



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	Liberal
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARR, James	Crescentwood	Liberal
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	Liberal
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CONNERY, Edward	Portage la Prairie	PC
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALLOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNESSE, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, March 21, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Ben Sveinson (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the First Report of the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources presents the following as their first report.

Your committee met on Thursday, November 16, 1989, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider the Annual Report of Manitoba Telephone System for the fiscal year ended December 31, 1988. Your committee met on Tuesday, November 6, 1990, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislature Building to consider the Annual Reports of the Manitoba Telephone System for the fiscal years ending December 31, 1988, and December 31, 1989. Your committee also met on Tuesday, March 19, 1991, at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislature Building to consider the Annual Reports of the Manitoba Telephone System for the fiscal years ending December 31, 1988, and December 31, 1989. On November 6, 1990, at 10 a.m. your committee elected Mr. Sveinson as Chairperson.

Mr. T. Stefanson, Chairperson, Mr. R. Bird, President and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. D. Wardrop, Executive Vice-President and Mr. B. Fraser, Vice-President, Finance, provided such information as was requested with respect to the Annual Report and business of the Manitoba Telephone System for the committee meeting on Thursday, November 16, 1989.

Mr. T. Stefanson, Chairperson, Mr. D. Wardrop, Acting President and Chief Executive Officer, and Mr. B. Fraser, Vice-President, Finance, provided such information as was requested with respect to the Annual Reports and business of the Manitoba

Telephone System for the committee meetings on Tuesday, November 6, 1990, and Tuesday, March 19, 1991.

Your committee has considered the Annual Reports of the Manitoba Telephone System for the fiscal years ended December 31, 1988, and December 31, 1989 and has adopted the same as presented.

Mr. Sveinson: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, I have a ministerial statement. I have copies for the House.

Today, March 21, is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

In 1966, the United Nations declared March 21 the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in commemoration of the tragic event at Sharpeville, South Africa, 31 years ago, when peaceful demonstrators against apartheid were wounded and killed.

In December 1983, the General Assembly of the United Nations called upon all states and organizations to participate in programs and activities for the second decade to combat racism and racial discrimination.

On March 21, 1986, the Prime Minister proclaimed Canada's participation in the second decade and called upon all Canadians to join together in extending their efforts to ensure the rapid eradication of racism and discrimination and the realization of mutual understanding, respect, equality and justice for all Canadians.

In September 1988, ministers attending a federal, provincial and territorial ministerial conference on human rights agreed to commemorate March 21 in all Canadian jurisdictions. It is hoped that observance of this day will rekindle in all members

of society an eagerness to re-examine their attitudes, beliefs and actions so that we may work together in partnership to achieve a society free of racism.

This government is committed to the elimination of racism. We know, however, that government cannot do it alone, and we will continue to work in partnership with the people of this province to build a better society.

* (1335)

Mr. Speaker, I have several different initiatives throughout the ministerial statement that government has undertaken. I will not go through them now, but they are there for all members to read. I want to ask all members of the House to join in observance of this very important day.

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupertsland): Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to the government statement on behalf of my caucus.

Just over a year ago we had a series of public incidents of racist pamphlets, posters and even a cabinet minister greeting protesters dressed as Ku Klux Klan members.

Racism is far from dead in this country. The actions of the federal government, yesterday, in claiming that aboriginal people not living on reserves are no longer aboriginal is but the latest example of the extent of the problem.

Last year this provincial government was silent over the federal budget cuts to Native media and Native organizations actions that were condemned by the Canadian Centre for International PEN. The Canadian Centre for International organization known as PEN, an organization devoted to challenging international human rights violations, recently released a report, their first in Canada, entitled "Silencing Native Tongues," charging that Canada has failed to meet its obligations to Native peoples under international law.

The report, endorsed by 18 legal experts, argues that last year's budget cuts to Native media and to Native organizations conflicts with the right of the aboriginal people, aboriginal cultural development, an international human rights under the U.N. Charter and the International Bill of Rights.

These funding cuts have severely threatened Native languages, information sharing, news sources, education, employment and services for isolated and aboriginal communities. All vital

elements of aboriginal self-determination were affected. For Native people, self-determination means the right to control their economic, political, civil and cultural development; it means, in short, cultural survival.

The preservation and protection of Native culture is considered a federal responsibility. As the latest budget cuts demonstrate, the federal government has no desire to ensure that Native culture is safeguarded.

The recent B.C. court decision in which the judge claimed that aboriginal people have no claim to their land that they had lived on for thousands of years is another example of racism.

The judge was saying aboriginal people had no laws, communities, political or social structure prior to colonization. First Nations exercised stewardship over the resources for centuries, had a rich spiritual life, lived in harmony with neighbours and traded with other nations, but none of these was recognized. It is as if we did not exist as aboriginal people.

Once again history is being defined as beginning with the arrival of the white fur traders and settlers. This paternalistic and racist attitude is no longer acceptable. The actions of the federal government and the Province of Quebec this past summer at Oka are further proof that racism is alive and well in Canada.

Last fall, along with other aboriginal leaders, I attended the International Court of Justice in The Hague, and also attended the European Parliament where Canadian governments were strongly criticized. The United Nations have questioned Canada repeatedly about its treatment of aboriginal people at Oka and whether human rights were violated. Of course Canada refused to make any comments. Amnesty International, another organization, is presently investigating the actions of this country in its treatment of aboriginal people. This country has no record to be proud of in terms of treatment of aboriginal people in this country.

We know that the actions of the federal government will result in further tensions in this province. We already see services being cut. The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry was launched because of racist attitudes in the justice system in this province. Last week in Los Angeles a television camera caught a scene of a group of policemen beating a suspect. This scene angered people across North

America. Such incidents are not unknown or rare in this country.

One thing I would like to make a comment on is it is regrettable that the chief commissioner of human rights of this country missed the point when we killed Meech Lake. We were saying no to the paternalistic and colonial policies of this country. We were saying no to assimilation, no to integration, no to genocide.

* (1340)

Racism must be combatted by all sectors of society. I welcome the government's intention to do something concrete about racism and will be watching to see them actually do something in the weeks and months ahead.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I too would like to add a few words on behalf of our party. The elimination of racial discrimination is something, no doubt, that all of us inside this Chamber support. I have gone, like many of my colleagues, to many of the schools that we represent. You talk to the children, you see the children playing with each other and you do not see the discrimination in the children.

Mr. Speaker, what we need to concentrate on is education. We need to have a tolerant society. Canada is all about multiculturalism, and we have to be able to capitalize on our multicultural policies and so forth. We have seen the Manitoba Intercultural Council which has brought forward a report on how to combat racism. They have come up with different proposals, recommendations, both short-term and long-term recommendations. Some of the short-term recommendations we have brought to light through Question Period inside this Chamber. The one in particular in regard to us as legislators—a cross-cultural education day, minimal cost but would be of great benefit to all of the elected officials inside this Chamber, in City Hall and our school trustees.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of the things that I believe the government could be acting upon, because there are some people who are somewhat naive, and we have seen that. Not wanting to name any particular names, but if we look at members of Parliament—and just leaving it at that—everyone, I am sure, knows who maybe I could be referring to.

We see another short-term proposal for the Human Rights Commission. Mr. Speaker, if we are

serious and we want to send a message, we have to adequately resource the Human Rights Commission so that they have the capabilities to combat racism. There are a lot of things that we can do in opposition. There are a lot more things the government can do, and it is the responsibility of the government of the day to take the initiatives, to look at reports, such as the Manitoba Intercultural Council has submitted to you, and to start acting upon them—talk is cheap.

We need to start acting now, as only earlier this week where we received inside the Chamber some hate literature that is inexcusable, something that has to be acted upon, and I trust the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) will act upon it. I look forward to some time soon when the Attorney General will be able to come to me and tell me how he has acted upon it. On that note, Mr. Speaker, we do support very much the proclamation that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has issued for the day, and we look forward to the day in which we will see far less discrimination across this country. Thank you.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to, from the ministry of Natural Resources, table the 1989-90 Annual Report of the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report, 1989-90, for the Co-operative Promotion Board.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1989-90 Annual Report of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation.

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for and charged with the administration of The Communities Economic Development Fund Act): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Communities Economic Development Fund Annual Report for 1989-90.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today a group of high school students from across

Manitoba who are with the Citizenship Council of Manitoba, and they are here to recognize March 21 as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

* (1345)

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

Also with us this afternoon, seated in the public gallery, from the Maples Collegiate, we have 32 English program students, and they are under the direction of Aliisa Schell and Murray Goldenburg. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Chœema).

Also this afternoon, from the Shamrock School, we have eighty-five Grade 6 students under the direction of Miss Margo Classon. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Community Colleges Staff Layoffs

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, last week Manitobans became aware of a number of teaching positions that were reduced in our public school system as a result of the funding decisions by the provincial government. We are now hearing about some of the decisions as they affect university students.

Just recently we became aware, through administrators and faculty members, of decisions that are being made by the provincial government affecting our community colleges, the community colleges I think that have a national reputation for their performance. We hear there are 80 positions in the Red River Community College, positions that will be reduced either through term expiration or layoffs by June of 1991.

My question to the Premier is: What courses will be cut and what programs will be eliminated at the end of this school year in our community colleges in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I find it very regrettable that the Leader of the New Democratic Party wants to deal in rumour and innuendo all the time. It is we hear, it is we hear, it is

we hear. Whatever is the newest rumour, whether it is from a person or from a handful of people, he comes to this Chamber and he puts it on the table as presumed fact.

There is an obligation, a responsibility on the part of every member of this Legislature under the rules to ascertain whether or not his facts are correct, not to come on fishing expeditions, not to throw fear in the hearts of people who are employed in the public service by putting forth rumours.

Mr. Speaker, he and his colleagues deliberately fomented the disconcertion of people in the Winnipeg School Division about what they said was going to be the loss of funding for ESL. That issue was never, ever raised by this administration. It was never, ever a consideration of this administration.

We said from Day One that we would maintain our share of the funding and we would work together with them to get the federal commitment. They caused layoff notices to go out to teachers throughout the Winnipeg School Division. They caused rallies to take place for their own political benefit, all of it wrong.

I say to him that he is not acting in good conscience and he is not acting in a responsible way by bringing this latest rumour to the table of the Legislature before any final decisions have been made by the Treasury Board with respect to any funding decisions in this province.

Mr. Doer: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to have the Premier deny that there are going to be any cutbacks in our community colleges. I would love to hear the Premier say that today, because we believe in the community colleges. We are not out privatizing our education programs like this government is.

My question -(interjection)- well, let me look at that, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier is -(interjection)- I have, and there are 20 in Brandon.

* (1350)

My question to the Premier is: Is he reviewing the community college positions that they are proposing to cut in our community colleges, in light of the research showing that 91 percent nationally get jobs out of the community colleges, in light of the research in our own community colleges indicating 78 percent got full-time jobs compared to

21 percent that got part-time jobs in our community colleges?

Is he using a result-based management system for our community colleges, or is he going on the ideology that he should move money over to the private corporations for training allowances with questionable results in our schools?

Mr. Fillmon: Mr. Speaker, we indeed are using results-based analyses of what is effective and what works within government funding. We are basing our funding decisions on outcomes, on results at all times, and whether or not indeed—well, Mr. Speaker, you know the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) is off there nattering away. When he was an Education minister, and when his colleague, Maureen Hemphill, was an Education minister, they made massive staff cuts and changes at the community colleges.

What they did, I believe, at least I would hope, was to evaluate whether or not they should continue to do training in areas for which there were no jobs. After many, many years, possibly in some cases too many years, they decided that they should not be training people for areas in which there is other training adequate to the needs of the students or at lesser cost, or at no cost to government, or indeed where there were no jobs. They did not carry on as the Schreyer government did in the '70s training hundreds and hundreds of people for certificate courses for which there was no employment, 60 percent not getting jobs. They went on for years and years.

Those are not the kinds of things that I would recommend. I say to him if he is saying that to us that we should just blindly accept that what you have done for 25 years, you should keep on doing even if people are not being successfully employed or are not getting the proper—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Premier well knows that there were a number of people in the '80s redeployed and retrained to provide more current programs in the community colleges. They are positions, 80 positions, which would represent over 10 percent of the community colleges that were not cut back because the New Democratic Party believed in the community colleges and believed in the right of citizens to have the chance to go to those community colleges.

My question to the Premier is: What programs then has the Premier decided are out of date? What programs is he going to cut? How many instructors' positions are going to be cut, and what is going to be the impact of access for Manitoba citizens?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Mr. Fillmon: Mr. Speaker, the member knows full well that decisions of that nature are not decisions that are made around the cabinet table and Treasury Board table, that evaluations as to program effectiveness, firstly, ought to be done by professionals; secondly, ought to be done by the professionals within the Department of Education and the community college system, who can do these kind of comparisons as to where there is other training available at less cost and more effective than within the community college.

