequate housing stock in the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, when the Member from across the way, when the Member gets across the way he will see a—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Minister of Housing.

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, when the Member across the way gets into the Estimates, and I am sure he is very excited about getting into the Estimates procedure, he will see under this particular Government in the last two years that we have increased the housing units in this particular province substantially, always at an increase and always at the rate of inflation.

Foreign Workers Ogilvie Oats Dismantling

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, last week I took as notice a question from the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) with regard to Ogilvie Flour Mills and certain Mexican workers who were working on their premises.

I can advise that Ogilvie Oats sold the equipment in the mill to a company from Mexico. That company sent their employees here to (a) supervise the demolition or the disassembling of the equipment, to catalogue it, to ensure that (a) they get the goods that they bought, and (b) they will be able to put it back together again when it comes back to Mexico.

Employment Standards Branch Toll-Free Service

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) and this Government continue to pay lip-service to rural Manitobans about the services they are being offered.

My question is to the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond). Can the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond)

explain why the employment standards branch in her department is no longer accepting toll-free calls from rural Manitoba and northern Manitoba, in flying in the face of statements made by the First Minister and the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) that there has been no change in policy, can she explain why her department no longer accepts calls?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice.

Department of Rural Development Toll-Free Service

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, recently a constituent of mine called the Department of Labour, asked for the employment standards branch and was told by the operator that the service had been cut off, and I have that on record. On November 16, the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) assured this House that there had been no change in policy, no change in service.

Will the Minister now retract those misleading statements, retract those statements, and reinstall service for rural and northern Manitobans so they can access Government services like every other citizen of the City of Winnipeg?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I certainly find interesting the comments that the Member for Thompson (sic) is making. The current policy in Manitoba is the same as what it was during the former administration; there has been no change and there is no change contemplated. If the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) would want to indicate to the operator when dialing the 800 number which department they would want to talk to, or who they would want to talk to, they would be transferred to that department.

* (1420)

Mr. Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege—

An Honourable Member: Do you have a standing up motion?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, this Minister continues to mislead the House. His own—the Government operators are saying that service has been withdrawn. Mr. Speaker, the Minister's obligation is to tell the truth in this House, to have the facts correct before he presents them to this House. I have a tape recording of the operator saying exactly what I am reporting to this House. I have a verbatim transcript of it. The Minister is not reporting the facts to this House, and I demand as a Member that the House be told the truth and the people of Manitoba be told the truth.

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Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Government House Leader. Order, please

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) rose on a question of privilege and in the course of that question of privilege engaged in unparliamentary language without following up his question of privilege with a substantive motion to put before the House.

Now Your Honour has not before you a substantive motion which renders his question of privilege out of order in the first place, but the second point I would raise is the Member ought not, with the experience that he has, engage in such mischief in this House as to rise in his place and make statements about Honourable Members of this House without following it up with a substantive motion.

Members, such as myself when I was new, made the mistake of rising on a question of privilege and not following it by a substantive motion, but at that time, I was not the veteran of this House that the Honourable Member for Flin Flon is. He knows better and ought to be called to order for his behaviour today.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank Honourable Members for their advice. The Chair will take this matter under advisement and report back to the House.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: I have a ruling for the House. Order, please. Order.

On Wednesday, October 25, during the second reading debate on Bill No. 56, and on November 22, during the second reading debate on Bill 64, points of order raised by the Honourable Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), respecting words spoken by the Honourable Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery), were taken under advisement by the Chair.

The Honourable Minister, in his remarks on both occasions, had referred from his seat to the absence of a specific Member. This, as I believe Honourable Members all know, is contrary to Beauchesne's Citation 481(c), which states that, "... a Member, while speaking, must not: refer to the presence or absence of specific Members."

Therefore, I must rule that the points of order are valid. I am consequently requesting that the Honourable Minister provide the House with an unqualified apology for the offending words used on both occasions.

The Honourable Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared to make an unqualified apology.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Minister. That concludes the matter.

HOUSE BUSINESS

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, prior to asking you to call certain Bills this afternoon, I would like to seek the leave of the House pursuant to Rule 65(6.3) to change the sequence of Estimates in order that the Department of Housing be dealt with prior to the Department of Energy in the committee room outside the House.

The change I am requesting is that the Estimates of the Department of Housing be dealt with prior to those of the Department of Energy in the committee room outside the House—Housing before Energy.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that the sequence be changed? (Agreed)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to call Bills 27, 34 and 53?

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 27—THE FISCAL STABILIZATION FUND ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill No. 27, The Fiscal Stabilization Fund Act; Loi sur le Fonds de stabilisation des recettes, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst), the Honourable Minister of Industry and Trade.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I had held the Bill on behalf of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) who would then close debate on the Bill.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I am having extreme difficulty hearing the Member. I did not hear one word of the Member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst). Could the Member give us his words again?

Mr. Ernst: For the information of the House, I had held the Bill on behalf of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) who was going to close debate on the Bill.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance with further debate.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise and close a long debate on Bill No. 27.

It is not my intention to take any more than a couple of minutes, because this is an important issue. This is one that Members should be summoned to vote on. It is an integral part of the budget.

Let me say that I will review many of the representations made by all Members of the House, because a large number of people have spoken on this

BILL NO. 34—THE LOAN ACT, 1989

Bill, and I will be prepared to address certain portions of them in Committee of the Whole. Hopefully, Members will see fit to consider Bill No. 27 in Committee of the Whole on Wednesday.

Let me say though in response to, particularly, charges from the Liberal Party that this is a Tory slush fund; that this is a slush fund; that this is somehow akin to the former Jobs Fund of the NDP Government, I will say it today, I have said it before, and I will say it over and over again, this is not a slush fund in the sense that the Government will have an opportunity to reach into it at their will; at the whim of Cabinet; at the whim of Treasury Board; at the whim of caucus. This fund will be accessed one time a year during the budgetary development process, at which time certain amounts of money will be removed from the Stabilization Fund and turned over in support of the budget objectives, the spending objectives of the Government of the Day.

In that sense, Mr. Speaker, this Stabilization Fund is not anything more than a fiscal shock absorber put into place in support of needed programs. I have to make that clarification, because of course the Liberals are trying to play basic politics with the Stabilization Fund. Indeed, I dare say once the next budget of the province comes down Members opposite will be lauding the fact that there was a stabilization fund in place.

Mr. Speaker, with those few words I commend it to the House. Hopefully, all Members will see fit to support this very important Bill.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the Members.

Order, please. The question before the House is second reading of Bill No. 27, The Fiscal Stabilization Fund Act; Loi sur le Fonds de stabilisation des recettes.

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

YEAS

Ashton, Burrell, Connery, Cowan, Cummings, Doer, Downey, Driedger (Emerson), Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Hammond, Harapiak, Harper, Helwer, Hemphill, Maloway, Manness, McCrae, Mitchelson, Oleson, Orchard, Pankratz, Penner, Praznik, Storie, Uruski, Wasylycia-Leis.

NAYS

Alcock, Angus, Carr, Carstairs, Charles, Cheema, Chornopyski, Driedger (Niakwa), Evans (Fort Garry), Gaudry, Gray, Kozak, Lamoureux, Mandrake, Minenko, Patterson, Roch, Rose, Taylor, Yeo.

* (1520)

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas, 31; Nays, 20.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill No. 34, The Loan Act, 1989; Loi d'emprunt de 1989, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), the Honourable Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand and speak on Bill No. 34, which I think is a very important Bill which we agree with the principle of.

I just finished voting on a Bill, Bill No. 27, which is another finance Bill. I think the Liberals must have had some extreme difficulty on that one, because during the discussion on the Bill they had already spent the money several times over. I am wondering how they could vote against it when they had come forward with programs of how they could be supporting it.

I think The Loan Act is very important to address some of the developmental needs of northern Manitoba. I think the North has—although the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) often talks of how well he is looking after the North, I think there certainly are some holes in the program he is coming up for when dealing with it.

The Northern Development Agreement is one area where there has been some hesitancy of closing that agreement. It is certainly one that is required for northern Manitoba to continue on with the development we had started with when the New Democrats were in Government. That development is certainly lacking at this time, because of the absence of the Northern Development Agreement which was in place at that time.

The North is a part of the country that is particularly being hit hard by the approach of the Mulroney Government at the federal level. I think the approach that the Mulroney Government is taking is one that we would see in this province as well, if the Conservative Party in this province had a majority, which they presently enjoy at the federal level.

I know there are many programs Mulroney is presently bringing forward that are hitting the North particularly hard. I think one of the areas is the goods and services tax. Everything that the people receive is going to be hit, especially the middle- and low-income people who use up the majority of their salaries just to make ends meet, and quite often they are strained.

(Mr. William Chornopyski, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

The goods and services tax will not be implemented on food, that is, not at this time. Everything that has the food delivered to northern Manitoba is certainly going to be touching the tax by goods and services, so that is going to increase the cost of our food in northern Manitoba.

I think every time you tax a consumer item it is going to be taxed, and therefore it is going to make it that

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much harder for people living in northern Manitoba to make ends meet.

Another area is the postal rates, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The postal rates are being increased on food, and many of the people in isolated areas are the only ones that use the postal rates for getting their food moved into northern Manitoba. The federal Government has, once more, heartlessly imposed a tax on Northerners, which is going to make it that much more difficult to live in northern Manitoba.

The people who are least able to absorb an increase like that are the ones that are being hit once again. Especially at a time when you see the post office making a profit, at this stage of the game, then they would come up and increase the air postal rates, which is going to be affecting the people who are least able to absorb that cost.

The Northern Tax Allowance is another program that the federal Government is coming up with. They came up with a task force. They sent out a former Member of Parliament, who has no idea what it is like to live in northern Manitoba, or to be faced with those additional costs of living in the North. He is eliminating that Northern Tax Allowance, a tax allowance which made it a little bit easier for people who are in northern Manitoba involved with—

An Honourable Member: You are on The Loan Act.

Mr. Harapiak: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Maness) says try The Loan Act. This is dealing with the finances of the Province of Manitoba. The people of the North who need to survive in that part of the country are certainly being affected by these programs that are being brought up by your federal brothers in Ottawa.

They are certainly affecting the ability of northern Manitobans to survive. That is dealing with the finances of Manitoba. Maybe you should try going up there and living there for a while, and seeing how the people are affected. Then you will see how people are affected by living in northern Manitoba and how The Loan Act is also going to affect them.

Northern development agreements have not been brought forward and dealt with, so the people can come forward and have some programs which can address the economic development in northern Manitoba, and that is where The Loan Act can come in. This is going to make it much more difficult for the people of northern Manitoba to survive in that area.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for The Pas.

* (1530)

Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Deputy Speaker, one other area that is going to be affected again by The Loan Act is the forestry agreement. There is a need to reforest the burned-out areas in northern Manitoba. Under the previous agreement that was in place there was a

reforestation agreement. It needs to be renegotiated at this time, because there is a special need for some great incentive for the people of northern Manitoba to have a reforestation program which will replace some of those areas that have been burned out.

Not only is forestry going to be affected, but the wildlife in this province is also going to be affected. The people who live in northern Manitoba are effected by the fires that have destroyed their trapping areas, their traplines, and there is a need to rebuild that. I know that there has been some initiative by this Government to rebuild those areas, and I hope they would go a little further and create some jobs in that area. The trappers are not able to carry on because of the effect that all of that area—I am glad that there is a program in place.

There is a need for it at this time, because the people in northern Manitoba are having difficulty surviving as it is. When that forest fire came along and burned out all of their trapping area, then what little income they do make in trapping certainly has to be looked at in a different light, because now those areas, most of them have been burned out.