Those are not individual decisions that should be made. They may have been made on a political basis by the New Democrats in government, but they will not be made that way by this government. We will look at outcomes; we will look at resources available, and we will always do what is best for the people of Manitoba, that taxpayer, that poor beleaguered taxpayer that got hammered over the head year after year after year by New Democrats raising taxes. That poor individual in this province is going to be considered, finally, by an administration that cares about all the people of Manitoba, that does not choose its friends, and does not try and just go with the people who vote for it, Mr. Speaker. We are going to consider all the taxpayers, all the people in this province who ought to be considered.

* (1355)

Anti-Racism Programs Government Priorities

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

During the harsh economic times that Manitobans are facing, we are aware that visible minorities and new immigrants are facing increasing forms of scapegoating. I wonder if I could, through you, ask the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship to convey the appreciation of the official Opposition for the report and work of the Manitoba Intercultural

Council and for their recommendations in this report.

B'Nai B'Rith has argued that there has been a 33 percent increase in racist incidents across this country. I would like to ask the minister if she could indicate for us where this report fits with government priorities by giving the House an idea of how much new money has been allocated—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I guess maybe I would like to ask my honourable friend across the way how much new money she believes should go into the system.

I believe that we need to look at the overall initiatives within government that are ongoing and that have been developed since we have become government to increase intercultural understanding and awareness. We are the party and the government that brought in the first ever multicultural policy for the province of Manitoba with the three basic principles of pride, equality and partnership. As a result of that policy, we have set up a Multiculturalism Secretariat to co-ordinate government departments and look at what in fact is ongoing and what kinds of new initiatives have to be established.

We took into account—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mrs. Mitchelson: We have received the report from the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I have responded to the Manitoba Intercultural Council, looking at what some of the short-term recommendations are, and there were many recommendations in that report.

I will continue with the next question.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, given then that there are no new monies for this program, will the minister indicate how she will deal with the legitimate concerns expressed in the report that the follow-through support for the public awareness programs are not in place?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying when I was responding to the first question, that in fact there are many ongoing initiatives and there will be new initiatives. Those will be incorporated

through the Estimates process this year with each governmental department taking a look at what they are doing right now. It does not necessarily mean there will be more dollars, but dollars will be prioritized into the areas that will address some of the concerns that the Manitoba Intercultural Council has expressed.

Mr. Speaker, some of those things and many things have been initiated by this government, but I want to say here, clearly now, today, that yes, government has a responsibility, but every member in this Legislature has a responsibility and every member in our Manitoba community and society, including the media, has a responsibility to promote understanding and intercultural awareness. It is not just specifically one government or one person's initiative. It is all of us working together in partnership which is going to eradicate racism in this province.

The Bridging Cultures Program Funding Allocations

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Could the minister tell the House how the \$400,000 promised in the election under The Bridging Cultures Program has been allocated?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, as a result of my new responsibility as minister responsible for citizenship, I will very shortly be amalgamating and co-ordinating the ESL program through Winnipeg School Division No. 1, and Immigrant Access from Family Services in my department. We are in the process of getting that structure in place. If the member will wait, very shortly we will be making those announcements.

* (1400)

Department of Natural Resources Staff Layoffs

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, about half an hour ago, I received a letter from the Manitoba Government Employees' Association, the original of which was sent to Mr. Derkach, the Minister of Education, indicating that 100 teachers would be laid off from our community colleges.

In addition, I heard a broadcast on CJOB this morning, in which the Minister of Natural Resources indicated that eight or nine branches of his department would be affected by layoffs.

Can the Minister of Natural Resources indicate to the House today how many positions will be lost in the Department of Natural Resources and how many of those positions will be in rural Manitoba?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, no, I cannot confirm rumour or speculation as to what will happen with respect to my department. I welcome the opportunity that this question affords me to indicate—as my Premier (Mr. Filmon), indeed as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), has often indicated publicly in this House and other places—that the priorities of this government are clearly stated in the vital services of Health, Education and Family Services.

We have also all been told in an unprecedented open way by the Minister of Finance about the state of our fiscal capacity to respond to the demands that are placed on government these days.

With the full support of the entire Treasury bench, departments like mine are being asked, indeed being challenged, to examine the different programs that we are engaged in to see whether or not which programs we possibly can have done in another manner so that we can contribute to the stated policies, the stated priorities of this government.

Department of Natural Resources Staff Layoffs - Rural

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we are not dealing with rumour here, we are dealing with public broadcasts. We are dealing with letters submitted by the MGEA, and we are dealing with statements by this minister saying his department is going to be affected. People's lives are on the line.

Would the minister responsible for decentralization in this province, the Minister of Rural Development, tell the House how many rural jobs will be affected in the Department of Natural Resources and our community colleges system? Would he tell us how many of those jobs will be lost, thereby not only eliminating their commitment to decentralization, but not even keeping the jobs that are already in rural Manitoba?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, let me assure you that our commitment to rural Manitoba and the decentralization program is there and will, as the

financial capability of the province is able to carry out those responsibilities, be done. Those questions are very appropriate for the Estimate process of the Department of Natural Resources. I can assure you that there have been some 250-plus positions already moved into rural Manitoba under decentralization. We are continuing to do it in a responsible, well thought-out manner.

Department of Natural Resources Staff Layoffs - Notification

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is to the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, would the Premier of this province tell this House why it is acceptable to his government to leave people, government employees in community colleges and the Department of Natural Resources learning about their future from broadcasts and not from the government itself who has a moral responsibility to these employees?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I realize the Leader of the third party has never been in government, so she does not understand process.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that final decisions are not made until the point at which we are prepared to put together the final printing of Estimates and the budget. There are floating throughout government departments proposals that are put forth by senior administrators, proposals that may or may not be accepted by Treasury Board. I can tell you that of the various issues that have been raised in this House by opposition members thus far, due to so-called leaked documents, most of them were not accepted by government—most of them.

Mr. Speaker, there are obviously decisions that have to be made for the very reasons that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) stated, that we have zero percent increase in revenues, before going to pass along significant increases to health, to social services, to other areas of government departments—agriculture, education, all those areas. Some areas of government will not get as much as they would like, as they have gotten in the past or as they need to carry on everything they have done.

* (1405)

It is a very fine balancing act. It is a difficult choice-making decision, but none of this is available in final form until the Estimates are complete.

Department of Natural Resources Staff Layoffs - Rural

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): On virtually a daily basis this government has betrayed rural Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. Promises made last summer by the Filmon team were no more sincere than those of the Mulroney government.

Yesterday we learned that this government is building a stronger Manitoba by cutting funding of municipalities by over 13 percent. The last couple of weeks we have heard of decentralization being cut back and put on hold, and today we learn, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Natural Resources plans to cut over 200 jobs in eight or nine branches of his department. The question was put; I never heard an answer.

I am asking this minister: Can this minister tell me specifically, today, how many jobs in rural Manitoba will be lost?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, the answer is no, and I will give him another reason why we cannot say that, and I hope the president of the Manitoba Government Employees' Association is listening, because if they are asking for 10, 12 or 14 percent increases when they have been told that government revenues are not growing, that could affect the number of employees that may have to leave government services at some point in time.

That is not a threat, Mr. Speaker. That is simply saying that I cannot, nor can my government at this time determine what that number may be.

Land and Water Strategy Impact Staff Layoffs

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, a year or so ago this government began touting their land and water strategy as a means of conserving our resources and ensuring long-term economic prosperity. How can this minister and this government justify cutting jobs in his department which will affect the implementation of this strategy in rural Manitoba?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I suppose the question is not out of order,

not quite, but as the Premier (Mr. Filmon), and indeed as the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) have said now on several occasions, final decisions have not been made, and indeed if they were, it would be improper for any member of the Treasury bench to provide that information to the public before the budget came down.

What we have here by the opposition benches is an attempt to cause fear and to destroy in the minds of the people that are working for the government any sense of confidence. I say to them, shame. There will be budgetary announcements that will be made when the budget comes down which will give the full understanding of what government policy is.

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): I am not sure whether that was intended to be an answer in response to my colleague for the Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans), but the minister was clearly impugning motive. The fact is that these statistics and these questions are being raised by the very civil servants whose jobs are in jeopardy. Mr. Speaker, it is a legitimate question.

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

Department of Natural Resources Service Reduction

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, according to this minister this morning, the Parks Branch for one is not an essential service, which will also have a negative effect on tourism.

Can this minister tell us what programs, and are programs and services within his department, within these branches that are losing jobs, also going to be cut and on the chopping block?

* (1410)

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that we will in due course be considering the Estimates of the ministry of Natural Resources. Those are all legitimate questions and areas to examine at that time, and the honourable member is aware of that. I have nothing further to add at this time.

Anti-Racism Programs Government Initiatives

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Finally, I have a chance to get to the floor of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Racism is like alcoholism. We acknowledge the problem but we hide it.

My question is directed to the Attorney General. If it is the government's policy to quietly and discreetly deal with this problem in their own way, what has the government done or has been doing since the report on combatting racism has been issued by the Manitoba Intercultural Council last October 1990?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I thank the honourable member for his question. He and his colleague, the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), however, do not help in the battle against racism in Manitoba by making accusations about the way the government of Manitoba deals with this serious issue. It is certainly a public issue. It is certainly not an issue to be dealt with quietly and discreetly. It is an issue that we ought all to be together on and start doing this as a human being problem, as opposed to a political problem that needs to be dealt with in a political fashion.

I reject the approach of the honourable member for Broadway and the approach of the honourable member for Kildonan in combating racism. When we are talking about quietly and discreetly, in a general sense, that is nonsense coming from the opposition, but when we are talking about specific investigations, I do have some grave concerns when some prominent members of society—including MLAs—raise matters that are under investigation in a way that is not very wise, if we are all interested in achieving the same result, which is to catch perpetrators of hatred and to stop them from doing it.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Speaker, given that the Attorney General had ducked the issue once by not proceeding under the human rights act, can he tell us what plan of action has this government in trying to combat racism in this province?

Mr. McCrae: I reject out of hand any suggestion that the Minister of Justice for Manitoba has ducked the issue. When the honourable member wants to get serious about discussing it, I will be very happy to do so.

Mr. Santos: In specific terms, Mr. Speaker, I would like to know what this government's plan of concrete program of activities is relating to the Human Rights Commission, the Ombudsman's office, and the various departments of government, in trying to combat racial discrimination in the Civil Service, in the government, and outside the government. Thank you.

Mr. McCrae: If the honourable member, when he suggests the Ombudsman's office, thinks that I am going to play a role in the Ombudsman's office, he can think again. I am not going to do that. The Ombudsman's office is there to serve in a very independent way, and that is what the Ombudsman's office is doing. In fact, the Ombudsman would be the first person to get after me if I tried to interfere with the way he and his office do their business.

With respect to the Human Rights Commission, Mr. Speaker, the Human Rights Commission does all it can possibly do to promote understanding and tolerance in our society through education programs, through mediation programs, and through investigation of specific acts of human rights violations, in addition to providing advisory opinions to those who seek that kind of instruction from the Human Rights Commission.

On the part of the government, it is the role of government to ensure that the Human Rights Commission is able to do its work, and we are constantly watching that situation, Mr. Speaker.

Crown Corporations Council Information Release

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Crown Corporations Council.

This morning at committee the Minister in charge of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation was asked to make public certain advice, reports, and observations about the operations of MPIC which had been given to him by the Crown Corporations Council. The minister refused.

Why is the government keeping this information to itself? How does this tight-lip policy enhance the accountability of our Crown corporations?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act): Mr. Speaker, the member

chooses to misrepresent and repeat his question. He asked if I had information or if I had directives from the Crown Council—I forget the wording precisely that he used—and I indicated that I had certain information of Crown accountability council, but I did not indicate that those were in terms of directives or, in manners of speaking, of evaluations and that type of thing. We were talking about operational examination of the Crowns. That is information that was provided to me on a confidential basis, and that is a fair and reasonable manner in which to accept it.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, it is hard to know why keeping that information confidential enhances public accountability.

Crown Corporations Council Legislative Review

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): My supplementary question is to the Minister responsible for the Crown Corporations Council.

Since this council has been established by legislation it has not appeared once before a legislative committee. I would like to ask the minister, why not?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister responsible for the administration of The Crown Corporations Accountability Act): Mr. Speaker, I think it is time to have the Crown Corporations Council appear. I think they have just now completed their first full year of activities. They do file reports which are public and which are available to the member if he so wishes to see them. There may be a reference even to some of the matters referred to in his first question to me, I cannot recall, but certainly that information is available. I see no problem as to why the Crown Corporations Council should not be called before the Legislature to discuss certain aspects of its activities.

Information Release

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, we are getting competing answers from the two ministers. One minister says that the information is confidential, and the other says that the information may be made public or indeed may exist in reports.

My question to the minister is very simple. What information does the government treat from the Crown Corporations Council as confidential, and

what information does he believe ought to be made public?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister responsible for the administration of The Crown Corporations Accountability Act): Mr. Speaker, that is not my decision. Under the strict stipulations of the act, the Crown Corporations Council has that full responsibility to first of all, engage in discussions with the Crowns on matters as mandated within the act, and secondly, to report to the public on those matters. The minister in charge, in this case myself, has no influence as to what the Crown Corporations Council reports. Further to that point, I am not in conflict at all with my colleague, absolutely not.