One of the other areas that the federal Government is affecting the people in northern Manitoba is in unemployment insurance. The people who are involved in working in seasonal work, like the fisherman in northern Manitoba, is one area that is particularly going to be hit with some of the changes that have been brought forward in the unemployment insurance rates.

In previous years when the people were able to work for a certain period of time, there was an agreement worked out that fisherman are a special category, they should be allowed to collect unemployment insurance. That has always been accepted as an area that did qualify because of the needs of fisherman and also the seasonal type of employment that it is. Now with the unemployment insurance rates being changed, the fisherman are being particularly hit by the unemployment insurance changes that are being brought forward again by the federal Government who has one goal in mind, and that is reduce the deficit. I think most people would accept that if they were reducing the deficit, but unfortunately they are hitting the people who can least afford it, and still there is very little sign of the deficit being reduced in any manner.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said at the beginning of my words on this Loan Act, I support the principle of The Loan Act. I think that Manitoba business needs the type of support that would be supplied by an Act of this type. I think there is a need for a vision capital fund, and I think it is a worthy program. I urge them to begin now with a program of that sort which would help people get started up with some businesses in northern Manitoba. There are several examples of programs they can bring forward. There are several programs that were in place which helped small businesses get started when we were the Government.

Especially under the leadership of the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) when he was in that position responsible for the business in the community, he was very aggressive in getting out and meeting the needs

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of the people in northern Manitoba, and there were many examples of programs that were brought forward which helped people get started in business, and they are now still surviving.

I think there is a special need at this time for the community of Lynn Lake, because the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) was not able to bring that agreement to completion, and the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) was not willing to get involved in the negotiations. I think it is unfortunate that the First Minister did not care for a mining community the size of Lynn Lake, that he would not have gotten involved first hand in those negotiations. I know that the community of Lynn Lake is a service centre for many of the surrounding communities which now are going to be forced to travel to places like Thompson to receive their services, because the community of Lynn Lake is not going to survive. With the last big employer pulling out of the community, it is going to make it much more difficult for those people to meet their needs.

The people from Pukatawagan, for instance, had to travel up by rail line to Lynn Lake where they got all of their medical needs and groceries and whatever services they required, met in Lynn Lake. Now, with the last big employer being pulled out of that community, the people of Pukatawagan are going to have to travel either to The Pas or Thompson to get their needs met. The goods and services tax will apply to the transportation for these people to get out there and get their groceries met, or if they are going to have their groceries shipped in by postal air rates, again they are going to be affected by it, because they are increasing by over 20 per cent at a time when they are having difficulty surviving.

I just think that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) missed a golden opportunity to use some of the skills that he has and get involved in the negotiations and save that community. Unfortunately, he chose not to become involved, and I think it is sad that a community of the size of Lynn Lake has to be closed down because of this Government's unwillingness to get involved in the negotiations.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says there is such urgency in passing this Bill. This Bill was introduced on October 13, and I am surprised that it has been called so few times in order to give the people to - (interjection)- Well, the Minister of Finance should have a look and see how often it was called. In the last week or so it was called, but prior to that it certainly was not being called. If it is such an important Bill, why was it not introduced at an earlier date than October 13, after we had been sitting in the House for that length of time?

If this was a priority, then he certainly should have been introducing it at a much earlier stage, and if it is important, then he should have been putting it on the House Leader's list of priorities and have it called first out every day that the Bills are being introduced in this House.

While we are on that subject, Monday normally is not a day when we introduce Bills, but again because of somebody's manipulating, this Bill is being brought

forward on a Monday when we should be debating the Estimates. I am not sure if the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is trying to stifle discussions on it or what it was, but this is not normally the way you would do things.

Normally you would have negotiations between the House Leaders to what order of business would be introduced, not surprise the House at the last minute and bring forward Bills that you are going to be introducing just prior to going into Estimates. We said a week ago that we would be bringing this, this week, but we did not say on Monday when it is not the day when we deal with Bills. Wednesday is a normal day for dealing with Bills and not Monday.

Therefore if you are going to be bringing forward this type then there should be negotiations going on between the House Leaders and have some order brought to this House rather than doing everything at the last moment.- (interjection)- We have had discussions in our own caucus, but there obviously—they are not sure of who is the House Leader on this side. Is it the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness), the First Minister (Mr. Filmon)—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the Honourable Member, however, I must remind him that the Rule states that debate must be directly relevant to the question under consideration. The question under consideration is the principle of Bill No. 34. The Honourable Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that this Bill is extremely important and that is why we say we are going to be bringing this Bill forward on Wednesday of this week. What I was stating was if it is important that this Bill be brought forward then there should be negotiations going on with the House Leaders so we would know when the Bill is coming forward.

We are speaking on The Loan Act at this time and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) should forget he is only the Deputy House Leader. He is not the House Leader and there should be a little more co-operation going on there as to how they bring their business forward.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am looking forward to seeing how the Liberals will be—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Minister of Finance, on a point of order.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): I think the record should be corrected. Members of the NDP had knowledge of over a week and a half ago that it was our intention to call Bill No. 34 now. Bill No. 34 will also be called on Wednesday at which time, hopefully, there will be an opportunity to take it into committee. Indeed the very wish of this Government was an attempt to provide Members of both Parties in Opposition an opportunity to fully discuss this issue. The Member knows full well that his House Leader was

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apprised of our wishing to call this Bill today over a week ago.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A dispute over the facts is not a point of order. The Honourable Member for The Pas.

Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that Bill No. 34 is extremely important, and I had been in on the discussions when we were willing to bring these financial Bills forward last Friday. I think the Minister of Finance will recall at that time that he did not want to have a vote on it where we were prepared to vote on Bill No. 27 at that time. I was the Acting House Leader that day and we were willing to vote on that Bill at that time, so it is unfortunate that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) chooses to not tell the actual facts when he is discussing how this Bill is brought about.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I was saying before I was interrupted by the Minister of Finance, I am looking forward to seeing how the Liberal Caucus will be voting on this Bill. It is interesting on Bill No. 27, which deals with the Fiscal Stabilization—with the funds of the Province of Manitoba, they were spending the money, everyone that got up and spoke on that Bill No. 27 was spending the money and how they would use that \$200 million. They used it several times over, and then when it came down to voting on it they voted against it. It is going to be interesting to see the approach that they use when voting on this Bill.

Like every other Bill, the change, depending on how the individual polls are going, and I guess it will depend on how the polls are going at this stage of the game, if the Liberals want to have an election at this time or what their mood is, so I am not sure when the latest poll results have come out, but I think if the latest poll results have come out they are not quite as anxious for an election as they were a couple of months ago, because they have taken a tumble of quite a few points in the latest polls so they will not be as anxious to cause an election in this province as they were in previous—

* (1540)

One of the other areas that we see in the northern part of the province being affected is how the toll-free service is being affected for people of the outlying areas. The Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) continues to tell us, yes, they are still in place. There have been no changes to how the people are being affected. Yet, when our constituents are calling in and trying to get the service that every citizen of this province is entitled to, they are told that service is no longer in place.

An Honourable Member: Exactly the same policy is in place.

Mr. Harapiak: The Minister of Rural Development says it is exactly the same policy that was in place, but there is always an interpretation of how Bills will be put in place. I think there is some direction from the Cabinet

telling him not to make it as accessible as it was in the past, because the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) has it on tape where he called in and asked to be transferred to a department and they were told that service was no longer in place on a program that was previously supported.

I think the Minister responsible for Rural Development (Mr. Penner) should, rather than giving us a lot of rhetoric, in northern Manitoba and rural Manitoba, they are going to be supporting those remote areas that they should prove it by continuing to give it the same amount of support that we gave it when we were in Government.

I am looking forward to the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) finally getting the proper information and sharing with Manitobans of why they really have cut off that service that the people of northern Manitoba have enjoyed all the years we were in Government. I think it is difficult for people to receive that service, because of their remoteness. At least when they had the toll-free line in place, they were able to call and get the information that was necessary. Now, at this time, they are cutting it off. There has been a lot of talk on decentralization. I think that is a direction that we should be going in—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Finance, on a point of order.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with some reluctance I stand, but there certainly has to be some relevance with respect to this Bill. This is not budget, this is not Interim Supply, this is not the throne speech. This is the Loan Act. Members that have been in this House as long as the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) know fully well that there has to be some relevance with the issues that are brought forward under this Act, under this Bill. They are very specifically within an area of the Manitoba Telephone System where they are requesting additional non-budgetary loan activity and many other areas of the Crown corporations. I would ask him to direct his attention towards the import of Bill No. 34.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Thank you. I would remind the Honourable Member to direct his remarks relevant to the Bill at hand. The purpose of this Act is to provide capital supply to the agencies and organizations listed in the schedules to the Bill. I would ask him to - (interjection)-

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for the Interlake.

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the same point of order, there is no doubt that the question of relevance plays a role in debates in this House, but just to point out to you that the Loan Act that is before us covers many of the areas that the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) has been raising in that capital raised under The Loan Act is for services that are provided by the Manitoba Telephone System

of which a point of order was raised to my Honourable Member from The Pas.

The Manitoba Telephone System is requiring under this Act, \$35 million. As a consequence of that request, their entire operations in terms of capital expenditures are subject to debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I thank the Honourable Member for his comments. The Honourable Member for The Pas has the floor.

Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Deputy Speaker, once again I think that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is being extremely sensitive. I do not think that he listens. He just sits in that House and if he feels like we are not talking exactly about the subject that he wants to, it is not relevant. I was at this moment speaking about the telephone service to people in northern Manitoba, so I want to ask him why he thinks that is not relevant.

If the Minister of Finance wants to get up and speak on that at this time, I would appreciate hearing his words on it. He obviously was not listening to the words that I was saying. He just felt that it was time once again to get up and intrude and cause some mischief as he has been known to do in the last little while. I guess he is extremely sensitive over his Bills and therefore he is sensitive because he was not supposed to bring it forward this day. We said we would deal with it during this week and Wednesday is the day when we normally speak on these Bills. I guess maybe he feels that he should be the House Leader and bring the bills forward when he feels, rather than the negotiations that are taking place between the House Leaders.

I think the program that has been brought forward by Manitoba Telephone dealing with services to Manitoba Telephone System customers is a very positive program. The Community Calling Areas is something that we were looking at when we were in Government. The Member for the Interlake (Mr. Uruski) and the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) went and had meetings throughout the province dealing with that same subject. I have to be honest, they have gone beyond where we were going to when we were dealing with community calling areas. I think that is a move in the right direction.

Looking at the information that was brought forward to us during the Manitoba Telephone System's committee hearings, I was disappointed to see that the communities of Easterville and Grand Rapids are not even on the long-range plans for being brought in for services from The Pas, because The Pas is the area in which the communities of Easterville and Grand Rapids get all their medical needs and most of their shopping, and are all received in The Pas.

It would make sense that these people would have that as a calling area, especially when you look at the map that was given to us by the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System (Mr. Findlay). The community of Easterville would be linked up with the

community of Barrows and Mafeking, which are the same distance from Easterville as The Pas is. So it would make sense to swing that line over and take in the community of The Pas rather than have it going to Barrows and Mafeking with which these communities have no relationship.

I think that the recommendation was made to the Minister when we were in committee and I hope that the Minister has a look at it, and he comes forward with some recommendation to make sure that Grand Rapids and Easterville are connected with The Pas because that is the area that they receive their services from.

One of the other areas we want to receive their funding under this is the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. That is an area that is in need of finances because the housing is one of the areas that is of short supply in northern Manitoba. I know that money has been used for building some new homes and also carrying on with the repairs that are necessary under the existing housing. When we were Government we had ongoing discussions with the Manitoba Metis Federation as to how they would like to see housing needs carried out in those remote communities so that we would have less of the difficulty of collections and some of the other difficulties that the corporation is faced with when they are dealing with housing in northern Manitoba.

I think that some good suggestions came forward during those discussions and we said that we should turn all the existing housing over to a community housing authority and charge the appropriate rent and that rent would stay in the community to make sure the houses are upgraded. Not only would this give the people in the community some ownership of those homes and therefore they would feel more inclined to repair them when the repairs are necessary, but I think that it would also create some jobs in those communities because there is a need for the carpenters, electricians and plumbers who are necessary to keep upgrading those homes.

I think it would make sense to turn those homes over to the community housing authorities. Therefore they would be responsible for their own housing needs. There would be some difficulties in there because a local person would be responsible for the collection of rents, and this sometimes becomes a difficulty in those communities because of the high level of unemployment. But there is a formula in place now for when people are unemployed, their rent is dropped.

I think there would be greater flexibility for a local housing authority to deal with that rather than having to make the application to the person who is responsible for that, and it takes a long time before they can get back to the community and let them know how their rate is affected. It takes quite some time, so if this was handled by the local housing authorities, there would be greater flexibility and the local people would be responsible for that collection of rents and also for carrying out any of the repairs that are required on those homes.

* (1550)

I have said on previous occasions that there was one house that was built by MHRC and CMHC in co-operation with the local community of Easterville where they utilized all local material. That is a direction that should be pursued to a greater degree as well. The use of logs should not be overlooked as well because the logs are plentiful in that northern community. If there was some support given to the local community with equipment and maybe some assistance to bring that in place, a sawmill of some sort, then I think that they could build a lot of the housing because there certainly are a lot of people who are available. The materials are there and most of the housings could be built by the local communities.

There is an example of that in Cormorant where there was a sawmill brought in and there are a few homes that were being built. They are starting to cut the logs for the church which they are going to be building in that community. If people are given the opportunity and there is co-operation with the Department of Natural Resources to give them the necessary permits, and there always has been that co-operation, then the housing needs of Northerners could be met much more efficiently than they are at this time.

One other area that is being affected by this Loan Act is the area of MACC. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation has certainly received a lot of requests for credit in the last little while because the farming community is certainly in difficulty, and I guess once more the goods and services tax is going to be affecting the agricultural community to a great degree.

When you look at some of the areas that the Manitoba agricultural community, the corporation is going to be getting greater calls on, because of the goods and services tax being introduced. When you look and you see how the farming community will be affected by that opposed goods and services tax, it is very clear that the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation is going to get much more demand on it because of the fact that many more farmers are going to be having difficulty in operating because of the increased cost of operating.

When you look at some of the operations that will be affected by the goods and services tax and you see that most of the inputs that are used by the farmers such as seed, feed, fertilizer, which will also be of zero-based, therefore no tax will be paid on these products and no credit will be given to the receivers. However, most of the input of other costs like machinery, fuel, chemicals, will be subject to the goods and services tax. Mr. Deputy Speaker, very clearly it shows that the agricultural community is going to be in much more difficulty than it has been to this time.

I am not sure how much more the agricultural community can withstand because there are many young and existing farmers—there are farms that have been in the family for three or four generations—are at this time finding themselves in a position where they are unable to function any further. Again, the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation is going to be getting many more requests for funds because of the fact that the goods and services tax which is coming forward in 1990 is going to be affecting the farmers' ability to meet the needs of the farmers.

One of the areas that will be taxed is veterinary services. All veterinary services, drugs and equipment will be taxed at 9 percent and full input tax will need to be claimed. I guess that is one of the other areas you look at when you have to have so large an amount of money in there before you can put in a claim. I guess the big corporations again are favoured, because they will have the ability to put in a refund because of their size. They will be able to put in for a refund very quickly. What about the small farmer? How much of a bookkeeping system is he going to have? How much of a bookkeeping system is he going to need in order to survive?

I think the paperwork that is going to be required in order to deal with this goods and services tax is going to be enormous, and once again is going to be a drain on the farming community. The Minister had better look at putting in a little more money under the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation. There is certainly going to be a requirement for it, because the farming community is going to be under much greater stress than it has been up to this time.

(Mr. Gilles Roch, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

I know that the Minister responsible for this Act is a practising farmer. Of course he is not one of the ones who is struggling, maybe he should be talking to some of the people who are struggling, to some of the smaller farmers, farmers who are having great difficulty surviving this time and find out how much more of a need there is going to be for the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation to be involved so this community can survive. As much as they give us a lot of rhetoric that they believe that the agriculture -(interjection)- Does the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) want to make a comment?

As much as this Government would like to say that they are a friend of the farmer, they certainly have not been supporting the farmers when it comes to dealing with the federal Government and the goods and services tax, because the goods and services tax is going to be affected to a great degree. I think that the effect of the goods and services tax is certainly going to be putting a much greater drain on the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, therefore, the Minister should be putting a lot more money in that area.

An Honourable Member: Would you announce exactly how the goods and services tax will apply to the farmer?

Mr. Harapiak: Certainly, in many areas, the fertilizer cost, the machine cost, the fuel cost, are all going to be subjected to the goods and services cost, therefore -(interjection)- How much of a bookkeeping system? The Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner), who is a great defender of the farmers—that is exactly the question I was asking. How much of a bookkeeping system is a small farmer going to have? How often are they going to be able to make an application to have these—they are not going to be able to make an application for a return as often as his operation is going to be making, because his input costs are large enough he will be able to make an application very quickly. I think that he should look at how the small farmers are going to be affected.

There are some other areas in the northern part of the province that are going to be affected to a great degree. I think one of the areas that there is some funding in this area for is the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Corporation. I would hope that the Minister responsible for the Hazardous Waste Corporation is taking the opportunity to—Mr. Acting Speaker, how much more time do I have?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Roch): The Honourable Member has three minutes left.

Mr. Harapiak: Three minutes. One of the areas that the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Corporation is also under is The Loan Act. I would hope the Minister would take the opportunity to travel to northern Manitoba to see what special difficulties those people who operate in northern Manitoba have with that Act, so they would take the opportunity to see how some of those areas will be affected by the operation of this Government.

One of the other areas that I would like to touch on very briefly is the area of the Western Diversification Fund. I do not see any sign of that Western Diversification Fund in northern Manitoba. I know there have been several applications, but maybe the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) could take the opportunity to get up and tell us what has happened to the development in northern Manitoba. Have there been any approvals from the Western Diversification Fund? I know that there is a need for it.

* (1600)

I would hope that he would put forward projects like the Town of The Pas put a project in to have water brought in from Clearwater Lake in order to give the Town of The Pas a clean source of drinking water. I think that is a project that could be supported under the Western Diversification Fund and I think that the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the First Minister, is looking at targeting the constituency of The Pas. I think that if they were able to support the project in the Town of The Pas for bringing a clean source of drinking water to the Town of The Pas then I think they would certainly be gaining a lot of friends in northern Manitoba.—(interjection)—

The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) says that I should get up and support Repap. I have never, ever hesitated to get up and show my support for Repap. I think they are a responsible corporation who is doing a great job in their operations in Wisconsin and in New Brunswick, but I think when it comes down to it they are going to do a responsible job in The Pas. I think that some of the Members of this Government would like to see that development go ahead without a proper environmental hearing. We have never, ever denied that we support it, but we also have said that it has to be a responsible development not just develop it at any cost. So I—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Roch): Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member's time has expired. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): It gives me great pleasure to be able to speak to this Bill, that being Bill

No. 34, The Loan Act. In reviewing this Bill, the one item that certainly appeals to me as a citizen of Manitoba, is the Manitoba Business Start. I think that is an excellent initiative being taken by this Government to provide funding for small business people who are willing to start a small venture in the Province of Manitoba.

I would have been even more appreciative if this Government would have provided some greater incentive to small businesses to relocate in rural Manitoba. I think we have to be more cognizant of the fact that there are a lot of small entrepreneurs in rural Manitoba who probably desire to be able to start a small enterprise but probably do not know how to do it. A good media campaign to the various sectors of rural Manitoba would certainly be an appropriate way of doing that.

The other thing that bothers me about these loans which we offer to the various corporations, is that I find they are given to them and they are not accountable. I will just give you an example. During the Lyon years—and this is a pamphlet which was produced by then Premier Sterling Lyon, budget debate of May 1981, Economic Development in Manitoba. I will just cite you a few examples of the mismanagement of the previous Tory Government in respect to funding to businesses.

I am quite confident that a lot of people will remember Versatile, which received \$26 million and they were supposed to have 600 jobs over five years. My question being: was there any accountability for these jobs? I am not belittling them for having the \$26 million but was the Province of Manitoba, the taxpayers of Manitoba, assured that these jobs were in place? I doubt it very much.

I will give you another one. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), I am quite confident, is fully aware of the Superior Bus Manufacturing Plant in his own home town. They were given \$4 million. They were guaranteed 125 jobs. The plant is now gone, it is defunct. The taxpayers of Manitoba are out \$4 million out of their tax dollars. I think that is simply irresponsible. I could go on further and I will cite another company, a few more, just so that I can solidify this irresponsible type of spending that the previous Tory administration had undertaken. Victoria Leather, which is now of course defunct, went bankrupt, was given \$515,850 and they were to provide 90 jobs. The company is gone. Wescott Fashions, another one—\$1,398,200.00. They were given a loan of that money and now it is gone.

Let us go down to Portage la Prairie, Mr. Acting Speaker. B and B Foods in Portage la Prairie were given \$500,000 and there were supposedly guaranteed from 12 to 18 new jobs. B and B Foods are no longer in existence. Woodstone Foods in Portage la Prairie—\$1.25 million—15 new jobs. Again, it is gone. So I can go down and list all of the irresponsible spending of the previous Tory administration when they were in a majority situation. I find that very, very irresponsible.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Roch): Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Finance, on a point of order.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Speaker, I ask for forgiveness from the Member opposite. I was not listening to all his remarks, but the last few minutes I have been and I cannot trace any lineage whatsoever as to the import of the Bill plus what the Member is saying. He is totally off Bill 34. The relevancy of his comments comes nowhere close to the main portion of that Bill and I ask him to be called to order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): The Minister said it himself when he said that he had not been listening to the full speech. In fact, it was when the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) suggested that he call him to relevancy that he had stood up shortly after that point. I would suggest, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) should maybe listen to all of his remarks and then make comment of that sort if in fact he was listening to it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Roch): I thank all Honourable Members for their advice. I would like to remind all Honourable Members that our Rules state the debate must be directly relevant to the question under consideration. The question under consideration is the principle of Bill No. 34. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

Mr. Mandrake: I was addressing the Manitoba Business Start and I was addressing that in a far more global extent than probably the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) would have preferred me to do. I will go on further, Mr. Acting Speaker. I just want to go on to other aspects of this Bill that I find rather intriguing.

I was just talking to a manufacturer on Sunday when I was at the officers' mess at CFB Winnipeg, and he said that with regard to industrial opportunities that this Government does not seem to have the foresight to promote our companies—to promote companies like Standard Aero, for example, Bristol. There are other huge companies in Manitoba that are flourishing. They are making a great big impact in our province, but yet we do not have the opportunity to go past the Manitoba border. I think it would be incumbent upon this Government to do some lobbying on behalf of these companies, not only in the Province of Manitoba, in the United States and across the seas.

Again, Mr. Acting Speaker, I am very happy that the Vision Capital Fund is going to be receiving \$30 million, and I am very, very pleased with that—industrial opportunities again. There are certain aspects of this bill that certainly I could absolutely live with. They are certainly showing initiatives. The Federal-Provincial Water and Sewage Agreement—it is an agreement, and I would have hoped that we would have probably seen a greater, more aggressive type of—something put on the agenda whereby this type of water and sewage agreement would have an impact in our rural communities.