The question that the member wants answered should be put to the Crown Corporations Council, and I will undertake to have them come before a standing committee of this House.

Assiniboine Community College Staff Layoffs

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, just a few moments ago during this Question Period I received a call from my constituency in Brandon advising me that today ACC has sent out notices that several positions will be terminated at the end of June, at the end of this term.

I would like to ask the Minister of Education, will he now confirm that there will be a major layoff and termination of positions at ACC this year?

* (1420)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I would have to indicate that in our community colleges we do have some term instructors that are currently hired, and indeed, they are hired under those circumstances where in fact the course is completed, then that term indeed will be terminated.

The member for Brandon East may be referring to some of those positions, but in terms of layoffs, the magnitude that the opposition is talking about, I think that this is a bit of fearmongering. I think that perhaps my colleagues opposite should wait until the budget is presented before the House, so that in fact they do have the facts before them rather than enticing rumour among the people of this province.

Mr. Leonard Evans: It is a total mockery of rural decentralization—a total mockery of the whole process.

Mr. Speaker, the employees have been given notices today. Surely the Minister of Education could tell us now how many positions are being affected—how many term positions? If he says it is term positions, how many term positions are going to be cut now? They are telling the employees. Please tell the Legislature.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I do not have that kind of specific figure at my fingertips, in terms of which courses may in fact be completed and which terms will be coming to an end. That is something that is dealt with by the community college, by the president of the community college and by the PACE division.

Mr. Speaker, I will endeavour to get that information for the member, in terms of how many term employees may have received some notices, which I may not be aware of at this time.

Manufacturing Industry Job Losses

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I have another question to ask the Minister of Finance: How does the government plan to cope with the problem of disappearing jobs in the private sector, especially in manufacturing? Can the minister explain why we have fewer people employed in the manufacturing industry today than three years ago when this government took office?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): In case the member did not know, we are in the depth of a recession. I would think he, of all people, who studies the economic statistics in such great depth, that he himself would understand that we are in the middle of a recession, and that there are manufacturing job losses all across the land; indeed, all across the continent; indeed, all across the western world. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, what is occurring here in Manitoba, in a proportional sense, is no different than is occurring anywhere else in Canada.

Tourism Government Strategy

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

Mr. Speaker, tourism in Manitoba is almost a \$1-billion-a-year industry. It is not evident, however, that this government recognizes how important

tourism is to our province. According to the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, there was a 30 percent increase in the number of day trips Manitobans took to U.S. destinations last year, and last year a corresponding decrease in the number of U.S. citizens who came to the province of Manitoba.

My question to the Minister responsible for Tourism is: What concrete steps is this minister going to take to reverse that trend? Why have we seen no provincial advertising campaign, and what is the tourism strategy of this government?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, the member for Flin Flon, I think, is melding two issues here. In terms of the area of tourism, we are currently spending approximately \$2 million, focused on the northern United States, Manitoba, parts of Ontario and Saskatchewan in terms of a focused market, in terms of the kinds of tourists and the opportunities available to Manitoba.

North Dakota was our primary market last year. We had in excess of 200,000 visitors from the state of North Dakota attend here in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, you could translate that into a decline in tourists from the U.S.

My second question is: Given that the same study indicates that \$300 million is being spent in the U.S. by Manitoba citizens and that is decimating our small business sector in Manitoba, can the minister indicate what he intends to do to prevent this drain, to promote Manitoba to Manitobans and to U.S. visitors?

Mr. Stefanson: The second issue that I referred to—the first one is the whole area of tourism. The other area is whatever term you want to call or utilize in terms of leakage.

There are several reasons, I gather, why people from Winnipeg and Manitoba are in fact going down to the United States. It is happening I might add all across Canada in the southern part of Canada. In some cases it is for a short holiday or getaway, but more often it appears to be on the basis of price of goods and those kinds of things and the difference now in our dollar, with the Canadian dollar getting much stronger.

The kinds of things that we are trying to do are very important to change that, Mr. Speaker, in terms

of improving the business climate here in Manitoba so businesses can in fact be more competitive to keep the dollars here in Manitoba, not like the days of the NDP government when we had the highest—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Small Business Bankruptcy Rate

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the minister seems to have forgotten the fact that the 30 percent increase in people leaving the province was under the Tory government.

My final question is, yesterday Statistics Canada reported a 60 percent increase in bankruptcies in the province of Manitoba. What is this minister going to do to improve the situation for small businesses in the province of Manitoba to keep people spending their dollars in Manitoba, other than talk about the problem and blame it on the previous government?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, it is hard not to blame it on the previous government when you look at the disastrous record that occurred under the previous government.

If you want to talk about bankruptcies, let us talk about the last 20 years in Manitoba. I will share a statistic with you—and I touched on part of it the other day in terms of bankruptcies—just to let you know in terms of what is happening in Manitoba.

It is true. Unfortunately, we are facing some bankruptcies. As I said the other day, that is in fact happening all across Canada. To compare Manitoba to what is happening across Canada the only good news is that we are not suffering as many bankruptcies and unfortunate situations here in Manitoba.

I want to share something with you, Mr. Speaker. The rate in Manitoba, as I indicated the other day, is currently, approximately 44 per 1,000, up from a rate of 41 per 1,000. The statistics I want to get to, which are very important, is to put this in perspective. The highest level of bankruptcies per 1,000 starts in Manitoba occurring over the last 20 years occurred in 1982 and 1983, at 58 per 1,000, 35 per 1,000. Who was the government of the day? They should know as well as anybody what develops during a recession.

Main Street Project Alternate Detention Facilities

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

The Main Street Project will stop accepting involuntary admissions under The Intoxicated Persons Detention Act in just 10 days. The Main Street Project has served some of the most vulnerable and destitute people in this province on our behalf for many, many years.

Tragically, a jurisdictional squabble between this government and the City of Winnipeg appears to have killed the process of finding a new centre for these people. Mr. Speaker, what must be accepted by this minister is that it is his and his alone responsibility.

Will the minister tell the House what plans he has in place for April 1?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I would invite the honourable member to leaf through the two-page Intoxicated Persons Detention Act and read it. That act, in effect, sets out, Mr. Speaker, that if there is a facility available in a community then the Minister of Justice can designate such a facility to be used for IPDA purposes.

However, the Main Street Project is indeed a problem. I have visited that facility, and there are significant problems associated with the facility. The honourable member suggests nothing is being done. I disagree with that, because there have indeed been discussions between the operators of the project, civic officials, and provincial officials. I hope to have more to say about that at a future time.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Speaker's Rulings

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Orders of the Day, I have two rulings for the House.

On Friday, March 15, 1991, I took under advisement a matter of privilege raised by the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). In raising the matter, the minister moved, "That the member for Osborne in presenting his matter of privilege on March 14, 1991, provided inaccurate and misleading information to the House and that the member for Osborne should withdraw the inaccurate information and apologize to the House."

I would like to thank honourable members for their advice to the Chair on this matter.

* (1430)

In his submission, the Minister of Health went somewhat further than his motion indicated. In addition to arguing that the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) in developing his matter of privilege had made inaccurate statements, the Minister of Health submitted that the basic premise of the member for Osborne was that a police investigation had never been undertaken with respect to an MLA being in possession of confidential material. The minister stated that, in fact, there had been a police investigation over an incident in 1985 which had involved him. The Minister of Health then asked that the member for Osborne withdraw his matter of privilege, because it was based on the false premise that he, the member for Osborne, had been singled out for police investigation.

Beauchesne, 6th Edition, Citation 31(1) states that a dispute over the facts is not the basis of a matter of privilege. On page 76 of our Manitoba rule book this principle is reiterated. Further, the authority Joseph Maingot, in *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada* at pages 190 and 191, makes the same point and also states that alleging that someone misled the House is definitely not a matter of privilege.

In any event, the words complained of were withdrawn by the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), immediately before the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) raised his question of privilege, when the member for Osborne stated, "I did make a statement that suggested that the Minister of Health was knowingly in possession of documents that may have been stolen. I wish to withdraw any allegation, any imputation of the reputation or the motives of the Minister of Health."

The Chair indicated at that time that the withdrawal was satisfactory. Indeed, the Minister of Health shortly thereafter stated, "I thank my honourable friend for his apology regarding his accusations which were not accurate about myself, and I thank him for that." That, I believe, puts to rest the first point.

Perhaps the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) was intending to provide some further guidance to the Chair respecting the matter of privilege raised by the honourable member for Osborne, when the Minister of Health suggested that the matter was out of order

because it was entirely based on false premise. I had already heard argument on that matter and had taken it under advisement.

It seems to the Chair that the Minister of Health was using a question of privilege to debate facts presented on the previous day by the member for Osborne. Such remarks, I suggest, would have been appropriate for debate of that original matter of privilege when and if it was debated.

Based on the procedural references cited, I must rule that there is no prima facie evidence of a breach of privilege. What was complained of by the Minister of Health was a dispute over the facts. Therefore, the motion is out of order as a matter of privilege.

* * *

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

On Thursday, March 14, the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) rose on a matter of privilege and moved: That this Legislature censure the Minister of Finance (Mr. Orchard) for his attempted intimidation of a member of this Legislature.

At that time the matter was taken under advisement. I thank all honourable members for their advice to the Chair on this matter.

There are two conditions to be met in order for a matter of privilege to proceed. The first is one of timeliness. Was the matter raised at the first opportunity? I am satisfied that this condition was met and that the honourable member for Osborne did bring the matter to the House at the start of the sitting immediately after the incident of which he had complained had taken place.

The second condition to be met is whether a prima facie case of privilege has been established. As has been noted in past rulings, as Speaker I am not ruling per se as to whether a breach of the member's privileges has occurred. That is for the House to decide. What I am charged to do as Speaker is to determine whether a claim of a breach of privilege appears to be sufficiently involved to justify giving it precedence over the Orders of the Day.

In his submission, the member alleged that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) had attempted to prevent him from exercising his responsibilities as

an MLA. In particular, he alleged that the minister had "begun a campaign of intimidation, attempting to prevent myself"—himself, the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock)—"among others, from continuing to expose the incompetence of the management of the Department of Finance." In particular, he alleged that the minister had "seen fit to instruct the police to enter" his office and interview him on the matter of how he had come into possession of certain tax records of the Taxation Division of the Department of Finance.

To claim that a member has been intimidated is to claim that the member has been obstructed or interfered with in the performance of his or her parliamentary duties. The authorities on privilege have this to say: *Beauchesne*, 6th Edition, Citation 92 states: "A valid claim of privilege in respect to interference with a Member must relate to the Member's parliamentary duties and not to the work the Member does in relation to that Member's constituency." Joseph Maingot, in his book *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada*, elaborates on this point: "There must be some act that improperly interferes with the Member's rights, such as freedom of speech. The interference, however, must not only obstruct the Member in his (or her) capacity as a Member, it must obstruct or allege to obstruct the Member in his (or her) parliamentary work." "In other words, it must be shown that the Member was obstructed in his (or her) work relating to a proceeding in Parliament and not simply while he (or she) was performing his (or her) representative duties in his (or her) constituency or in other myriad areas."

My ruling of December 29, 1988 and the rulings of House of Commons Speaker Lamoureux in 1971 and Speaker Jerome in 1975 further clarify that privilege only applies to a member when the member's action directly involves a proceeding in parliament.

It is clear then that the alleged breach of privilege was not linked to any proceeding in parliament. The duties that the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) alleged were being interfered with were not clearly identified nor was there any indication that the parliamentary duties of the member had been obstructed or interfered with. It then follows that the honourable member's charge that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) had attempted to intimidate him is not a valid case of privilege.

I wish at this time to comment on the submission of the opposition House leader (Mr. Ashton) that the investigation by the police within the precincts of parliament was questionable. I would draw to the attention of the House that the facts stated do not indicate that police were acting on a search warrant, nor did they seek to enter the parliamentary precincts unannounced. Further, the Manitoba situation is different from that in Ottawa, (as outlined in *Beauchesne*) in that control of the building in Manitoba is in the hands of the government, not in those of the Speaker. Even in Ottawa, the question of police within the precincts of parliament is not a clear-cut one.

Also, I wish to address the point raised by the Attorney General and Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) that the incident in question could be subject to the sub-judice convention. *Beauchesne* is clear that the sub-judice convention is applied to matters awaiting or undergoing trial or to matters which have been appealed. As it is my understanding that no charges have been laid, the sub-judice convention does not apply.

In conclusion, for the reasons that the matter raised by the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) did not relate to a proceeding in parliament and because it did not obstruct the member's ability to perform his duties in a parliamentary sense, I must rule that there is no prima facie case of privilege. Therefore this motion is out of order as a matter of privilege.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, may I ask leave of the House to revert back to tabling of reports?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable minister have leave to revert back to ministerial statements and tabling of reports? Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report of the Manitoba Universities Grants Commission.