The Tourism Agreement, albeit \$6,850,000—that is very good because Manitoba is certainly going to be suffering very, very severely because of the VIA Rail cuts so therefore we have to be very aggressive in our tourism industry to tell the people down south and north, east and west that, sure, Manitoba is a healthy place to come to. We are a friendly province. We are a province that will receive people from all over the world.

Of course the other one too is the Communities Economic Development Fund with loans of 3 million and five. I think that is a respectable initiative and I certainly will not condemn the Government for that.

* (1610)

The other aspects of this Bill, Mr. Acting Speaker, is appreciated, but I would have thought that maybe, just in case, the co-operative loans and loans guarantee boards would have received probably a little more capital funding than what they have—is a \$1 million. The co-operatives—and I know this being a person from Saskatchewan, we have very, very, strong co-operatives in that province, and I would have hoped that this Government would have seen the advantages of a co-operative and probably provide them with, if at all possible—dip into that Stabilization Fund that they have now passed, and offered a little bit more money to them.

Mr. Acting Speaker, as I said before, I think when it comes down to small businesses, if we are going to offer small businesses a loan guarantee or any kind of funding, that each and every company that receives this funding must be held accountable either by a financial statement or visitation by the appropriate type of ministry to make sure that, if they promise to inject X number of jobs into their manufacturing or whatever the case may be, that in fact that is done.

So in all sincerity, I have no problems with this Bill. The only thing is that, again, I would like to see accountability—accountability in respect that whenever we do expend any type of money that we know exactly where that money is going. I think it is so vitally important, particularly today when money is short, to be borrowing the money and paying such horrendous interest charges on this money, I do not think it is a very advisable thing to do. I am sure that the Government will take this into consideration and make sure that, if they do loan out any money to anybody, it will be accountable.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I recall the comments made by the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) with regard to the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation. Ten million dollars, and if my information is correct, this year alone I think there is a decrease, and the total revenue for the farmer is down by 34 percent. That is a very shocking statistic—very, very shocking. Obviously, in a logical sense, I would have expected a little bit more funding in the Agricultural Credit Corporation because our farmers are the backbone of this province. Our farmers need the support of our provincial Governments to survive, \$10 million, I honestly feel is a start, no question about it, it is a start. I think the Government should be looking at that from a greater perspective.

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(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

The other one is the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. I am happy they are addressing that issue, because we are now entering a stage in our life where we are depleting our ozone layer. We are completely destroying the surface of our land by depositing all kinds of hazardous material. We are being very, very irresponsible. I think this initiative by the Government is certainly in the right direction. No question about it. The only thing is, it has to have good management.

The Manitoba Development Corporation—again, I am pleased to see they have allocated some funding for them. I think it is a very, very valuable corporation that certainly can provide assistance to the people of Manitoba. The Energy Conservation Loan Fund Act certainly has some merit and I would not dispute that. Venture Manitoba Tours Limited I would venture to say is that—is there any accountability in that expenditure?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in all essence as I said before and I will say it again, we have to have accountability whenever we have an expenditure either to a small business or a large business. I feel we have long passed the days whereby we can afford to expend X thousands of dollars or millions of dollars and not have accountability. I think this is so important with the very, very tight budgets that we are under today.

With that comment, I certainly wanted to place my views and my points on the table on this Bill, and hopefully it will meet the requirements. I am sure there are other people who want to talk to this Bill.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is indeed an honour to speak on The Loan Act at second reading, Bill 34, before the Legislature. The Loan Act is an opportunity to speak on general matters of Government performance, because the borrowing requirements in The Loan Act are by its very definition a reflection of the total Government operations, particularly those areas that are impacted under The Loan Act of Manitoba.

I would want to start off then on The Loan Act speaking about the health care system of Manitoba, a system that is in a state of absolute confrontation and chaos, absolute confrontation and chaos. Last spring there were thousands of nurses out in front of our building, the Legislative Building of Manitoba. The Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) displays the arrogance towards the health care professionals by his reaction.

An Honourable Member: I am airing my disgust for the errors and inaccuracies.

Mr. Doer: I think they are whistling past the health care system graveyard they are producing because - (interjection)- we voted for tax decreases. The Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch)—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

* (1620)

Mr. Doer: I do not know whether the Members have gone back to Rules of procedures school yet or not

but if you defeat a finance Bill the whole budget goes down. The whole budget goes down. The tax decreases go down, it is very simple. You cannot cherry pick Bills. I know the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) is very nervous, but when the appropriate time comes your constituents will be glad to hear you did not just vote against the tax decreases once in the budget, you voted against them twice, and you will probably vote against it at third reading. So it is three times and that is good because the more you vote against it the more out of touch it shows that the Members are. We will see there is a day of reckoning for all of us.

An Honourable Member: When is that?

Mr. Doer: Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are in an interesting stage in our political lives here, a year and a half after the last election and approaching that festive season of—

An Honourable Member: Two and a half years before the next one.

Mr. Doer: You never know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how the universe will unfold. One day somebody is sitting in the benches here, the next day they are sitting over there like ping-pong balls.- (interjection)- That is right, there is a difference.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr. Doer: There is a difference because in the case of our move from one side of the House, the people decided. The case for the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), nobody decided, just he did. I believe—he does not have a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know that and I know that.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is a very serious reflection on the Chair to have to say, before I even said anything, that I did not have a point of order. I think the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) should apologize to the Chair for that remark, but I do have a point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: What is the point of order?

Mr. Roch: My point of order is that the Member is not making comments which are relevant to the Bill. If he was being relevant, he would mention the fact that he wanted to run as a Tory in River Heights in 1986.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Thank you for that advice Honourable Member. The Honourable Member from Concordia has the floor.

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Mr. Doer: I love this.- (interjection)- What is that? Well, everybody is allowed to commit hari-kari on their own. As I said before, I knew the Member did not have a point of order. The Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) must be getting a little antsy. If I can please proceed on The Loan Act. Can you please call the Member to order?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I do not like any feuding at all with that whole October group.- (interjection)- What is that? Oh, he was, was he? Who else? No, I had better not. Let us get on with The Loan Act. I always like the informer pointing fingers at the old gang there.

On with the health care situation. I had said before that we are in a very serious situation and now that we are out of the usual journalistic debate that goes on in Question Period, I hope the Members in the Government benches pay attention to what is going on.

You have got a proposal on the table that is not just the usual collective bargaining proposal, it is a radical change from the manner in which patients receive their services from the doctors that work and live in our communities. It is not just a disagreement about whether the settlement will be 2 percent or 4 percent, which we used to have and that should take place in a very firm way. We have no problem with that, but you are radically changing the way in which the people of Manitoba receive their health care services, and you are doing it through a collective bargaining process, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I do not think you understand.

I do not believe the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has cleared these issues through his Cabinet and explained to his Cabinet what the health care ramifications will be. Do you want a situation on December 1 that a patient in Portage la Prairie cannot go to a doctor in Portage la Prairie because that doctor is now 2 percent above where he was last year? Either that patient in Portage la Prairie will have to go to a different doctor or maybe go to a doctor in Winnipeg, or maybe not go to a doctor at all because the cap has come in place. Do you want people to be assessed on the basis of a cap and not on the basis of health care? Has this Cabinet really had it explained to it, the ramifications of the proposal from the Minister of Health? Sure, be tough in bargaining, be firm. Look at creative ways to reform our health care system. Look at ways of dealing with the rising costs of the health care system and you will get support from our Party, but do not put in unilateral proposals that will change the relationship and the ability of patients to receive their health care services from their Government and their doctors in their own community where they live and work.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do not believe that this is your normal collective bargaining process where you

disagree with 2 percent or 4 percent or whatever. We believe that this is a radical change, a radical change in the way in which citizens access their health care system. I do not know whether Cabinet has looked at this proposal, and I do not know whether they have looked at the health care ramifications, but we do not want a few doctors in Thompson not to be able to see patients because they are over the cap on December 1. We do not want specialists to be discouraged from coming to this province, and we are seeing more and more of that under the Conservative regime. We do not want a health care system that uses as one of its criteria for treatment of patients and citizens in our province the criteria of the billing system, because that goes against the universal medicare system and universal access that we have known, developed and implemented in our province.

I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and through you to the Government front bench and the Treasury Benches of the whole Government, get this proposal back off the table from the Minister of Health. He does not understand what it will mean for patients. He does not understand what it is going to mean for our Medicare system. He will be supported by us if he goes to the table in a firm way, and yes, negotiations are always tough about whether you can have a 2 percent settlement or a 4 percent settlement or a 5 percent settlement. We will expect those negotiations to be tough, and we will expect the Minister of Health to be firm on behalf of the taxpayers of Manitoba. We will expect the doctors to be firm on behalf of their membership.

If do not they arrive at a dispute, there is a way in which that dispute can be resolved. They can go to final offer selection, but the hypocrisy of the Liberals to talk about arbitration today and then last week talk about voting with the Tories on final offer selection is beyond comprehension. The Liberal Leader may not be sharing the correspondence she has received from the Manitoba Medical Association on arbitration. I bet you she has not shared it with the Liberal Members of her caucus, because the Manitoba Medical Association is urging the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to not withdraw and repeal The Labour Relations Act on final offer selection. The Manitoba Medical Association, through their leadership, has publicly asked all three political Parties to vote against the repeal of The Labour Relations Act. I wonder if the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) knew that. Were you aware of that? I know you were not.

You know, today, to sit in the House and talk about arbitration and wring your hands about a doctors strike when you are participating with the Tories against the advice of the Manitoba Medical Association to repeal the final offer selection, I would suggest puts you in a very hypocritical position.

* (1630)

Back to the health care system, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is asking for a considerable amount of money in his major Estimates and we have as I say chaos in the health care system.

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We have a situation now where we have patients stacked up in the hallways of our buildings while the Member for Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson)—I would like to take her on a tour of Concordia Hospital tomorrow. Any day you go there the patients are stacked right up in the hallways, they are stacked into the overflow rooms, and we have the spectacle of 85 vacant beds at Deer Lodge Hospital, beds that we built. First, we are told that we froze the beds and then we see that the beds are not only built, but they are empty. I wonder how the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) squares that circle with the people of Manitoba. I do not think he can.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the health care system is in a state of chaos. If you look at the patients, it is chaos. If you look at the health care professionals—doctors, nurses, other health care workers—it is confrontation and chaos. If you look at the senior administration in the Minister's department, it is chaos. He is running a department that does not have any senior management in it. He has no Acting Deputy Minister or no Deputy Minister, ADM, that when Mr. McLean left in March, we do not know the circumstances around that resignation or retirement. We have just lost last week the doctor, Dr. Sharon Macdonald, a competent, capable person, and I hope it is not because the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) spoke against that individual before when he was the Opposition Critic. We have lost a tremendously competent and capable individual as the Assistant Deputy Minister of Health, as a doctor in the senior part of that administration. We have no doctor now at the ADM level of the Department of Health.

We have lost the director of Research and Planning, who has left his department. The executive director of Mental Health Services has left the department, is now a psychiatrist, as the Minister pointed out, in another area outside of the direct Department of Health. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not know how many other people he has in acting capacity in various places in the department. The rumours are that everybody in the department is acting. Is it because the Minister cannot get somebody to work for him?

There were a lot of comments about the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson), and I did not like what happened with the executive director of child care. I thought that was a terrible decision and I thought it was very inappropriate. We still believe that person should be in a senior capacity in her department. She brought in a structure recently that showed a lot more stability of planning and management skills in some areas at the senior management levels, with the four ADMs and the people in those spots, than you could even begin to detect in the Ministry of Health.

It is kind of ironic, because the Minister of Health is able to bluster and bluff in this Legislative Chamber and he is perceived to be competent. The Minister of Family Services gets into a few scraps and she gets a different kind of ring to her ministerial reputation. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no comparison. I will find criticism and fault with the Department of Family Services on policy issues, but there is no comparison between the Ministry of Health and any other department in Government in terms of the chaos going on there. Is anybody watching the Minister of Health?

I know he is a great colleague of everybody, and I know they love it when he rebuts certain things and goes back to 1943 of what some other Party did. I know he is a great debater and I respect his debating abilities, but his department is a house of cards with no cards left. He has nothing left. It is falling like a house of cards, and I suspect because the Minister is strong in his personality and capable in his debate that nobody in the Cabinet is worried about him, because I imagine he is a hard guy to take on in Cabinet. He is tougher to take on in the House, I have to admit that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you ask a question of the Minister of Health you get a certain rebound to it, you get a little bit of—it is an enjoyable exercise. The Minister of Health is a capable debater, but you strip all that rhetoric aside from all of us, and there is chaos in his department. He has no ADMs in a full capacity. It has been eight, nine months since Don McLean left; he has not been replaced. Sharon Macdonald, the ADM, has left. He has no director of planning, he has no executive director of Mental Health Services in a couple of weeks. I hope somebody over there is listening, because I hope somebody is keeping score. I hope somebody is keeping him accountable. I do not think that is happening, and that is why I ask the questions to the Premier today, because I do not think anybody is holding the Minister of Health accountable in Cabinet or in the relationship between the Premier and the Minister of Health.

I hope the Government is not intimidated by the Minister's feisty personality from asking some very serious questions, because it does relate to each and every one of your constituencies. There are people I believe that will be very negatively affected in the health care system by the house of cards that is tumbling down, that is being stewarded by the Minister of Health.

We had some early signs of this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You can see certain signs and symptoms of a Minister's performance: the gag order that went into the Department of Health. No other ministry has put in a gag order like the Minister of Health. That was a sign that somebody likes to have pretty deep control over what is going on in his department.

An Honourable Member: Only the Finance Minister.

Mr. Doer: Only the MDS, but no other Minister has put a gag order in the Department of Health, that MLAs could not look at basic literature, basic policy ideas. It had to come through him first.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, then we heard about the gag orders in the ambulance review. I think the Minister has done some positive work in ambulance; I do not want to be all negative, but again there is a strong belief in that department that no one should talk or be seen to be talking to anybody about what is going on in the department because the wrath of the Minister, the well known wrath of the Minister, will come down upon your career and your personage.

Then we move into health care to a very simple issue, pay equity. Now one has to ask oneself if there has

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been about 15 Cabinet Ministers that have been involved in pay equity—there have been Ministers responsible for Workers Compensation, there have been Ministers responsible for Hydro, telephone, Education, Ministers responsible in the old Government and the new Government and the Civil Service, Ministers responsible for Education in the old Government and this Government, on and on and on.

There are probably about 15 Cabinet Ministers involved in pay equity. Only one department of Government and one Minister could not come to a settlement on pay equity. Who is that person? Who is that one Minister, I ask? Oh, oh, it is the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), again. The same person that had the demonstration of nurses in front of the building is the same person that could not come to a settlement on pay equity.

Now we have to ask ourselves: is the Minister of Health the only one right when he says no to the settlement or were the other 15 Ministers, through two different Governments, right when they came to a settlement and correct when they came to a settlement with the health care workers, the nurses, the 86 percent of people that are women working under the health care system and under the Ministry of Health?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is the Minister of Health. I think he believes that pay equity is a foreign concept to the public service and the Manitoba situation. I think he believes in a different system of pay equity than what we have in legislation. He took a settlement that was negotiated between 22 employers, 22 boards of directors, 22 sets of citizens, 22 sets of administrators, 22 sets of collective negotiators from the employers side, professionals, and 10 unions with 10 boards of directors, 10 sets of membership, 10 sets of professional negotiators, he took that settlement and said: no, I am not going to settle that. I am the Minister of Health and I am going to deny it. So who again is correct, the Minister of Health or the 22 administrators? Is it the Minister of Health and the 22 board of directors? Whose side are you on? I would ask the Government this.

Do you want to listen to the volunteers, the nurses, and the doctors on this settlement or do you want to listen to one intransigent, stubborn, anti-employee individual? That is right, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the side I am on and the side our caucus is on is the 86 percent of people that are women in our health care system that are working under tough, tough conditions, moving patients, seeing patients, changing beds, moving beds around. We are on the side of the health care workers that is why we brought in pay equity legislation.

* (1640)

This Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is bullying the health care workers, just like he is now with the doctors, just like he is not getting nurses associations on the Health Care Advisory Committee. He is an absolute dictator when it comes to his department and I am telling you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of the Members Opposite better start listening to their own constituents.

What are they saying in the Pine Falls Hospital, to the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik)? What are they saying in the Beausejour Health Care facilities? What are they saying in the Portage Health Care System? What are they saying in the Neepawa Nursing Home? What are they saying in the St. Amant Centre? I ask you, ask your constituents what they are saying? Do you believe all those thousands of women working in those fields or do you believe the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)?

That is right, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 86 percent of the people in the health care system are women, 86 percent. Manitoba with one Minister has taken the leadership torch and fumbled it. We were the leaders in the country. We had a system that came in this country that was copied by Ontario, copied by New Brunswick, copied by Nova Scotia, copied by Prince Edward Island and it was the model for the rest of the country. The rest of the country is now going to go ahead of the Government and the people of Manitoba because of this dictator who treats employees like they are chattels instead of human beings working on behalf of Manitoba patients and Manitoba health care. We have a totalitarian dictator in the Ministry of Health and you are going to start paying for it.

You are going to start paying for it because people do not trust you on health care to begin with. When you start to see this unilateral proposal with doctors and combine that with nurses and look at the pay equity system, you come to the inescapable conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the health care system is in chaos. The health care system is in chaos. The largest department in Government has no senior managers, has no partnership with nurses, has no partnership with doctors, has no partnership with nurses aides and has no partnership with the 86 percent who are women. It has no partnership with patients who are stacked up in hallways while beds remain vacant.

It takes time in the life of a Government for people to see what they are actually doing and what it means to them in their daily life. I believe that people are going to start to see the chaos and the totalitarian unilateral dictatorship of the Department of Health, the absolute chaos with the lack of any senior management; the total disregard and partnership for people, employees and patients is going to start wreaking political havoc, as it should on the Government, because the accountability and the buck stops right there, right in the Cabinet.

Nobody is taking on the feisty Minister of Health. The only one who takes him on are those of us who want to ask questions of the House. People of the Cabinet and the caucus, they do not take him on. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) does not take him on. They are all scared of him. They are all scared of him because he is a tough little guy. Being tough does not mean you are competent. Scaring away your senior staff does not mean you are running a good department. Scaring away the administrators on pay equity does not mean you care about women and the health care professionals.

I suggest to some people around here there had better be somebody with a backbone to start taking

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on the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), because if nobody has a backbone, I suggest to you, you are on a very slippery slope. You may not know you are on it now. You are on a very slippery slope, because you do not have a lot of credibility in health care to begin with. You fought Medicare along with the Liberals in Saskatchewan for years -(interjection)- I had to do that, Jim.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Deputy Speaker, while I ask you about FOS I might reiterate to the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) that the MMA supports final offer selection. The Member for Fort Rouge should know—and I do not know whether the Leader of the Party shared the letters we got from the MMA, but I think I will send copies to the Liberal Caucus because I do not think they got copies from the MMA. We have nobody with any backbone over there.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Concordia.

Mr. Doer: The Premier would not even come and meet with Lowell Murray today. He signs a communique and sends the rest of us in to meet with Lowell Murray. No wonder he has trouble dealing with the Minister of Health. What a bizarre situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Here we are, the Premier goes in to meet with big Brian at the Conference of the First Ministers' meeting and all Manitobans supported the Premier in terms of the changes to the Meech Lake Accord. No problem.

I was very disappointed that the Premier did not come back at the Prime Minister on his comments of the GST, on his comments on the base closings, on the VIA Rail closings. We sat around like Conservative apologists by not taking on the Prime Minister at that First Ministers' meeting. Then they go behind closed doors, and you know no one knows what goes on behind those closed doors, as the old country and western song goes.

They come out with this communique, and the Premier says, well, we got everything we wanted, did not get a thing. You did not get VIA Rail reversed, did not get the base closing reversed. We did not get the GST dropped. We did not get anything, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We did not get a thing. What did we get? We got a communique that said we would have a meeting with Lowell Murray. We get a senator going around talking about senate reform. Some of us want to get rid of those senators, but we will have a senator going around about senate reform. The Premier of the province agrees to the communique.

An Honourable Member: You voted with us, not to defeat us.

Mr. Doer: You have to know the issues to vote against it. We believe that there will be a time when the health care chaos is obvious to the citizens of Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier of the province would not even agree to meet with Lowell Murray after

he signs the communique. How is that going to fit with good federal-provincial relations? How is he going to go back to the Prime Minister and say reverse the base decision? He signs the communique and then he will not even follow through on it. What a spectacle, what a disgrace, what a total disgrace, when the Premier of the province signs a communique and will not even follow through on what the communique said, for him to meet with the senator the Prime Minister has put in charge of this mission.

I did not agree with the communique to begin with. I thought it was a wishy-washy proposal to solve Meech Lake, and I did not think it was going to go anywhere. I said that that same day, unlike the Premier who stated that this was getting everything we wanted.

Then for the Premier to not agree to meet with the senator, as he agreed to in the communique, I believe is a horrible signal for federal-provincial relations. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is not the Minister. It is not the Premier and his wealthy friends who are going to get their nose bloodied when federal-provincial relations fail. It is all those citizens across all our communities that rely on good, intelligent, federal-provincial relations and it is a real shame.

In speaking to The Loan Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we did talk about the health care system a bit and the -(interjection)- Well, the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) raises it, borrowing for health care purposes in capital funding and health care is an important part of The Loan Act, as the Member well knows.

Another very important part of this Act is of course the economic situation in the province. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Members opposite think that private investment is increasing in this province. The only place it is increasing is in bailiff companies and in moving vans, one-way moving vans, going out of the province. Those are the only places there is an increase in capital investment.- (interjection)-

The Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) is going to need the Premier's decentralization program to go to his community times three just to make up for the loss of jobs in his own community.- (interjection)- Of course not, I think jobs should go to Portage la Prairie to make up for the decimation of their federal cousins in terms of the cutbacks that have taken place in that community. I said jobs not people, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We will see whether there are jobs or people attacked when the final announcement comes along.

An Honourable Member: The base is not closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the naive Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) says the base is not closing.

An Honourable Member: Time will tell.

* (1650)

Mr. Doer: We will see, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I suspect that is the latest damage control strategy when you

cannot fight and when you cannot win you say it is not going to happen and hope the election is called before it takes place. It is a nice strategy, but you are not fooling anybody. You really seriously try that line at Portage la Prairie, you really try to tell people that?

An Honourable Member: Ask the military people at the base.

Mr. Doer: I have asked the military people at the base, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they think it is closing. I have asked the support staff for the base, and they think it is closing.

An Honourable Member: Now you know

Mr. Doer: They will believe that the base is not closing when the Minister responsible, the Honourable McKnight, reverses his position publicly and gives a position that indeed the base is going to stay open.

Let us look at the economy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If you drive down Pembina Highway, if you drive down another major street in the city, you do not need Stats Canada results to know what is going on in this economy: for sale, foreclosed, for rent.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

That is the Tory -(interjection)- That is right. That is more Mayor Norrie and the Planning Committee at City Council's fault, south Portage should have been given much more money and support and I am not sure I can blame that on the Tories. The federal Tories, yes, but not the—most of the other things I will blame on them.