* (1440)

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hickey (Point Douglas): Moved by the member for Point Douglas, seconded by the member for Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans), that the composition of the Standing Committee on

Economic Development be amended as follows: the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) for the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes); the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) for the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, before I call the motion to go into Interim Supply, I wonder if I could officially notify the House that the Standing Committee dealing with Economic Development slated for April 2, that added to the consideration of the Communities Economic Development Fund for '88-89 will be added the '89-90 report which was tabled today.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that you call the motion on the Order Paper dealing with Interim Supply.

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that this House will at this sitting resolve itself into committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): I would like to speak on the Interim Supply.

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the motion that the First Minister has called is already on the Order Paper. The member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) would like to speak on that motion.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the honourable member for Flin Flon, there has already been agreement on the motion that was on the Order Paper.

The honourable Minister of Finance will be moving into the next step for Interim Supply which is also a debatable motion.

SUPPLY—INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of

Justice (Mr. McCrae), that this House will at this sitting resolve itself into a committee to consider Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion presented.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): I would like to begin by trying to understand the decision-making process that is going on in this government. We are supposed to be a democratic government, and we have been elected here as representatives of the people, the constituents. They are supposed to be our principal to convey the wishes, the preferences, the values and, through us, make and arrive at certain decisions that affect every individual, every group and the society in general. We are supposed to be accountable to them, the voters who have elected us, to these positions in the legislative body.

Yet when we achieve that status and the position, and have now been placed in positions of authority to make decisions for the community, for the groups, for the individual, there is a tendency for us to ignore the very wishes of those people who have placed us in positions of authority.

I am appalled by the divergence between the theory and the practice of democracy when we deny access to the citizens of this province to their very own Legislature, to which they have elected their representatives to speak for them. It is a case where the agent had now arrogated upon itself the authority that should ultimately reside on the principals, namely the voters, the citizens on whom resides the sovereign political power. The students, particularly, we have shown them, when we bar the grounds of this Assembly to access and prevent access to their own Legislature, this is unconscionable divergence from our theory of democratic accountability to the people.

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

How can a government in an enlightened, civilized western country do such a thing like that, barring their own citizens from expressing their concern about public issues that particularly affect them?

An Honourable Member: This is the point you wanted to talk about yesterday, is it not?

Mr. Santos: I am talking about democracy and decision making in government, and this is relevant to decision making, even about the allocation of

resources. It is essential that this matter of principle be raised at every opportunity.

It took a glorious revolution in England to establish the basic democratic principle that it is Parliament that is sovereign over the executive. The executive can in no way dictate how the sovereign body of the people, the Legislative Assembly of the people, shall be run and shall be operated. Indirectly, the executive government, the government of this province, cannot define how the procedures and activities of the House, of this Assembly, should be done. That is simply contrary to the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty.

Well, the sovereign Legislative Assembly of the people is the highest court in the land, to which everybody must pay heed; yet the Legislative Assembly, as it is, is simply an expression, a manifestation of delegated power and authority from the sovereign people. When the sovereign people, including the students, are barred from even looking at the very process by which decisions are made that particularly affect them, this is truly undemocratic and truly authoritarian.

An Honourable Member: Are those the students who walk on somebody's car?

* (1450)

Mr. Santos: Civil disobedience to express disappointment about the actions of government is not being condoned, but law and order cannot be used as a protection in order to suppress the liberty of the people to hear what the constituents are saying. If this government, if this insidious practice shall be condoned and uncriticized, this is the beginning of the loss of liberty of the people. Of all the agencies in society, of all the organizations—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Santos:—in society, only the government has the legitimate right to use force in a legitimate way. The only justification for the use of force by government in order to maintain order is to promote the interest and benefit of all the people. There is no case here that these students are about to destroy that basic order in our society. Of all the segments of society, the most enlightened, the most educated segment of this society are the students at the university level.

Yet this government is denying them the basic right to express their right to express their dissent,

to express their opinion and differ in the policies of this government. What does this government want to do? It wants to dictate and control everything. That is not consistent with democracy, and particularly so if it touches the hallowed ground of this Legislative Assembly. When this Legislative Assembly is no longer open to the access of its own citizens, then I say that is the beginning of the death of democracy in this civilized society.

Point of Order

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): I am having great difficulty hearing the comments of my honourable friend from Broadway, and I would ask you to call to order the members opposite so that I might have the opportunity to listen to the speech, please.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I would request that all honourable members in this House maintain some decorum and order. The honourable member for Broadway has the floor.

* * *

Mr. Santos: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Something is wrong with this government. I understand that these are difficult times. I understand that resources, particularly financial resources, are limited. The receipts of government are flat. It is a general economic depression throughout this country, including this province. By definition, material resources of society are always scarce.

There is never enough in order to do what we want to do. Therefore, if decisions are to be made, decisions must be made on the basis of competing values and competing priorities in society. Among these competing values are those values that relate to human needs and those values that relate to the saving of wealth and resources. There must be something wrong with the government—in order to save money, start cutting down basic social services.

The bare existence of government, as I have indicated before, is for the purpose of providing basic and essential services to its own people. The obligation and duty of government does not cease simply because revenue is low and money is difficult to come by. Regardless of the degree of prosperity or the degree of difficulty in the economy, basic essential services is a right of every citizen and, whatever the economic pie may be, everybody must

equitably have a share to that economic pie. It is wrong when the basic essential needs of the poorest segment of society are sacrificed, and they are being asked to give up some more of the very little that they have. Truly that is the realization of the basic paradox in our society: To those who have more, more shall be given; those that have none, even the very little that they have will be taken away.

Something is wrong when certain segments of our society, who are unable to help themselves and are in a difficult position to bargain or deal with a bureaucratic agency, have nowhere else to turn for help to help themselves. I received a phone call the other day from a disabled constituent of mine. He has some disabilities and, basically, health problems. He had high blood pressure. What did the government do, Madam Deputy Speaker? They deprived him of even this item to have a telephone in his little room. They would not permit and give him a little item, a little amount of money to pay for a telephone. He was so anxious and so afraid that should he suffer any health problem, he has no way to communicate or to call an ambulance. That is to me an irrational kind of savings measure, if that is the case.

Something is wrong when it is implied that he cannot handle his money, and his little assistance is split and given to him every two weeks and he cannot plan his budget. This is oppression, Madam Deputy Speaker, and it cannot be condoned by not saying anything about it.

Though we may be saving a little bit of money by scrimping on basic essential services, that is not the purpose of government. The purpose of government is to equitably distribute the resources of society according to the principle of social justice. The principle of social justice dictates that whatever little resources we have in our society should be so allocated so that those who have the most need should at least have a priority, a little of everything that they need to meet their essential services in order that no human being may be deprived of a decent style of living.

It is wrong for government to deal harshly with the workers, particularly with our health care workers.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There appears to be some question in the minds of some honourable members as to why they see the lens of a camera here. For the information of members, the only thing

that is being filmed is Question Period. We are right now training a young individual. There is no film in the camera and it is not wired to anything. There is no video display leaving the Chamber. I am just making members aware of the fact—order, please—the camera has been here now for two weeks. This young fellow has just been training, and actually all he is doing is focussing his camera and learning how to run it.

Mr. Santos: It is morally wrong to deal harshly with the workers, even workers in our public services, to leave their faith in the limbo of uncertainty without telling them whether they will be moved, be demoted, be transferred, or their positions will be abolished. It is to be harsh and callous to human problems and human needs.

Every worker, whether in the public or private sphere of activity, has a family to feed, a mortgage to pay. They have budgets to meet. To leave them hanging out in the air without knowing what will be done is simply oppressive to the individual human being. That is not the function of government.

It is also wrong for any government to intensify the already existing antagonism between different segments of competing groups in society. To create and foment deep, irreconcilable antagonism between labour and capital, between management and worker is detrimental to the stability and peace in our society.

These are the two partners in our economy that provide all the necessary factor inputs in order that the productive activities of the society may produce the essential goods and services that we need. It is intended that there be an atmosphere of partnership and co-operation between all the sectors of society in order that the welfare and benefit of everyone will be duly protected.

To intensify the antagonism by trying to suppress their own liberty to organize and bargain for their own benefit and welfare according to the basic rule of the collective bargaining process is to destroy the stability and harmony among the competing groups in our society.

* (1500)

Social bias, discriminatory treatment cannot be rectified by the unequal and inequitable distribution of resources. It is said that the government cannot increase the allocation to the public schools. Why?

Because they have given so much to the private schools. That is not equitable.

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

The public school is to be given a rate of increase that is below inflation, and yet the private school is given an 11 percent increase. That is not equitable. The equitable thing to do is to give a share to everyone in such a manner that will be perceived as just and fair. To violate justice, to violate fairness is to endanger the very stability of this government.

Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie): Do any of your children go to university at no expense, Conrad? Do you have any children in school, university?

Mr. Santos: Yes, I have some children.

Mr. Connery: At university?

Mr. Santos: Yes.

Mr. Connery: Are they paying their tuition or are they getting it free?

Mr. Santos: The honourable member for Portage la Prairie was asking me all these questions. Naturally, as a parent, I have to help support my children.

Mr. Connery: Are they going to university tuition-free because you are a professor? Tell us, are they?

Mr. Santos: I had to pay for the tuition.

Mr. Connery: Do you get it back?

Mr. Santos: If they make the grade, I do.

Mr. Connery: Oh, there is one to one. Now he is complaining.

Mr. Santos: I am not complaining.

Mr. Connery: His own children go to university free. Now is that not democracy, when other students have to pay, and you are standing up there talking—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Santos: The member will have his chance to speak if he wants to. All I am saying is that all the resources in society, whether it is in the elementary school, primary school, in the school divisions, in private schools—I am not denying anyone any share. All I am saying is that the share should be equitably distributed between all the elements and segments of society. If you allocate a larger percentage, a larger proportion to some segments because they are ideologically close to you, you are

fomenting these divisions, antipathies and disharmony in society.

All resources, material resources, as long as they are material, are by definition limited because if you have a little amount of money in your pocket, the more you give to your left hand, the less you have in your right hand. All resources by definition are limited, therefore the only way by which they can be usefully used to the benefit of everyone is to allocate them equitably regardless of ideological orientation, regardless of whether they voted against you or not, regardless they are your friends ideologically or not.

To allocate several million dollars of training assistance to the private corporations and private firms, and then to cut down on this basic training program in our community colleges and universities that train those who cannot necessarily be working for private corporations, is to indulge in unfairness and inequity that destroys harmony in society.

If this government has no courage to impose taxation in order to share the burden of civilized government, then this government should at least conform to the doctrine of fairness and equity in the allocation and sharing of the public resources. You can be alone as long as you are morally right and yet not fear anybody. I can be the voice in the wilderness, it does not matter as long as I distribute and anything that falls in my mouth is the truth and for the good of everyone.

How do we allocate resources among competing claims? How shall it be decided? X amount of money, should this amount of money go to activity A rather than to activity B, or activity C? How do we decide how to allocate the resources especially if the resources are very limited?

Let us try to find out the best way how we can allocate the limited amount of resources. Okay, you must have certain standards and criteria. What are some of the suggested standards for rational allocation of limited resources? That is the first question. Now, if we run a deficit by borrowing, it depends whether we borrow from within the economy or borrow from outside the economy. If we borrow from outside the economy, remember you have interest charges that you have to put up over there and it will lift the economy.

An Honourable Member: Now, are those bad?

Mr. Santos: It depends because you have to compare those interest charges outside with the

prevailing interest rate inside. There is only one economy all across Canada. Despite jurisdictional division, there is only one economy. You cannot fight inflation in Ontario and say that high interest rates should only be obtained up to the border in Ontario, and then the rest of the country should have a low interest rate. That is impossible.

The problem is when the federal government is trying to pull down the inflationary pressure in Ontario we have to suffer the burden of high interest rates in western Canada, and that is detrimental to our productivity in western Canada.

An Honourable Member: It should be lower.

Mr. Santos: I said it depends on whether the interest rate outside the economy is lower than the interest rate inside the economy. It depends on other considerations. If they are the same, then you have to borrow from within.

An Honourable Member: Is that better than borrowing from without?

Mr. Santos: That is better than borrowing from outside, because when you borrow from your own citizens, your citizens are investing in their own government. When they do invest in their own government and they receive their interest payment, they will use the interest payment as their money to spend within the economy and that will stimulate all the economic activities in the sense that they will be able to buy goods and services. If they are able to buy goods and services, the manufacturer will have some incentive to manufacture more. If they are manufacturing more because there is demand for their products, they can hire more workers. If they can hire more workers, then there will be more people who will have access to their means of livelihood. All of this occurs in economic circles.

An Honourable Member: Should we ever pay them back?

Mr. Santos: The practice that has been done by government is to pay them by borrowing again, by issuing another series.

An Honourable Member: Is that good or bad?

Mr. Santos: The question is, good for whom, bad for whom? You have to pay them back, because you have to redeem them when the maturity dates come, and you can only redeem them if you have some money to pay them. You can have some money to pay them only when you issue some more bonds and some more securities, because if you do not

issue them, the only resort is for you to print more money. If you print more money without corresponding economic activity, you intensify inflation. It will be like Brazil where inflation is about 1000 percent, because they only print money.

An Honourable Member: Conrad, can I borrow some money from you? I like your finance. I would like to borrow some money off you; it would be within this Chamber.

Mr. Santos: The honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) is reputed to have so much money that he does not know anything what to do about his money.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

* (1510)

Mr. Santos: I do not lend them; I give them away to meritorious cases. -(interjection)- If the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) wants to speak, then he can stand, but I cannot speak with him talking there. -(interjection)-

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Santos: Madam Deputy Speaker, the honourable member asks me on what standard, on what criterion, should they allocate X amount of money for certain activity A, as against activity B or activity C. The one standard that is being suggested by economists is what they call the "doctrine of marginal utility." What does this mean? The economics authority named Pigou said, resources should be distributed among different uses such that the marginal return of satisfaction is the same for all of them. Expenditures should be distributed between battleships and poor relief in such a way that the last shilling devoted to each of them yields the same real return. The question is, how do you assess the utility that you derive from undertaking a certain set of activities as against another set of activity?

If, in the assessment of the decision maker, the value and the utility that is derived from undertaking activity A is much greater than undertaking activity B or activity C, then the resources should proportionately be allocated to that set of activity that gives the most utility.

Now, the question is: Is our health less important than competing activities, like training program for some corporate employees? Is public school less important than private school? Why is there \$100 million given to private schools, who by definition

are already in the wealthier segment of society and deprive the public school and not give them anything when only the public school can attend to the education of those who are poor and who are helpless in society.

I am not denying aid to any group or any interest groups. All I am saying is that the amount of resources that are to be allocated should be proportionate to their needs. There was a great socialist philosopher by the name of Proudhon, and that is where Marx borrowed the phrase, from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.

An Honourable Member: Now we are quoting Marx. You see, that is the true philosophy—

Mr. Santos: Marx is a misunderstanding. I just told the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) that is not from Marx. He just borrowed it from the French socialist Proudhon.

An Honourable Member: They follow Groucho Marx theory.

Mr. Santos: Maybe the member is familiar with Groucho Marx but not with Karl Marx.

The most quoted scholar all across the literature, No. 1, is Karl Marx. The next one was Shakespeare, but we are not concerned whether he is in this category or that category. What we want to analyze is if there is any grain of truth in what he is saying. If our minds are closed simply because we belong to one ideological set, and we never open up or question anything, then shame on us, because we cannot understand and compare things.

An Honourable Member: We will send your speech today to your constituents.

Mr. Santos: Go ahead.

You said communism is bad. When the first Christians were trying to struggle and establish themselves, they surrendered everything they owned to the community and they lived as one unit. They had no sense of ownership of what is mine as against yours. Is that bad? The only reason why we cannot do it today is because of the establishment in our institution of certain concepts of private property, concepts of inheritance, concepts of right to this and right to that to the exclusion of other human beings.

Health is our most important wealth. You may have all the money in the world that you do not know

what to do about it, but if you cannot even eat anything but banana and milk, shame on you.

An Honourable Member: What? How did we get into food?

Mr. Santos: Because you are not using the resources that are entrusted to yourselves for the good of human beings. Our resources that are given to us are given for a purpose, and the purpose is more important than the possession of it. If we are so engrossed with the possession of things and we have devoted all our life to the pursuit of accumulating things and have never used them for the good of human beings, then we have violated our trust.

An Honourable Member: Then why are you not prepared to say zero percent on your increase in salaries this year? You people want an increase. You want more, more, more.

Mr. Santos: Do you know—just remember now—

An Honourable Member: Why are you not saying, enough with the constituency allowances?

An Honourable Member: The party of greed. Did your party push up and want as much as they could out of the constituency allowances? The first year when it was in the House, you wanted 25. You should know that is ridiculous when all of your party said four.

Mr. Santos: The constituency allowance is essential to the performance of our role as servants of the people. It is essential in order that we can communicate and serve our constituents. If we deprive ourselves of that resource in order to attend to the needs of our own constituents, if we only think about ourselves, then we are not being true to our role as representatives of the people.

There are mounting health needs in this province, especially among senior citizens. They are becoming concerned about the developments that are going on at all levels of government. The Mulroney government has just again frozen for the next three years the established program financing for health care and for education. They have already capped what the provinces can spend on those two areas as far as these provinces are concerned. Pretty soon we will have no choice, perhaps—I cannot foretell the future—but there will be greater and greater astringency in order that we can sustain our essential health care services.

The mounting need for health care in our society, all the more, should justify for us allocating a proportionate amount of our resources in order to meet the health care needs of our own people. If we put all our concern and our purpose on saving money at the expense of human suffering and human misery, I say we are being shortsighted and being too materialistic. Why do all the ministers then have to give up their salary increases? Why does the minister or anybody in position of cabinet, why do they have to maintain executive assistants? Because it is one of the essential means by which you can perform your duty as cabinet minister. Why do you deprive this to rural people in your cabinet when they can no longer represent their constituents? Is that fair? Now, the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) becomes quiet. I touched a sensitive cord.

* (1520)

The long-term needs of our society and the long-term needs of our province are to increase productivity, but that can only be done when there is a better allocation of the factor inputs of production, only when there is better management of the resources, only when we use more efficient procedures, more effective procedures. The moment we indulge in inequitable and unfair distribution of resources, the moment we shelter the confidence of the people in their own government, the moment we debar them from even accessing this Legislative Assembly, we are now creating the very problem that will haunt us the rest of the century.

There is a need for satisfying the needs of the people in the areas of health, in the areas of education, in the areas of the protection of the workers and the protection of consumers. The government must do all the best that it can do, given the stringency of financial resources, in order to satisfactorily meet at the appropriate level the various needs of competing groups in society. The moment they indulge in unfair distribution of these resources, then the people themselves will be frustrated. They will lose their confidence in their own government, and they will no longer support the government that is in the realm of power at the present time.

I will now focus on how the government can increase the credibility of government in the eyes of the people by focusing on another type of resource

that is not necessarily limited. Maybe it is very difficult to understand this, but I said before that material resources are, by definition, limited. By implication, other types of resources, other types of values, those that are not material—they are not limited.

Let me give you an example. If I have money which is material, it is, by definition, limited in quantity and amount. The more I spend, the less I have. But if I have other values like fairness or love or concern, the more I am fair, the more I get richer. The more I give away concern for others, the more I get richer. The more love I give and extend to other people, the more I get richer in that resource because love, fairness, justice, these are nonmaterial things. The more you give them away, the more you have.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like now to conclude by saying that any government faced with a limited amount of material resources, material base for doing what it has to do, must distribute that little amount that they have in a most fair and equitable way to all groups following the dictates of marginal utility and fairness and justice.

The moment they deviate from that rule of fairness they destroy the credibility of government in the eyes of the people. If the government would like to regain and recoup some of the lost confidence of the people, then the government should, by promoting all kinds of programs of government in a fair and equitable way, will be able to endure.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity. Thank you.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe that if there is no one wishing to pursue—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: No, no.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): I appreciate the opportunity to rise again in this House and discuss issues directly and indirectly related to the governance of this province, particularly in the economic sphere as we are talking today about Interim Supply, which is discussing the government's funding of itself before the next budget comes down which we are all looking forward to within the next month.

I would like to begin by talking yet again as I have in the past about the basis upon which the current provincial Conservative government bases its throne speech, its budgets and its spending priorities in the province of Manitoba.

One of the statements that the government has been speaking about most vociferously over the last few months is the need to bring down the deficit that is, according to the government members, a direct response to the behaviour of the previous government. I would like to take exception to that rather simplistic kind of analysis and read into the record some of the historical elements that have gone into the current situation in the city of Winnipeg, in the rural and northern communities in our province, in the province as a whole, in Canada and, as well, throughout the North American continent.

Far from being a direct result of the actions of the previous New Democratic Party government, the financial and economic situation and social situation we find ourselves in today as Manitobans is, I would state, a direct response and a direct outcome of conservative fiscal behaviour over the last 20 years. I use the term conservative in its largest context to include not only Progressive Conservative governments but also Liberal governments.

I think we here in Manitoba forget or need to be reminded a lot of the time that for most of this century, the federal government which sets much of our tax policy has been Liberal. Many of the problems that we find ourselves in economically and socially today can be directly attributed to the monetary and fiscal policies of federal Liberal governments. As a matter of fact, it was the government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau that began this latest round of problems that we face in our economics today.

In 1975, the year that Mr. Turner left the Finance portfolio, federal Finance portfolio, his Liberals were in power in the federal government; 1975 was the year that the federal Liberals indexed the personal tax system to respond to inflation. This general tax break—and it was a general tax break—was quickly followed, however, by a series of special loopholes for corporations such as accelerated depreciation allowances.

I think that we must always keep in mind the fact that the difference between Liberal and Progressive

Conservative economic policies is very, very slight. The people of Manitoba need to be reminded, as I am sure they will be by members on this side of the House both provincially and federally, of the close connection between the fiscal and monetary policies of both federal Liberal and Progressive Conservative Parties and governments.

* (1530)

The Liberals, under the prime-ministership of Pierre Trudeau also lowered the top combined federal-provincial marginal tax rate for individuals from 56 percent to 50 percent and introduced such benefits for the rich and upper income as the Registered Home Ownership Savings Plan.

These kinds of financial policies only serve to have more money and more disposable income in the hands of those who have. In order to take advantage of these tax loopholes and these tax benefits, you have to have income and revenue to shelter. One of the basic philosophies of tax loopholes is that there must be revenue income money to protect from a progressive income tax system. The federal Liberals were the ones who initiated these tax loopholes for the wealthy.

The Tories came into office federally in 1984 and they, after they became government federally, instituted a \$500,000 lifetime capital gains tax exemption. They lifted \$6 billion in energy taxes. In 1987, the tax reform, so-called, put the taxes for the wealthiest portion of the citizens down from 50 percent, which had been instituted by the federal Liberals, to 45 percent. The only beneficiaries of Liberal tax policies and federal Tory tax policies have been the highest 1 percent of income earners.

A report has stated that Canadians with incomes over \$114,000 a year, since the Tories have been in power in Ottawa, have had their taxes cut by \$1,570 a year, while virtually all other Canadians, 99 percent of Canadians, experienced a net tax increase. This is tax reform. These are the basic financial policies upon which Canada and Manitoba have based their taxation systems under Progressive Conservative and Liberal federal governments.

It has also been studied and shown that if we instituted a truly progressive income tax system, whereby the more you earned or had access to, the more you paid; if we reintroduced that sense of progressivity into our tax system, we could raise \$13.2 billion in revenue each year. This is \$13.2 billion of revenue that the federal government is

forgoing knowingly by its federal taxation policies, and there are good and sufficient reasons for the Progressive Conservative government, both federally and provincially, to have taxation policies that benefit the rich.

If we add to that \$13.2 billion that has been forgone by the tax loopholes, with the federal interest rates which have fluctuated from a low of 9.5 percent to a peak of 19.3 percent in the last decade, again due to federal Progressive Conservative and Liberal financial and monetary policies, we could have avoided entirely this debt deficit monster that has been created.

Michael Wilson, the federal Finance minister, and I quote from Frances Russell's column of March 13 of this year. Michael Wilson, and I quote, "has cut and frozen payments to the provinces for health and post-secondary education. He has capped Ottawa's contribution to a wide range of social welfare measures in Canada's three 'have' provinces." I think it is interesting that she mentions while those provinces are classified as 'have' provinces in total, they also include one-half of the poor people in Canada. It is a double cut to those poor citizens. "He has instituted a 'clawback' of family allowances and old-age pensions from Canadians earning over \$50,000 a year." Again, another taking away from the concept that we all in this House at least give lip-service to, although some of us believe it more than others, of universality.

Quote: "And he has eliminated the federal government's contribution to unemployment insurance, making it both more difficult to obtain and of less benefit to out-of-work Canadians." These federal tax policies, and as provincial tax policies, as the provincial Progressive Conservatives have followed along, have had the effect of reducing the Canadian middle class. It has been reduced by 2 percent in the decade of the 1980s. So, as we have been saying on this side of the House, it truly is the fact that Canada is becoming like its large neighbour to the south, a nation of haves and have-nots, with the middle class, which has produced much of the backbone of this country over its history, being eliminated through federal Conservative-Liberal tax and fiscal policies.

The other interesting thing that the federal Conservative government has been trying to sell to the Canadian people—and, I believe, has done a

good selling job on its provincial government counterparts, as we have seen in their discussion of the budget of last year and this year's throne speech and the information that we are receiving on what will be in the next budget—is that the debt is what is causing us all of our problems. The debt is what has led Mr. Wilson to cut back on transfer payments to the provinces; the debt is what is causing the provincial government to cut back on its services to its weakest and most vulnerable members, when, in fact, on the federal level, Ottawa has been running an operating surplus for the last three years.