An Honourable Member: A Tory is a Tory.

Mr. Doer: That is absolutely right, a Tory is a Tory is a Tory. Mr. Speaker, the economy of this province—

An Honourable Member: Are you going to say you are as incompetent as Howard Pawley?

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, you know the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery), the honourable black cloud over my head everyday Member for Portage la Prairie, should be very careful.

Going on to the economy, there is absolutely no economic strategy that this Government has in place whatsoever. They are totally devoid of any economic ideas. They have the old line Party's position on economic development, the trickle down theory, Mr. Speaker.

An Honourable Member: Wrong.

Mr. Doer: The Member says, wrong. A friend of mine just lost his business the other day. The economy is going down and down and down. Bankruptcies, closings, rationalizations—and these people supported a Free Trade Agreement, a Free Trade Agreement that is driving companies out of Winnipeg and Manitoba to eastern Canada and down to the United States.

The Member shakes his head. Look at Ogilvies, where did it go? It went to Midland, Ontario. Where did all the jobs go in the brewing industry? They go to downtown Toronto. I was talking to some of my counterparts in the last couple of days and the economy is booming in Toronto. You know why it is booming in Toronto? The federal Government and the Free Trade Agreement. The agricultural processing industry is going more and more to central Ontario than it is to western Canada, again under the Free Trade Agreement.

There is nobody over there watching this. It is sort of the "don't worry, be happy" approach. This group has supported free trade and now it is being blindsided in free trade and it does not want to admit it. It does not have a strategy to deal with it. It has the sort of "well, it is going to be better for us" kind of approach, the sort of Canadian Chamber of Commerce approach, not a Winnipeg citizens approach in terms of what is happening.

I suggest the Members opposite should take a very heartfelt soul-filled look at what is going on in the economic development. I do not know whether or not they do any soul-searching over there, but you have made a big mistake supporting free trade. You have made a really big mistake.—(interjection)—I beg your pardon. The Members opposite again betray their understanding of the Free Trade Agreement. I would ask Members opposite to look very seriously at the balance of payments for Canada. They will see that before Free Trade it was about \$26 billion.

The first year of the Free Trade Agreement is not over yet, but I suggest to Members opposite the balance of payments both in Manitoba and nationally will be radically changed. I will bet you, Mr. Speaker, that when we look at the whole area of balance of payments, in the first year of the Free Trade Agreement it will be under \$13 billion. That means we have had a 50 percent reduction in the balance of payments in terms of Canada's trade with the United States in 12 months. In 12 months we will have a 50 percent reduction in free trade.

How much more evidence do the Members opposite have to have in terms of jobs and our economy and our opportunity to know that they are on the wrong side of the issue? A \$26 billion surplus with the United States before free trade. It is almost like George Bush—before George Bush wall, after George Bush no wall. Is it not very simple? Before free trade \$26 billion surplus, after free trade under \$13 billion surplus. Who is winning? Who is losing? Can you not count? Have you not looked? Does the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) bring you back numbers to show you the truth, or do you just score on this ideological rhetoric that it is good for us because it is a great deal?

If there is no bottom line over there, no wonder we are in such trouble. If you do not keep score, if nobody keeps score, how do you know whether we are winning or losing on the deal. If our balance of payments had gone up, then indeed I would say, well, maybe it is working a lot better than we had predicted.

Okay, maybe we were wrong. If our UIC had not been touched maybe we were wrong. If our senior citizens

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pens in terms of a clawback had not been touched, maybe we were wrong. If our regional development programs had not been cut, maybe we had been wrong, but let us look at the score card; balance of payments, down; regional development programs, down; UIC programs, down; unemployment in Manitoba, up; the number of people leaving the province, up; the number of people working in the workforce, down 7,000 less people in October. Is that the size of Neepawa, I had asked the Deputy Premier? -(interjection)-

The Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), if anybody should be quiet on this debate about losing population it should be the Member for Portage la Prairie. He has lost Campbell Soup—

An Honourable Member: And we have the old plant.

Mr. Doer: You have nothing. This man has nothing; he has a legacy of disasters. I felt sorry for him when Dorothy Dobbie was lecturing us on the bus. I supported the Member for Portage on that point. Mr. Speaker, he has lost his base, he has lost his major employer, his Campbell Soup plant. Mr. Speaker, he is whistling past the proverbial graveyard because the score card is negative.- (interjection)- Well, Mr. Speaker, the Member—I would not want to put my house against his house because the Tories are cutting—

An Honourable Member: I said election.

Mr. Doer: Oh, okay. The Tories are cutting Concordia Hospital as well. It is these provincial Tories that are wreaking havoc in my constituency, not the federal Tories. They are doing that too, I guess, with VIA Rail and everything else, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, we are only beginning to talk about this Loan Act.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member's time has expired.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Thompson, on a point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): As Leader, the Leader of the New Democratic Party would have unlimited time. Our rules do not require notice in terms of Leaders having unlimited time. I just wanted to draw that to your attention. I am not sure if the Member does have further comments, but our rules are fairly clear in terms of that.

Rule 33 and 33(1)(c) which indicates that the Leader of a recognized Party is allowed to have more than 40 minutes, notice is not required other than to give unlimited time to another speaker who is the designate of the Leader.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) is quite correct. According to our rules

the Honourable Member for Concordia does have unlimited time on that Bill. I was of the opinion the Honourable Member for Concordia was winding down his remarks. The Honourable Member for Concordia.

Mr. Doer: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will continue on my point. I think the precedent is very important to establish.

Mr. Speaker: Oh, it is five o'clock.

Mr. Doer: Okay, thank you.

* (1700)

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5:00 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Hour. This matter will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Concordia.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

RES. NO. 25—IMMIGRATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), Resolution No. 25, Immigration and Human Rights, the Honourable Member for Inkster.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), that

WHEREAS Manitoba is a multicultural province which has relied on immigration for vitality and growth; and

WHEREAS Canada actively encourages people from other lands to settle here; and

WHEREAS Canada and Manitoba must rely on immigration to promote labour force stability, specifically in those sectors of our economy where there are critical worker shortages; and

WHEREAS an August 1988 deportation has highlighted an immigration issue which has been interpreted as discriminatory; namely, third parties recruiting overseas have implied that marital status is a criterion for admission to Canada; and

WHEREAS Sally Espineli, who lived in Manitoba for eight years, was intentionally misled to misrepresent her marital status in order to gain admission to Canada; and

WHEREAS immigration officials either failed to detect that misleading information had been given to her, or chose to ignore that knowledge; and

WHEREAS these immigrants have built new lives in Canada, enriched our culture, and made significant economic contributions, but live in fear of deportation; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Employment and Immigration authorized over 10,000 ministerial permits in 1988 on compassionate grounds.

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge that the Government of Canada immediately initiate procedures which would alert immigration officials to potential abuses of the type experienced by Sally Espineli and others; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Government of Canada to look at granting immunity from deportation to those immigrants who felt compelled, by reasons beyond their control, to misrepresent their marital status in order to gain admission to Canada on the basis of that misrepresentation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Minister of Employment and Immigration to grant Sally Espineli consent to return; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Assembly be directed to send copies of this Resolution to the Minister of Employment and Immigration, the Solicitor General, and the Prime Minister of Canada.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Lamoureux: Every year thousands of new immigrants come to Canada for many different reasons. In general, they believe Canada will provide them with freedom and opportunities. Canada's immigration policy allows for a limited number of immigrants each year. Thousands of other potential immigrants are turned away every year. With this in mind, one should be able to appreciate the real desire of many to try and gain entry to our country. Canadian business has always played a major role in immigration. Federal and provincial Governments respond to industries' need for workers by recruiting overseas. While this is generally a desirable way of bringing workers to Canada, it does have its problems.

Some businesses prefer to recruit specific types of workers to fill jobs that they have to offer. Why is that, Mr. Speaker? Well, I have been told by some that a single person often works harder for a company because they would likely feel most comfortable at work since, at least for the first while, their work would be their life. A married person with a family would have commitments outside of work. Whatever the reasons are or were, the fact remains that there are biases in the recruitment of workers abroad.

For many outside of Canada, a job in Canada means hope and prosperity. When recruiters such as representatives of the garment industry went around offering even a hint of a job, many prospective employees would have felt compelled to fit what he or she perceived would be in his or her best interest in order to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, real or not, discrimination was perceived by many who wanted to gain entry to Canada, and that is the bottom line. I have talked to many who have perceived this type of discrimination. My resolution deals in part with the specific case, that case, of course, being the one of Sally Espineli.

In my opinion, when Sally Espineli applied to come to Canada, she was discriminated against. If she had

said that she was married, she would not have been able to come to Canada because she believed, like hundreds of others, that industry recruiters were looking for single women for this particular type of employment. Sally feared her marital status would jeopardize her opportunity for employment here in Canada. Like many others who wanted to come to our country, she felt she had to say that she was single. In her mind there was no doubt.

I would like to give you some background about Sally. She was deported to the Philippines in August of last year. Prior to her deportation, Sally had led a very productive life here in Manitoba for eight years. She had never committed a crime and had never relied on any type of social assistance. Rather, while living in Manitoba, she had contributed to our society in a very positive fashion. Like many other immigrants of the time, Sally came to our province to fill a position in our garment industry that could not be filled otherwise. Manitobans would not have a garment industry today that employs over 8,000 men and women directly if it were not for people like Sally Espineli.

Mr. Speaker, over the weekend I spoke to Sally, and I would like to relay some of the conversation that the two of us had. Sally now lives with and is supported entirely by her sister. She works part time for her sister in a small store. In Canada, Sally was completely independent, working for the St. Norbert Nursing Home in the Manitoba Home Care Services, as she is interested in working with the seniors of all societies. The work she enjoys she is being discriminated against in the Philippines, as once you have reached the age of 40 in the Philippines, hospitals will no longer employ you, or the likelihood of you ever gaining employment in that field are very, very rare.

Unfortunately, Sally is now completely dependent on her sister. Let me ask you and my colleagues in the Chamber if that is fair. To top it all off, the reason why she was deported was because she was married in coming to Canada. As it stands right now, she does not live with her husband, and she has never lived with her husband since being deported back to the Philippines. At the time it was a marriage on contract, and there is no love, there is no marriage back in the Philippines, but that is the reason why she has been deported back to the Philippines.

Mr. Speaker, Sally is not alone. There are many others who came to Canada under the very same circumstances. Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues, I know immigration is a federal responsibility, but we as elected officials represent the people of our province and we should be standing up for the people of our province.

Sally and others like her deserve the right to be here. It is our responsibility as elected officials to ensure the right thing is in fact done. I would say we should be doing that.

If I was a Conservative I would be approaching Jake Epp. I would be asking my Leader to intervene on her behalf. I would talk to Barbara McDougall and if necessary the Prime Minister himself. If there was a Liberal Government in Ottawa that is what I would have done. Mr. Speaker, surely this Chamber, this Assembly,

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means something. If we are unable to rectify a wrong of this nature then I believe there is something seriously wrong with Manitobans or Manitoba's relationship with the Government in Ottawa at this time.

* (1710)

What should we be asking for, Mr. Speaker? The resolution addresses this question. We want this Assembly to urge the Government to look into granting immunity from deportation to those immigrants who felt compelled by reasons beyond their control to misrepresent their marital status in order to gain admission to Canada. We do not know the actual numbers. The Minister of Immigration does not know the actual numbers. I can say that I have participated in many community events sponsored by the Filipino community and I have talked to people of the community and it is a very real concern. We need to recognize that. These are people, the people that have contributed to our society, have contributed to what Manitoba is all about and that of course is multiculturalism.