It is not the transfer payments to the provinces; it is not the payments to social services for aboriginal people; it is not the payments to run the public transportation system; it is not the payments to post-secondary education and the health care system in our country that is causing the deficit.

The environment and economic development and social policy issues are not what is causing the deficit. What is causing the deficit is the interest-rate policy followed by the federal government. The tight money, monetaristic, Reaganomics, right-wing Conservative, dead hand of Adam Smith, supply-side, social-Darwinistic, financial, fiscal and monetary policies followed by Conservative governments throughout the developed world has led to this problem we are in, but far be it from the people who have gained by these policies, and there are many. The large corporations have gained, wealthy Canadians, wealthy people throughout the western world have gained from these policies.

The people and groups that have supported the good life for the few are the middle class of this country and this province, the vulnerable and poor people in this country and this province, which includes large numbers of women, single-parent families, aboriginal people and those who live outside the large manufacturing centres of our country, but the people who benefit from the financial policies over the last 20 years by the federal government are having a very good time, thank you very much.

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

In 1988, well into the Tory federal mandate, the country went from red to black ink in its operating budget. This year, in 1990-91, the government will spend \$12 billion less on services than it will take in. So do not let anyone tell you that it is the social

policy spending. It is the services for health education, day care, services to women in violent situations, services to aboriginals, services to the poor, infrastructures and support for programs that help people attempt to get out of their cycle of poverty. These are not the issues, these are not the programs, these are not the policies that are creating the deficit problem that the country is in. It is the fiscal policies, the acknowledged fiscal tight-money policies of the federal government that have put us in the place that we are in.

* (1540)

I would like to quote again from Frances Russell of March 9 of this year: "If Finance Minister Michael Wilson's forecasts can still be believed"—and I would interject here that his forecasts have been notoriously inaccurate over the seven years, except politically speaking—"his Tory ideology will create a Kafkaesque scenario for Canada in 1996, \$37 billion surplus in government spending, twinned with a \$43.4 billion interest payment."

I think that states in a very brief sentence what we are facing here as a country and as a province. There is no question that we have high interest payments. There is no question that we have a debt load that we would choose not to have. I think it is very unfair on the part of both federal and provincial governments to state that that debt and that interest load is as a result of social spending, of safety-net spending, of spending that reflects our stated commitment to the concepts of universality, accessibility, affordability and portability.

The cornerstone of our medicare system, which is one of the most basic of our fundamental rights, is being eroded and threatened on all sides today, not because people are misusing the services, not because people are asking for too many social services. No, it is not because of the people of Canada, 99.9 percent of the people of Canada. It is because of the unconscionable behaviour and policies of the few who are in power in this country, who have been in power in this country, who refuse to listen to the needs and the rights of the many in order to follow along and listen only to the demands and the requests from their few.

We have heard on this side of the House, both on the record and off the record, members opposite talking about people going to the public trough of spending. I would suggest to honourable members opposite that they take a look at what really is

happening in this country and in this province, the people who are really going to the public trough.

In this country, and I am paraphrasing, I believe, David Lewis, although I would not swear to it, but one of the federal NDP Leaders when he said—it was Tommy Douglas—in Canada today, we have socialism for the rich and capitalism for the poor. I would suggest that the federal and provincial policies of Conservative governments and Liberal governments as well have followed through on that ideology very nicely.

You do not hear large corporations saying: Make our taxes fairer. We know we need to pay our fair share; we know in order to have a healthy economy with a well-educated, productive population, a high quality of life and a province and a country that people want to come to and want to participate in. You do not hear the large corporations like Brascan, Investors, Great West Life, Power Corporation, saying: Yes, we have not paid any taxes for X number of years; we have taken and taken and taken from this country; and now we want to start giving back to this country. You do not hear those corporations, you do not hear wealthy Canadians saying: Yes, it is time we took a look at what we have received out of this province and this country, and it is time that we put back into it. No, you do not hear that.

What you hear is a continuation of: If they are poor, it must be their fault; if they are unable to access health care, it must be their fault; if they are aboriginals and they do not live on the reserves, we are not going to support them; if they are single-parent women with small children, no education, lack of job opportunities, it must be their fault, particularly in situations in the rural areas of this province.

I think members opposite who represent rural areas in this province should take a very hard look at what their government is planning to do for services to their constituents. I am not talking here about programs that benefit women and children and families and seniors who live in the urban areas, so you cannot tell me that I am only after people who vote New Democrat. I am talking about the services that are provided in the southeastern and southwestern parts of this province which are traditionally, strongly Conservative in their voting patterns.

Those people are being threatened with massive cutbacks to the programs that in many cases are their single lifeline to an ability to get off Social Allowance, a chance at a productive, happy quality of life. This government following in the footsteps of its federal counterparts and its historical background is threatening to cut-off programs such as the Human Resources Opportunity Centres, the Human Resources Opportunity programs which help Social Assistance people in the rural areas as well as in the city of Winnipeg, people who live in small communities far away from, or actually in very definitely rural areas who have a lack of transportation facilities, who have very few social networks, who have no access to support services.

Many of them, their only chance has been the Human Resources Opportunity Centres and Human Resources Opportunity programs instituted by the previous government, and this government is threatening to cut back if not entirely eliminate many of those centres and those programs thereby forcing those people to either remain on Social Assistance or to go on Social Assistance for the first time. And then they will say, well, they do not try, they do not care. If they wanted to, we made it by ourselves, they can make it by themselves. Look, we can prove it by the fact that they are not getting jobs, they are not getting training, they are not getting education. What they are not getting from this government and will not get from this government, as long as it is following its conservative regressive ideologies and fiscal policies, is the acknowledgment that these people are worthy, that they are valuable members of our society and that we as a society have a responsibility to take care of them.

* (1550)

In his Speech from the Throne, the Premier spoke about the quality of life in Manitoba and he specifically stated areas such as quilting bees, church socials and the like. Those qualities, those very qualities that have an urban counterpart as well, in church socials and block parties, that kind of thing, those qualities that this government talks about, that it is in actuality cutting back are the spirit of co-operation, and understanding that everybody deserves a chance, understanding that there are times when people do not have the resources to be able to do it on their own. When a farmer loses his crop through a fire, when he loses his barn, when he loses some livestock, when he loses his home,

what happens? His neighbours come and help him rebuild.

When someone in a small community has a problem, historically the theory has always been that people in small towns help each other. Well, I would suggest that has been the case and if people are given the opportunity they will always help each other in small communities, in large communities, and urban centers, in rural centers, in the north, all throughout this province and this country. People want to participate. They want to help each other.

The government is not allowing people to be able to help themselves. They are not giving the basic supports that will enable communities and individuals and groups to work together, to share with each other, to espouse those values that were talked about in the Speech from the Throne and that members opposite keep referring to. Well, it becomes just a bit—members on this side of the House start to become very cynical when they continue to hear that. Because the actions of this government, the actions of its Tory predecessors when they were in power in this province, the actions of federal Liberal and Conservative governments put the lie to all of those platitudes. They are truths but in the mouths of this government they are nothing but platitudes. The people of Manitoba, when they get this budget, they will see that they are meaningless platitudes mouthed only for political purposes.

The Premier of this province is fond of saying, particularly in this session, when asked legitimate questions by members opposite, by members of the official opposition, on program cuts, on services, on the government's plans, on what the government is going to do about a particular situation, he accuses the official opposition of playing to the media, of going for the eight-second clip, of doing it for crass partisan politics.

I would like to suggest that the government's actions, or I should say more accurately inactions, are following a blind ideology. They are following a very well thought out, although it does not appear to be very well thought out on the surface, but if you pause to reflect on what this government has done in its tenure you will see that they are following very closely Conservative thinking, which is the least government is the best government. Do little, do littler, do least, and we are getting to that point.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

The Conservative provincial government, according to what it says in Question Period and in the media and in its Speech from the Throne, cannot do anything because the federal government is cutting back because the global economy is bad, because, because, because, because of what the New Democratic Party government did, because of what the Saskatchewan government did, because of what the Ontario government did, because of what the American government did. They are refusing to take any responsibility for the fact that they were elected to govern and to govern means taking responsibility and doing something.

Government is an active activity, or it should be. The act of governing means more than sitting in a chair in a minister's office and responding. It means listening to the concerns of the population as shown by questions by the opposition parties which reflect a degree of the population, concerns of a legitimate part of the population.

Being in government demands that you respond and you listen to constituent groups which come before the government and the Legislature, constituent groups such as students. It means saying yes, we will listen to your concerns. We may not be able to handle or deal 100 percent with your concerns. We must govern for the entire province, but the very least we will do is do you the service of respecting your right to have an opinion, your reflecting the opinions of the group that you are representing, and we will listen to you.

This government has not done that. This government has narrowed the access of ordinary Manitobans to this House to its representatives. The behaviour of this government in padlocking the doors of this Legislature yesterday was unheard of.

I was talking to a constituent of mine yesterday and I assured with him what had happened to us in this House, how students with legitimate passes and many empty seats in the visitors' gallery were not allowed in to listen to their elected representatives debate issues that are of major concern to them. They were not allowed to do that.

This gentleman had just spent some time down in the United States a couple of months ago and he was in Washington D.C. the day after the coalition had gone to war in The Gulf, the day after, January 16th. He was very interested because he said, my wife and I walked around Washington; now we could not get into the White House, but we got in the

Senate building, the House of Representatives building, the Treasury building. We had no problem getting access into every single public building in Washington, D.C. This is while a nation is at war.

Now, are we at war in Manitoba? Are we at war in Manitoba? No, theoretically we are not, but I would suggest to you that in effect this government's actions are provoking, are engendering, they are advancing the cause of warfare in this province. Now, I am suggesting that there were legitimate individuals who had legitimate, duly-authorized passes to this House, and they were not allowed access to this Chamber.

An Honourable Member: How are you going to let two or three of them through? How are you going to do that?

Ms. Barrett: There is no reason. This is a public building and until last fall individuals and groups of citizens were allowed access to the building that houses their government, to the building that houses the offices of the people that represent them or are supposed to represent them. This government is insulating itself, and it knows darn well why it is insulating itself because it knows that its policies affect and provide services for the 1 percent, not the 99 percent of Manitobans and Canadians who want to be able to participate productively in the life and the economy and the activity of their communities and their province and their country, and they are being told no.

All we are interested in is toadying up to the people who support us, the large corporations, the wealthy Canadians and Manitobans who support both old-line political parties with finances and other forms of political support. They are not interested in providing services for the people in our province and our society who are unable to be completely independent and active in a total Tory, reactionary situation.

I would like to speak for a moment about one portion of that community that I am talking about which happens to be the major portion of our society, the 52 percent of our society which is made up of women. I would like to suggest that the policies of this government, the monetary policies of this government, have done nothing to advance the cause of women, have done nothing to advance the cause of children and families but have only advanced the cause of the rich and the powerful.

The programs, I am sure, when we come up to them in the next budget will bear this out.

* (1600)

Women do 65 percent of the world's work; however, they have access or control of only 10 percent of the world's wealth and less than 1 percent of the world's property. The actual fact is that in every single country in this world including the developed countries there are elements of Third World underdevelopment that can be related to women.

Forexample, and I will just give you one example, the unemployment rate for women in Nova Scotia is equal to the unemployment rate in Sri Lanka which on anybody's chart would be considered a developing Third World country. The unemployment rate in one of our founding provinces is equal to that of Sri Lanka. The health and mortality figures in the United States and in our aboriginal communities are lower than in many of the health and infant mortality rates in so-called Third World developing nations.

The labour market participation is lower than in some of those developing Third World countries and the political participation is lower than in some of those developing Third World countries. We in Canada call ourselves a caring, compassionate society. We certainly are one of the most blessed countries on the face of the earth when it comes to natural resources and potential, but along with that natural resources potential, the vast potential that this country has, goes a corresponding responsibility to husband and conserve our natural and human resources so that we can give to those who follow us, the generations that follow us, a society and a nation that is worthy of being called Canada.

The government benches opposite talk about mortgaging our children's future when they discuss the debt. I would suggest that we ought to take a look of the mortgaging of our nation's future, our province's future when we look at the services that we are providing to those children.

Those children are in deep jeopardy. They are a generation at risk. They are more and more being called upon to bear on their backs the effects of conservative, right-wing, regressive, fiscal ideology.

The Child and Family Services agencies are turning away 15- and 16-year-olds because they

have no place to put them. The alternatives are the streets, social assistance, Main Street Project.

This government refuses to fund any new programs, refuses to take into account the current realities of life in our cities and in our rural and northern areas. They refuse to respond to the realities that are facing most Manitobans because they are listening only to those who line their political coffers.

They are not listening to the people in the inner city of Winnipeg. They refuse to consider supporting institutions and community organizations such as Point North, a haven, one of the only places in the city that is safe for women to go in the downtown area. They refuse to fund Pritchard Place, which has been proven since 1984 to provide wonderful service to the young people in the inner city.

The list of past Conservative government activities has been stated in this House before.

I would like to end by saying that while the picture is grim and gloomy for the vast majority of Manitobans it is not without hope. I am not sure how much hope the people of Manitoba will have in this current government, or can have in this current government.

I will go on record again, as I have in the past, on behalf of the caucus of the Manitoba New Democratic Party official opposition in this Legislature, that we will continue to speak out on behalf of those people, on behalf of the 99 percent of the people of Manitoba and Canada who have absolutely no voice on the government side, and we will make sure that they, in this House—whether they are allowed to be in this House physically or not—we will continue to represent their interests and make sure that the government of the day is held accountable and responsible, both between now and the time that the next election is held. Thank you.

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, I had not planned on speaking at this time, but listening to the two previous speakers has left me with an awfully sick feeling in my stomach, when we see that is the kind of thing that is trying to run this province, who try to convince the people of Manitoba that they are speaking on their behalf.

The member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), and I see the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett)—no, maybe she is going to stay. I thought she was packing up to leave, but the member for Broadway

in his speech of fairness, equity, honesty, that he talks about—and we have seen the things that the NDP did to this province in the six and a half years between the Sterling Lyon government and the Filmon government, and the eight years before that. We saw what they did to this—well, the member for Wellington is leaving. I cannot say that, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw it.

The member for Broadway talks about honesty and fairness and then admits that as a professor at the University of Manitoba, while he is a full member of this Legislature drawing down some \$42,000 a year, that his children can go to university free of charge as long as they make the grades. How many people in this province—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Santos: I am not drawing \$42,000. In fact, the university cut down my salary in a greater proportion than what I am receiving as a member of the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, there is the good news in that statement and the bad news. The good news is that they cut down his salary. Well, I could sure understand why after what I heard from him.

The bad news is that because he is still getting a very reduced income, so that therefore he is playing a very small part at the University of Manitoba, his children still get a full, free university education. I think that is tragic when he stands up in this Legislature and talks about honesty and fairness for the people of Manitoba, and I wish the member for Broadway would kindly shut up and sit down—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I will give the honourable member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) an opportunity to address these remarks.

I would ask at this time that the honourable member for Portage la Prairie would withdraw that statement.

Mr. Connery: Tell me which one. I will withdraw it.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member, his remarks were: I wish the honourable member would just shut up and sit down. I would ask the honourable

member for Portage la Prairie to withdraw that remark.

Mr. Connery: Well, Sir, just as long as—I withdraw those comments.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable member for Portage la Prairie.

Point of Order

Mr. Santos: I just want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that I have sacrificed in staying in the Legislature financially, but I do not mind because I want to serve the people of my constituency.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Broadway does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Connery: Well, now we have another statement from the member for Broadway that he sacrificed to represent people in this Legislature. I will tell you, most people who sit in this Legislature put up a sacrifice to be here. I know many people who take wage decreases to come and represent the people of Manitoba, but their children cannot get a free education. How many people—99 percent of the people, as the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) speaks about 99 percent that are downtrodden. I will guarantee you that 99 percent of the people of Manitoba, of the students who want to go to university, cannot get a free education as the children of the member for Broadway can. I think that is a shame and it is a disgrace and it is something that does not belong here.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Broadway speaks about how bad this government is. Who brought in all of the taxes that the people of Manitoba are now subjected to? They talk about taxation to business and yet they taxed—I do not know the exact figures—people, the average medium-low earners of this province, taxed them about two to three times more than they did to business. Yet they talk about taxing businesses.

* (1610)

Mr. Speaker, they talk about the money that businesses will be able to deduct from their payroll tax payments for training of people, they talk about training people, but what is that doing? That is training people for the jobs that they have, for current jobs to make them better, because we are moving

into a very high-tech situation in Manitoba where we have to have those very well-educated and very well-trained people.

Mr. Speaker, they talk about fairness, I want to speak just for a minute about an article that I read in the paper this morning on the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), who was able to obtain a part-time salesman's permit from the Winnipeg Real Estate Board. Nobody is supposed to be part time and work for the Winnipeg Real Estate Board, or be able to sell under their auspices and get the multiple listings, but the MLA for Elmwood did.

Under what auspices did he obtain that permission to be able to sell as a part-time salesman earning other income, income from his insurance business and income as an MLA? He was given that. Was that to silence the member in criticism of the Winnipeg Real Estate Board? I do not know, but I researched Hansard and I do not recall—we could not find anything where that member criticized the Winnipeg Real Estate Board. But he did—he got a part-time sales licence to sell with the Winnipeg Real Estate Board as an MLA and sold only one house. I guess he was not that good at it, but he did earn an income when other people, who really need a job, are out of work and could work part time, were not allowed to do it, but the MLA for Elmwood was able to obtain that. I think that, when you are an MLA in this Legislature, you have to be above those sorts of things, because he knew that other people were not able to obtain a part-time sales licence with the Winnipeg Real Estate Board.

The member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) and the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) wax eloquent on being fair and honest with people, and it just makes me a little bit sick.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to obtain the election returns of the last provincial election, and it was very interesting information to go through. I have the returns of every candidate in the province of Manitoba who ran, regardless of political parties. It is very interesting when we go through them and we see that the Conservatives and the Liberals have listed on their sheets all of those people who have contributed \$250 or more, but almost exclusively the NDP show zero—zero on all of their returns, including the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), who talks about honesty, openness and fairness. On his return it shows zero, zero, zero, because that member does not want anyone to know who

donated to his party, who donated to him personally—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Santos: A point of order, Mr. Speaker, it is unparliamentary to impute any motive to any member of this House. The reason why that was zero, because there was no individual who was able to contribute 250 as required by the rules and regulations. Only about \$50 or \$20—very few dollars they can contribute—and there is no requirement to put them in.

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

* * *

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) digs himself in deeper. Mr. Speaker, I do have here the return for the member for Broadway who ran in the last election under the NDP banner, and he says he had nobody who gave \$250 or more, so therefore would not be listed on this, and it is, yes, listed by name those contributions \$250 or larger.

There is also a Schedule 2 that shows the number of contributions of more than \$25, but less than \$250, which is the small donations that member said he received, the \$5 and the \$10 and the \$20 donations. His form shows no contributors and zero contributions. Now what happened to the money? I ask the member for Broadway, did that money evaporate or where did you fudge around with it? You said—now the honest person in this constituency who is talking about honesty and fairness.

Mr. Speaker, there is another category, Category 3, which says for contributions of under \$25, and the member for Broadway, zero contributors, zero dollars. His contributions show zero, zero, zero. Now, that is honesty, that is openness to the public that the member stood and waxed so eloquently about. I say that is a scam and it is a shame and it is a mistrust of the people who elected you. Are you ashamed to say that you got contributions, or are you so ashamed that you got no contributions?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the minister, or rather the ex-minister who is the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) keeps on referring and speaking directly to a particular member of this House which is not appropriate and proper. All remarks made in this House must be addressed to the Speaker and I would just find it rather odd, in a debate of Interim Supply when the opposition is supposed to have an opportunity to comment on government spending, that we have a member of the government side wasting time in this House by bringing up these personal matters.

On a further point of order, I would say there is an agreement to attempt to finish the Estimates by tomorrow. Now, if this member persists in this kind of abusive attack on an individual member, we will be here for an awfully long time on Interim Supply.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, I was present when the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) invited members from the government a little while ago to participate in this particular discussion.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Government Services does not have a point of order.

On the point of order raised by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), I would remind the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) that all remarks are to go through the Chair.

* * *

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, now the member for Brandon East waxes eloquently and says that this Legislature is now for the members of the opposition to speak, but he says, if we speak we will sit here longer, sit here through next week, when it was considered that we would be taking next week off for spring break. He is saying that if members of this House get up and put their viewpoints on there, you will keep us in here and that is intimidation, Mr. Speaker, and I disagree that member has the right to say that.

If he feels left out in the election process, and if I am only speaking to the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), let me pull out the member's from Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). What does his say? The

same zeroes that the member for Broadway had. The member for Brandon East does not want to show how much he got from contributors in the last provincial election, because they are ashamed to hide it; they are ashamed.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will do one at a time.

Point of Order

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, the member is making serious and false allegations. He is laughing from his seat; he is making observations, which are subject to a great deal of dispute. I believe it is not the role of the Interim Supply Committee. It is highly unusual for the member to go on like he is, wasting the time of the Legislature when we should get on discussing government spending.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the member to withdraw those remarks reflecting on myself and reflecting on my constituency association because he is inferring as though there is something wrong or illegal.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Brandon East did not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* (1620)

Point of Order

Mr. Santos: Mr. Speaker, it is still unparliamentary for any member of this House to impute any motive to other members of this House. The member is implying that some members of this House are not honest, are cheating. If that is the case, the appropriate procedure is for Elections Manitoba to conduct the proper proceedings, but not to impute any motive without any basis.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable member for Broadway. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, I am pointing out the facts, and I know the members opposite are pretty nervous about the facts. I will point out the facts, and we will let the people of Manitoba determine whether it is cheating or not, but the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) made the comments that this is their turn to talk in the Legislature. It is not just

their turn to talk; it is everybody's turn to talk in this Legislature.

I think they are very nervous about the returns of individuals being put in there. Mr. Speaker, -(interjection)- the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) speaks from, not his own chair, but he chirps away there.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, the member for Elmwood chirps from benches opposite and makes obscene comments, but I would like the member for Elmwood to tell us categorically, does he charge for his office space on his constituency allowance? Is there a charge to his—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Portage la Prairie to address the Chair when he is putting his remarks on the record.

Mr. Connery: Sorry, Mr. Speaker, through you to the member for Elmwood, will the member for Elmwood tell this Legislature if he is charging on his constituency allowance for his constituency office at 186 1/2 Henderson Highway? He can nod, yes, or he can shake his head, no. The member moveth not his head, and I can see why because under the rules of this House you cannot have—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): This member continues to abuse the rules of this House. As my colleague from Broadway (Mr. Santos) has pointed out, this member is supposed to, first, address his remarks through the Chair; second, he is not supposed to impugn motive, nor should he be making allegations or suggestions which are clearly out of order.

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, through you, I make no allegations. I am asking the member if he is charging office space at 186 1/2 Henderson Highway through his constituency allowance, because the rules clearly state that you cannot have your party affiliation on your sign.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I recognized the honourable member for Portage la Prairie. I thought the honourable member was going to address the point of order raised, did not.

Therefore, to the honourable member for Flin Flon, he does not have a point of order.

Again, I remind the honourable member for Portage la Prairie to address the Chair when he is putting his remarks on the record.

* * *

Mr. Connery: I have no difficulty, Mr. Speaker. You are absolutely right that the questions have to be through you, but there are rules in this Legislature and there are rules of conduct. I would not be up here speaking if it were not for the pious attitude of the NDP who try to tell everybody, therefore the poor people, when the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) has not nodded yes or no. Is he charging office space to his constituency allowance, because the rules say you cannot have your party affiliation on that sign?

I will follow up that, Mr. Speaker, to LAMC because as you know, members' allowances are not open to public scrutiny. Only the bulk amount that is spent is open to public scrutiny. I think that is wrong. I think the money that we spend, people's money—because it is taxpayers' dollars that we spend on our constituency allowances—every cent that we spend should be open to public scrutiny so that everybody knows what we are spending that money on.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I just want to say that while members of the NDP speak very eloquently about being concerned about people and cost and the poor people, they are the ones who have continuously attempted to drive up the constituency allowances. I can remember when I came into this Legislature, we got \$3,500 a year in constituency allowances. It went to \$10,000. They wanted it \$25,000, Mr. Speaker. The member for Flin Flon says, speak the truth. I think he does not understand those words that he is saying, but I think there has to be some responsibility in this Legislature.

We have to be the same as we are governing. We have to take zero increase in our MLA salaries. We have to take a look at rolling back our constituency expense allowance because it is way over what it should be. It went from \$3,500 to—now it is almost \$28,000 since 1986. There is a whole raft of things that we have to ensure that we lead by example. It irritates me to no end when I hear members of the NDP acting so pious when they have the snout in the public trough as deep as they can get it, and the

only time you hear a snort is when it goes dry. Thank you.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to take part in the debate on Interim Supply this afternoon. My understanding is that this has to do with the allocation of financial resources by the government and therefore any policy or program of the government which costs money is suitable to discuss or debate at this time. I am pleased that the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) is listening and the former Minister of Housing is listening since I intend to talk about programs under the ministry of Housing and also to talk briefly about a program under the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer).

I would like to begin by talking about the government's policy of abolishing 98 rural housing authorities, something that the minister has heard me discuss before and will hear me discuss again. The place that I would like to begin is to ask: Why did the government bring in this policy? Why did the government abolish 98 housing authorities? This is something that, as far as I know, was not requested by any of the tenant groups in public housing. This was not requested, as far as I know, by any of the boards of the 98 housing authorities. It was something that the opposition Housing critics were not requesting. Why did they bring in this major change in Housing Authority policy?