Second, Mr. Speaker, I request that this Chamber urge the federal Government to grant Sally Espineli her request to return to her home here in Manitoba, Canada.

On January 15, 1990, Sally's case will be heard by the Canadian Human Rights Commission. She deserves the right to be present for her trial. All of us would expect nothing less if we were going to a court or to a commission of this nature. She deserves the right to come home now.

I am going to ask this Chamber to have compassion and to pass this resolution today and seek Sally's immediate return to her home here in Winnipeg. She wants to come home, and I believe that where there is a will it can be done. Let us work now at getting Sally Espineli home before Christmas. Thousands of permits are given every year to allow immigrants to remain in Canada. I look at Sally Espineli's situation and I find it very hard to believe that a permit was not given to this particular individual.

I could have stood today and tried to make a much more political issue of this nature. I could have referred to what I have done in the past in regard to trying to get the Government to do something, but I have not. Instead I am hoping that I have taken the high road because I really do believe that Sally Espineli does deserve to come back home and whatever we can do in this Chamber, and I am suggesting to you that means we should be passing this resolution today, then by all means let us do it, do what we can.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services):

I am pleased to speak on this resolution and I do appreciate the Member's concerns in this particular case. His resolution I think bears support. There are one or two little things I do want to say about it, but on the whole I think it is a resolution worthy of support. As I understand it, this woman's appeal is coming before the Human Rights Commission in January of next year and she may be allowed—and I say "may" because

I do not think it has been settled yet—to return to this province for that hearing. Of course in the case of her being successful, she also may be allowed to return and we would hope that is the case.

The Member raises the point of how we do welcome immigrants to this province. They help add to the overall culture of our province, an important aspect. We all, I guess if you got right down to it, are immigrants to this nation and province, with the exception perhaps of the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), of course. The rest of us can trace back in our families to having grandparents or parents or even maybe some of the Members themselves have come here from other countries. I know in my particular family, both grandfathers came to this country as immigrants to farm mainly because they had an opportunity in this country to own their own land which they did not have an opportunity to do in England because of the way that—well, probably the scarcity of land and their particular family situations.

We can all relate to that aspect of it and how this country has been built on immigration and continues to be built that way. We need a diversity of work force, labour force for some stability. Some aspects and sectors of our economy have critical worker shortages and particularly from time to time need to particularly recruit people into our province.

This particular case the Member has raised really raises some concerns in my mind about the way in which people are recruited to this province when this sort of thing can happen, this sort of misrepresentation which must have taken place for this woman to be accused and then deported for having misrepresented her marital status. Personally, I cannot really blame her nor find such fault with her and feel she is guilty of a crime.

I think it stems from the fact that whoever went to that country or in whatever way the recruitment took place was where the misleading statements must have been made and where the problem started. We really should be taking a look at what people are told are the qualifications they must have to come to this country. Obviously this woman, Sally Espineli, must have firmly believed she had to misrepresent her marital status because she wanted to come to this country obviously and be part of this country. That is where the problem must have arisen, in the original way in which she was recruited.

It is a misunderstanding I would say on her part and I would hardly want to really be accusing her of a crime. Unfortunately the way rules are set down and Immigration's ruling—of course we have to have rules and regulations, but sometimes they get carried to a point where we have to disagree with them.

I think one of the difficulties that may arise in the third last RESOLVED of the Member's resolution—I think too much of a blanket statement in this would cause some difficulties. It states, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Government of Canada to look at granting immunity from deportation to those immigrants who felt compelled, by reasons beyond their control, to misrepresent their marital status

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in order to gain admission to Canada on the basis of that misrepresentation.

I think it would be very difficult to make a blanket rule and regulation that granted automatic immunity to someone who said they had been misrepresented. It gets, I guess, back to the whole fact that you cannot legislate and make laws that say people have to be honest and thereby people will be honest. You would run into, I think, a little difficulty in that particular part of the resolution and the Member may want to rethink that. I am not sure.

I understand, I see from his resolution that the Minister of Employment and Immigration, federal Minister, presently Barbara McDougall, has authorized over 10,000 ministerial permits in 1988 on compassionate grounds, so it shows that even though there are rules and regulations, that from time to time these matters can be resolved in particular cases.

* (1720)

I think in going back to the statements I made about the Members, in the third last Resolved of the resolution, I think we should look at these things in a case-by-case basis, because it is very difficult to prove, yes you misrepresented, or you did not. You would get into a very difficult area there.

The Member in his speech did plead with us to speak and to write on behalf of Sally Espineli to the federal Government, and I understand that the Premier has written to Barbara McDougall on this subject and suggested to her that she look at this with the view to resolving it, and that Sally Espineli can come back to Canada. The Premier in his remarks had indicated that the eight years that she spent in this country, of course, should mean something—and the fact that she supported herself and was a successful citizen of our country, and obviously did not want to leave our country. All these things should be taken into account—and the fact that there does not appear to be, from the information I have, any malicious intent on the part of this woman to come to this country illegally. We should be pleased that people do want to come to our country and that they see in our country some opportunity to better themselves, or to find work. Perhaps in some of the countries in the world jobs are very difficult to find, and we should not be putting up roadblocks and making it difficult for people.

But getting back to my original, not original statement, but what I had said at the outset of my remarks, I think the fault mainly in this case, as I can see it, possibly lies with whoever was doing the recruiting, and they should have been clearer on what the exact qualifications were. I guess in their eagerness to perhaps recruit people to work in this particular—I understand she came to work in the garment industry—in their eagerness to recruit people they gave a false impression and, of course, that has led to these difficulties.

As I said, this resolution is certainly worthy of support and for this particular case definitely. I do not particularly agree with the Member that we should just make a blanket fact of granting immunity automatically if someone says that it has been misrepresented. I think

that would cause some difficulties that we might come into later. Sometimes when you are trying to fix one problem, if you go at it in just the wrong way you create 20 more while you are fixing one, so that might happen to be the case in that.

I think, speaking for our side of the House, I do not know whether anyone else intends to speak on it or not from our side, but I do think we have support for this woman in her difficulty, and would certainly want to welcome her back to Canada if she was able to come to a successful resolution of this, and it is very unfortunate that some misunderstanding took place along the way.

I do hope that she is allowed back to testify and clarify the situation for the Human Rights Commission. I understand that hearing is taking place in January, and we do wish her success with that hearing.

Sometimes these things take a long time to be resolved, and it is unfortunate that some time of course has elapsed from when this deportation took place and when it can be heard. Of course she is back in the Philippines, making it more difficult for her, because as the Member so aptly pointed out, the different marital status to which she was accused of having and now is not actually, I do not know whether the Member said she was legally married to this man or whether they are separated or the exact status of it, but not a happy situation in any event, whatever the technicalities are.

It is unfortunate these things can happen to people when they come to this country, but all in the necessity of having rules and following rules that sometimes people such as this person get caught up in them and find difficulties. With the statements that I have made regarding that one particular clause, I can see no difficulty with supporting this resolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be able to rise and speak to this resolution and to indicate how pleased we are that this has come forward and how pleased we are to support this resolution in full.

I think this gives us an opportunity not just to look at the case of Sally and her particular situation, but to look at the whole immigration policy and the attitude towards immigrants and the process that is undertaken to allow people, or to make the decisions on whether or not people come into our country.

I think that this is an opportunity for an all-Party agreement on a very critical issue. I was delighted to hear that the Members opposite seem to be leaning towards support for it, although I would urge them to not feel that they need to rule out the portion of the resolution that asks for similar consideration to be given to other people who are in a situation the same as Sally for the same reasons.

While immigration is a federal matter, they should not be establishing immigration policy or immigration procedures without having a lot of consultation and discussion with the provinces, and finding out what it is the provinces need and what it is the provinces want,

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and what the attitude of the provinces is toward opening their doors to welcome additional new immigrants. That is something that I think we have always done both in our country but particularly in our province. I hope that we are going to continue to do that.

First of all, just to talk a little bit about immigration in general. I think that we need to be concerned about the immigration policies, because the numbers for Manitoba are going down. I do not think that is particularly good news, because I think that both Manitoba and Canada have been built on the addition of people from many countries who have come here not just to live off the fat of the land of Canada, but to make a tremendous contribution towards the development of a very young country called Canada, and to make their contribution at every level in their community and to the Canadian society in general.

The drop in recent immigrants represented about 30 percent of all immigrants in 1981, but by 1986 they declined to about 25 percent. We are in the unusual situation, I think, where in other provinces immigration is going up, in Manitoba immigration in fact is going down.

I am not sure that with all of the other things that we are facing in our economy, with an increasing aging population, with increasing numbers of people who are in a very dependent category and that is people like single parent mothers, for instance, where the population is increasing a great deal. It is very important that immigrants who have made every effort to contribute to our country like Sally has, where they are employed, where they pay their taxes, where they make a contribution, where they are not coming in and just expecting to be taken care of, but they want to participate fully. These people we need, and we actually need them; we needed them before, and we need them again, and we need them for a lot of reasons. We need them because they make a genuine contribution to our economy, and we need them because they improve the life and the colour and the character of the kind of province and country that we live in.

* (1730)

So when we are talking about Sally, I wish that we would look at the whole immigration policy and communicate to the Government that Manitoba is not particularly interested in having their immigration numbers go down, that we would like, like the other bigger centres, to let the federal Government know that they do not need to be so tough, that Manitoba is ready to welcome additional new immigrants.

When we look at the personal situation of Sally, and I think it is important that we hold up what happened to Sally as a symbol of the immigration policy and the attitude toward immigration, I think that we see a lot of problems with it. Unfortunately Sally is the one that is the loser. I think that is really too bad that, where the process is at fault and there were their problems with that, I do not think it was a misunderstanding. I think that the very best you could say about it is that the advice given to Sally was very, very bad. I do not think that she should be the one who is paying for it.

She has been a good citizen for eight years, and her community, when this case came up, stood up and fought for her so that she could stay in this country. I can tell you, and there are members of this community here in the Chamber today, listening to this debate, I believe they would not have done that if they did not believe that Sally deserved it, that she was a good citizen and that she was entitled to stay. The support of her community was a major statement that I wish the federal Government had been a little more willing to listen to.

So we get to this issue of filling out an application wrong, and the question of the punishment for doing that, and why on earth is the federal Government, are we bringing people in from one segment of society anyway, like why are we saying that we want people who are single, and putting those who want to come to our country in the dreadful position of having to say that they are when they are not?

For Sally, I think, she filled out the application, but the application was checked by Immigration, and they stamped it. One wonders what understanding they had of that application and if they believed it was wrongly filled out, why they did not do something in the first place, why they stamped it and gave it their approval, and then having done that, left Sally to pay the penalty.

I think that the Minister has given a lot of people approval to come in. We are looking at a figure of 10,000, and I cannot understand why in this particular case Sally was not given that sort of dispensation by the Minister. The only thing I can think of is that they were concerned about a precedent, having the precedent of allowing somebody who had incorrectly filled out their application and submitted it and then letting Sally in, and then having all the other people in the same position say, well, you let Sally in, you should let us in, too.

I think that what we should do about that is not strike that part out from the resolution. I should think we should say that anybody else that is in a similar situation should have the same kind of recognition given that is given to Sally. It is not just case by case, because I think the federal Government was interested in finding out how many more cases there were like this, if this was unusual. I submit that it is not unusual, and I submit it is not unusual because the process is a bad process, and it is one that encourages, or even helps, people to get into the country by telling them that this is all right to do this.

So I think the solution is to eliminate it and to do exactly what this resolution says, and that is to say that all of those other people who are identified, who have found themselves in the same situation for the same reasons, should also be given the same status that is accorded to Sally. In other words, I think that instead of worrying about the precedent, we wipe the darn thing out so that it does not matter because it is not good. It is not a fair one.

The thought that there is some particular benefit to bringing single people in anyway, I am not sure what that is or that we want in a certain industry to only employ certain people. As if people who are married

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are not as good a worker, or they are not as good a citizen, or not as good a member of their community, I do not understand that logic at all.

She is a victim of an attitude about who they want to bring into the country for a certain industry that is not reasonable and is not fair, and Sally and I think many others are the victim of that.

I think when you are looking at immigration too, that it is important that we talk about the new process that the Government has set up for deciding on those—I think it is somewhere in the neighbourhood of about 70,000 immigrants who have landed immigrant status who are waiting to be processed and waiting to have the axe fall or waiting to be told after many years in this country that they can or cannot stay.

I think we are very concerned about that process too for a number of reasons. One is people are not sure that it is fair. There is a hearing where a couple of people sit and listen to somebody make their points and make a decision on whether or not they are telling the truth. A couple of people listen to somebody tell their story and decide whether they are telling the truth and on that basis decide whether or not they are entitled to stay.

I know that there are many people who believe that people are being sent back to their country to a dangerous situation where they are in danger. I think if we have to err on any side, we have to make sure that does not happen, and I am not sure what would happen if there was immunity granted to all 70,000 of them. I think that most of them have been here making a contribution to our country and have established themselves already as Canadian citizens.

I believe that the amount of money and time that is going to be taken to process all of those applications is going to be more costly than just saying, you are here, you may have come under a circumstance and at a time and with a procedure that is not going to continue. Maybe they are going to tighten up the procedure, or they are going to have hearings that are done in a more appropriate time, within a certain period of time, so people are not left for years and years establishing themselves in a country and then being kicked out.

Why do we not do that after? Why do we not say to those who are here, whatever the situation, the circumstances that you came into this country, you are here now and whatever procedures and regulations and laws that we are going to bring in to control new immigrants is brought from hereon in? I am not sure that would be such a terrible thing.

Mr. Speaker, I think that I am just trying to make the point that when we are talking about Sally, we are not talking just about her case. We are using her as a symbol to talk about an immigration policy that I think needs to be clarified. We need to know what both the federal Government and the provincial Government want to do about immigration. Do they want more or do they want less? In Manitoba, does this Government want to open the doors so that they are saying Manitoba will take more immigrants, because our immigration

numbers are down and because we can take more, and these people make a valuable contribution to our society? I would like to know that. I think other people would like to know that and I think the federal Government should know that.

Then we are looking at the question of the process that the federal Government brought in to examine those with landed immigrant status to decide whether or not they could or should stay in our country. I think that is a bad process, and that a lot of people are concerned that people will not get a fair hearing and will not have a fair opportunity to appeal. Not only should they not be sent back to their country if there is any suggestion of them being sent back to danger, but I think that we should really face the question of whether or not they should not be allowed to stay.

* (1740)

I think the process that we are questioning is the one that has put Sally in the situation that she is in where I think through no fault of her own, through advice that she was given, through information that she was given, and through what I believed she thought was okay as many others did, she followed a procedure that put her in jeopardy and had the decision made that she could not stay in this country. I agree with the Member opposite that she should be brought back home for her hearing, that she is entitled to that, and that the decision, when it is made, should be seen to be not just a decision to change the status for Sally, but a decision that will recognize that everybody else that is in the same situation as she is in will be identified and will be given the same accord. They will be given the same recognition that they are in a situation not of their own making but of a bad process, a bad procedure, and bad policies, and we are not going to allow that to continue to happen.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, this resolution goes through intact. It is a strong message to her community, to all of the immigrants in our province and in our country, and particularly to the federal Government that we stand united with a strong and clear voice on this matter.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, just briefly I feel compelled to add my support to the resolution before us. I speak as a first generation Canadian and in listening to the concerns about the particular subject we are discussing in this resolution I am reminded of the fact that my parents came to this country leaving a country in turmoil, in a virtual state of revolution. I am referring to the period of civil war in the Soviet Union after the October Revolution in that country.

I am personally aware, at that time, among the several thousands of people who came from that country to this country, as was indeed the case of my parents, they left their country illegally. Under those circumstances I have absolutely no doubt all the forms or regulations that allowed my parents' generation of people to come to this province, this country, that there were not mistakes made or not a full understanding of the immigration laws at the time.

I think that belies the question and the question is, is the person a person who is desirable, making a

contribution to this country and to this province, and as such those surely are the kind of people we ought to welcome in Manitoba and in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to place those words of support from myself with respect to this individual and I support the comments made by the Honourable Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill), pardon me, how could I forget? It ought well be expanded to go beyond the individual case being dealt with here, but to indeed look at the situation today's émigrés have perhaps found themselves in trying to comply with our current regulations.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

Mr. Speaker, as the Seconder I am delighted to speak to this resolution, but I am even more delighted when I hear voices coming from all sides of this Assembly which indicate their support for this resolution. I know the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) wants to put a few words on the paper today and I hope we can bring that to quick passage and certainly before six o'clock.

Immigration is one of those few issues developed in our constitutional process both through the British North America Act and through the Canada Act that in fact is a joint responsibility. It empowers both the provinces as well as the federal Government to have a say in immigration policy. That is why we must speak as provincial legislators to ensure our voice is heard with the federal Government so they can change what I am sure they too recognize as an inappropriate rule.

Marital status is no longer a means by which one can discriminate against anyone in our society. I know some of my female colleagues will recognize we have in fact in the past, not in this Assembly but in other occupations in lives, been discriminated against on the basis of our marital status. I remember once applying for a vice-principal's position and being told I was by far the most qualified person to be given the job, but I was married and I could not possibly be considered as a vice-principal because I was married. Well, Mr. Speaker, I was not prepared to give up my marriage, so I did not become a vice-principal and went on to do other things with my life. But we cannot do that any longer in terms of the Charter and in terms of the rights and responsibilities of Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, I have in my possession, and a book I would gladly share with all of the Members of the House, a book called "The Canadian Family Tree—Canada's Peoples." What it does is that it traces all of the immigrants to Canada—where they came from, what numbers they presently have in our nation as a whole. I learned, for example, in looking at the Filipinos, that they came primarily after 1946 and more specifically in the period between 1970 and 1975. The two provinces that were so enriched by Filipinos were Ontario and Manitoba. We have the second largest number in our particular province, and we have been much enriched by that.

When I used to teach the differences between Canadian immigration policy and American immigration policy, I used to refer to the mosaic concept in Canada as opposed to the melting pot concept in the United

States. This wonderful mosaic in Canada has been an incredible enricher of all of us. One only has to go to Folklorama in this community to go and see the variety of cultures that we have within Manitoba and their arts, their dance, their theatre, their beauty, but more importantly to sit back and to question those of the community in the audience and discover that they fulfill all of the professions and all of the occupations and that they are vibrant, contributing members of our particular society.

The Filipinos have been very special in the Province of Manitoba. They have been special because of people, some of whom are gathered in this Chamber, but also because of Sally Espineli and what she represented. She did not come here particularly well trained. She did not have a profession to bring, as others I know in this community brought—and some were not allowed to practise—but they had high professional skills. Sally did not have those. She came as a garment worker. She then became a health care worker, but wherever she worked, she made a contribution to those around her and to the community in which she lived.

On the basis of some X that she marked on an application form saying she was single instead of being married, something that we are not supposed to discriminate against in any case, she was deported, and now we have to bring her back to Canada and, more specifically, to Winnipeg and Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, when we speak of immigrants in Canada, it is not something that I, like the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), can talk about from personal experience. My father's family was potato famine Irish. We came sometime in the 1840s. My mother's family came from France, and we think they came in the latter 1700s, but maybe early 1700s. We have not been able to exactly place a time.

We do not know, for example, when the people of the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) came to this nation. We know they were here long before any of the rest of us were here, but whether they came across the Bering Sea on the land bridge, or what is the theory that brought them to this geographical area, we do not know, but we do know how Sally came. We do know that they went out to recruit. She was involved in that recruit, being programmed, and she signed an application, and put an X on an application, because that is what she was told she had to do in order to get into this community. She did what she believed she had to do, and for that we have now deported her.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that we must do everything we can in this Legislature to right that injustice. I think we can do that in a small way by passing this resolution today, and I look forward to its passage before the end of this session.

* (1750)

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): First of all, I want to indicate that it is rather disappointing that we were told a few minutes ago by my colleagues, the Liberals, that it was important to pass this today. This has been on the Order Paper, clearly, for a considerable length

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of time, although this is the first time we have had to discuss it, and there are many people in this Chamber I am sure who wanted to address this. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that it could not have received a fuller debate, because each of us has our own experiences. We have our own constituents who have been affected by immigration policy and by the process we currently use to determine who is eligible to become a Canadian citizen and the process by which we ensure there is some fairness in becoming Canadian citizens.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I recognize there is a will to see this resolution passed. I have no doubt people on all sides of this House recognize an injustice has been done to an individual and I think we equally recognize it is time that we as Canadian citizens came face to face with the fact that our immigration policy needs to be reviewed. In fact, our immigration policy is much too restrictive as it currently exists.

I know the federal Government has made some small steps at increasing the number of immigrants who are allowed into this country and we believe, and I think most Canadians believe, we have the capacity to absorb many, many more people in this country, not only the capacity but the need. I know the federal Government is currently moving to review its current policies because of the belief that we will need more people, people who will contribute to our provinces and contribute to our economy, people who will bring skills that we desperately need to this country, and that is to be hoped.

Mr. Speaker, the second point that needs to be addressed and is addressed in this resolution is the question of the role of the federal Government in ensuring the immigration process is fair. I think what the case of Sally Espineli clearly indicates is the federal Government has abdicated its responsibility to ensure that process is undertaken in a fair and reasonable and understandable way. We do not have enough immigration officials. We do not have the number of immigration officials both here and abroad to make sure people who wish to come to Canada are informed about the process, understand the process, and are assisted through the process.

We cannot leave that to chance. We have had too many examples in the past several years of people who through no fault of their own have been misled, who have been abused, who have been taken advantage of in the immigration process. We have to blame the federal Government for not living up to its responsibility of making sure that process is fair and understandable.

If we really believe we need and want to encourage people to come to this country, then we have to make sure they can, and we have to make sure they are not abused in the process.

Mr. Speaker, we have to make sure when there are mistakes made, and in this case innocent mistakes made, there is some sense of fair play. The resolution that was introduced by my colleague from Inkster indicates some 10,000 ministerial permits have been granted to people who were legitimately outside of the guidelines, who for whatever reason had to apply for special dispensation from the Minister to be allowed to stay in Canada. That has happened. It did not happen in this instance and I think the Canadian people and we in this Legislature have every right to ask the question, why not? What is so special about this case that compassion and fairness cannot rule the day?

I believe we like to think of ourselves as a compassionate society and I believe the exceptions made in the past could have been made in this case and should be made in this case. We have to argue that compassion should rule the day. This individual was in Canada, had lived here for eight years, and the kind of trauma, the kind of needless trauma and disruption this whole exercise has created is clearly unfair. If this resolution will help redress that injustice then by all means let us do it.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether my colleague from Rupertsland would like to say something, but I would like to conclude by saying we will support this resolution and I hope everyone in this Chamber will support it as well. It is a simple matter of justice.

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupertsland): Yes, if you can give me one minute to say—as you know as aboriginal people we have welcomed practically everyone into Canada, to our land and surely in this case we, as aboriginal people, would support this resolution and certainly we could not ensure the new immigrants to Canada the same condition that the first Europeans arrived here—pollution-free and no tax system in place. Certainly we welcome them all. Thank you.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

* (1800)

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m.