Was it to clean up one or two housing authorities that were causing problems? Well, I do not know of any housing authorities that were causing them problems that were so great that required them to amalgamate all 98. They had been getting criticism over the last few years about Winnipeg Housing Authority, and I think those criticisms were legitimate, but neither myself nor other people making those criticisms in public asked them to abolish that housing authority. In fact, in Estimates last year, I said that we wanted a co-operative relationship between tenants and management. That was something that was being worked on, because the government appointed new board members. The government allowed for elections to elect tenant representatives to the board. We were hopeful, and the tenant representatives and the new board members were hopeful, that a new relationship, a co-operative relationship would ensue and that the problems would be worked on co-operatively.

I do not know of any housing authority boards or housing authorities that were causing such great problems that the government would want to amalgamate all the authorities in order to clean up the problems of one or two. Well, did the government do this to save money? Yes, I believe that they did do this to save money. I think that saving money is something that we in this party are in favour of and would like to encourage the government to do, but the question that we need to ask is, can it be justified in this circumstance? Is this a long-term money saver, or will it lose money in the long term? I believe, in the long term, it will be more expensive, and they will only save money by laying off 50 staff in the short term.

I have been talking to some people who are inspectors with Manitoba Housing, I have been talking to board members of the regional housing authorities, and they have been giving me examples of how it is going to cost more money in the long term by having regional managers. For example, if in a public housing unit in Russell, a furnace breaks down and has to be replaced, who is going to authorize that if there is no local housing manager who lives in Russell? Well, the manager in Brandon will authorize it or the manager in Dauphin, whichever region it is in will authorize it. How are they going to do that? How are they going to prove that the tenant absolutely must have a new furnace? Well, they are going to have to either drive out to see it or send one of their staff to drive out and see it, and then come back and purchase a furnace or authorize the purchase of the furnace and install it, so we are going to have higher transportation costs.

Another example would be flying staff from Thompson to Churchill in order to authorize repairs, or to send in a contractor to do repairs, and the kinds of small, routine types of preventative maintenance that are done by people, by staff who live in the same community as the housing, will no longer be carried out. For example, if a housing manager goes to see the units—in some communities, we have 10 units, 20 units, a small number of units—and the manager is walking around and notices that the hinge is falling off the door, he is quite likely to take a screwdriver out and fix the door on the spot. If you do not have somebody who lives in that community to do that kind of preventative maintenance, what is going to happen is, you are going to be sending in a whole new door from another community and a service person from another community to replace the

whole door, because routine preventative maintenance is not being done.

* (1630)

Everyone who is in the housing sector, whether it is in nonprofit housing or profit housing, revenue housing, knows that preventative maintenance saves money over the long term, so I believe that this policy is shortsighted. It is not going to save money over the long term.

Why else might the government have wanted to amalgamate 98 housing authorities? Well, it could be that they wanted more control, to tighten up the controls on housing, to centralize housing authority. In fact, it is going against their policy of decentralizing jobs, because they are going to eliminate jobs, and shortly we will know how many of those jobs will be eliminated in rural areas as opposed to Winnipeg. I suspect that the majority will be eliminated in rural areas, because in Winnipeg there are only two housing authorities, Winnipeg Housing Authority and Winnipeg Regional Housing Authority. It will be fairly easy to amalgamate them. One of them only controls 1,000 units, and the other one manages about 6,000 units. So there will be some staff let go in Winnipeg, but it will not have nearly the impact as in the rural areas.

I think that, by centralizing control in one housing authority, the government is laying a trap for itself and setting itself up for future problems, because now, with people like myself as the Housing critic or the Liberal Housing critic or people in the community, tenant activists, for example, who criticize, they normally direct their criticism to the board of the housing authority and say, we want you to do this; we want you to do that. In the future, with one board directly under the control of the minister, the criticism is going to go all to the door of the minister, whether it is in this House or in public. Myself and others will raise that criticism directly with the minister instead of taking our criticisms to the local housing authority board, who actually had some autonomy and some authority to do things locally.

So, in future, there will be a different kind of accountability. We will be raising problems of individual housing units and different projects in Supply, Interim Supply, Question Period and in Estimates. I think that might become problematic for the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst). He will not be able to deflect the criticism or pass on the criticism

to a local housing authority, which was what could have been done in the past.

I have another reason why they might have wanted to have amalgamated 98 housing authorities into one. It is quite possible, in fact, I would even be willing to make a prediction, that they are going to let these units run down. In fact, they do not need to let the units run down. They predict that they will run down on their own, and then they will privatize them. They will sell off these units.

It is sort of like the person who owns a beautiful horse. They decide they do not want it any more, and they decide to shoot it. The owner mentions this to a friend, and the friend says, well, that is a stupid thing to do, because everybody is going to blame you for shooting the horse. Why do you not just starve it a little bit? So the owner says, well, now that is a good idea. I will just starve it a little bit. So he starves the horse a little bit, and the neighbour says, gee, that is a decrepit looking horse. Why do you not shoot it? The owner says, gee, I wish I had thought of that myself. I am going to shoot the horse.

Well, that is what the government is going to do with nonprofit public housing in Manitoba. They are going to let it run down a little bit. Then they are going to say, gee, this is inefficient. It costs too much to run; it is too expensive for us. You know, the private sector could do a much better job. They are more efficient—because that is what they believe as Conservatives. Then they will say, well, why do we not sell it off? Why do we not get rid of this liability? Why do we not make a little money for the taxpayers of Manitoba or save a little money for the taxpayers of Manitoba? Then it would be very easy to follow to the next logical step, to sell it off to the private sector.

Then, I think, they are giving up on their mandate. For example, we just received today the Annual Report for 1989-90 for Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. The role and mission statement is a good role and mission statement. It could be improved upon, but as it stands, it has some good things in it. For example, it says, and I quote: The department's mandate is as follows: to assist low-income persons who are otherwise unable to obtain adequate, affordable shelter in the marketplace; secondly, to provide a mechanism for the equitable resolution of disputes between landlords and tenants; and third, to recognize and facilitate the private housing industry as the major provider of housing and to otherwise intervene in

the market only where it is considered essential to the public interest.

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

That last mandate could be interpreted loosely. They could say, well, we think that, in this instance, the private market would do a better job. However, I believe that there is an important role, to assist low-income people who are not otherwise able to obtain adequate, affordable shelter in the marketplace.

You know, some of the public housing that they built in rural areas was not very popular when they first built it, but as more and more people were helped and as people realized that these people living in 10 units or 20 units were not causing major problems, it was desirable to have subsidized, nonprofit and public housing in small communities, including in rural Manitoba.

The second part of housing that I would like to talk about is that of co-op housing. This is something that I know a little bit about, having lived in co-op housing, having been on the board of directors and having been on committees of co-op housing. There are many good things about co-op housing. Co-op housing is democratic—one member, one vote. The members elect their own board of directors. The members hold those directors accountable annually at annual meetings and, under certain circumstances, can call special meetings.

The directors have obligations to the members. They have to present an audited financial statement every year. Co-ops are self-governing organizations, and the people who live there are part landlords and part tenants. They have an ownership stake in the housing they live in, because they must buy shares, so they have an incentive to try and save money. They have an incentive to keep the cost down, because they know that they have a very direct relationship between the cost of running the units and their rent. They can see it. They can see it in their financial statement every year, because they get to look at the books. They get to see the expenses as well as the income.

There are other advantages to being a member of a co-op and to co-op housing. There are social benefits, and many co-ops have a social committee and sponsor different kinds of activities so that members can meet and get to know their neighbours. Another advantage of co-op housing is

that those people who live in a subsidized unit have their anonymity protected, because normally only the office manager knows who is getting a subsidized unit. There is not the ghettoization and the stigmatization that comes from living in public housing where people assume that everyone is subsidized even though, in some public housing, it is rent geared to income, and people might be paying close to or even more than market rents.

In a co-op, normally, the persons who are getting the subsidy are not identifiable, because only the manager knows who is getting the subsidy. That is good, because you have a mixture of incomes and a mixture of people, yet the public perception is that co-ops are to be preferred over other kinds of housing.

At the Charles Cathedral Housing Co-op, who employed me for approximately three years, five out of the 20 suites were subsidized. Because of a high vacancy rate, the board of directors decided to increase the number of subsidized suites from five to 10, so 50 percent of all the members there are living in a subsidized suite, and those members are making a valuable contribution to the co-op. They have been on the board of directors. One of them has been a president. They take part in all the committees. In fact, they feel that in co-op housing they can make a much more positive contribution to society than they can in any other kind of housing.

Charles Cathedral Housing Co-op was built under the Co-op Home Start Program. This is a good program that was for the conversion of existing building, whether it was warehouses or other vacant buildings—in the case of Charles Cathedral Housing Co-op, conversion of a vacant United Church to 20 suites of co-op housing.

This is especially important in the inner city in Winnipeg. It fits nicely with core area renewal, revitalization. For example, many of the co-ops within the boundaries of the Core Area Initiative received additional subsidies in order to keep their cost down and make their rents more affordable. What is going to happen when the Core Area Initiative runs out? Well, unless positive housing programs are put in place, the kinds of problems around deterioration of the inner city will continue instead of being reversed by positive programs like the Core Area Initiative and Co-op Home Start.

Another problem that will continue likely is inner city depopulation. You only have to look at the

electoral maps that are revised every 10 years to see the effects of the depopulation of the inner city. For example, I ran under the old boundaries in Burrows in 1988, and it was an entirely north-end constituency, but because that part of the inner city, that part of the north end had lost so many people between 19—I am not sure when the last boundary revision was—let us say between 1979 and 1989, approximately 10 years, when the boundaries were redrawn, Burrows constituency was extended south of the tracks to Notre Dame between Sherbrook and McPhillips. There were five polls added to Burrows from the former Logan constituency.

* (1640)

That is an indication of how the inner city population declines. So you get vacant lots, vacant lots which could be built on. You get run-down and abandoned buildings which stand empty unless you have good programs like Co-op Home Start, which was begun under the New Democratic Party and continued for two years, almost three years. But we have a problem.

Before commenting on that problem, I would be interested in knowing—and the next opportunity I get, I am going to ask the minister, what were the criteria for the Co-op Home Start Program? What were the objectives of the Co-op Home Start Program? What was the goal; what were they trying to do with the core area program? I think I have probably partially answered that already. They were trying to get people to live in the inner city who wanted to live in the inner city, who chose to live in the inner city. They wanted to stop depopulation of the inner city. They wanted to revitalize the inner city, amongst the same goals as the Core Area Initiative.

When we see the goals and objectives, we will know if the program was successful or not, and we will also be asking for an evaluation. Did the Co-op Home Start Program meet its stated goals and objectives? But we have a problem. We have had no unit allocation for at least the last year. For example, in the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation Annual Report for 1989-90, under the Co-op Home Start Program, it says, no new applications for mortgage financing or further assistance were approved in 1989-90. No proposal development funding loans were approved in 1989-90.

I also know, from talking to staff, that no new applications and I believe no proposal development

funds were approved in 1990-91. For two years under this program there has been absolutely no activity. I think what that says is that the word has gone out—I do not know whether this comes from Treasury Board or from the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst)—we are not going to build any more units under Co-op Home Start.

I do not know that for sure because I do not know if there have been applications, but their report says there have been no new applications. When the next report comes out, we will know if in the current year there were applications or not. I predict that this program is going to be a victim of the government's budget. It will no longer appear as a budget line. It will not be renewed.

I and others will be asking, why is the government doing this? Is it only to save money, and, if so, at whose expense? Are they concerned about revitalizing the inner city of Winnipeg? Are they concerned about getting people to live in the downtown? I think those are important questions because Winnipeg is very much like an American city. Many American cities have an inner core which is deteriorating, which has a concentration of low-income people, black and Hispanic people and immigrants, surrounded by mostly white, higher-income suburbs.

Winnipeg, unlike many other Canadian cities, is much more American in its socioeconomic make-up. We have an inner city which has a very high concentration of immigrants, of visible minorities and of poor people, surrounded by mostly white suburbs where people make much higher incomes, so we always need to be initiating things which can make the inner city a positive place to work, by creating jobs, by creating affordable housing.

Co-op Home Start was one of the ways in which that was happening. After the Co-op Home Start Program is finally killed in the budget that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) will table and after the Core Area Initiative is wound down and after there is no more funding left and if the Core Area Initiative is not renewed, and I hope it is, the need will still be there. There will still be vacant apartments. There will still be vacant buildings that will need to be converted. There will still be a need for decent affordable housing, especially for low-income people. The good thing about Co-op Home Start is that it is a mixture of incomes. It

consists of people who pay the rent and people who are subsidized in their rent.

Finally, I would like to talk about cutbacks in programs under the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). For example, we have learned that the Human Resources Opportunity Centres are probably going to be a victim of the budget as well. Now we hope that is not true. We hope that the information that we have is not accurate or that maybe, since it was leaked, that the government decided to change their minds on that.

However, a number of years ago, when the MLA for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) was the minister responsible, he took myself and some other people on a tour of one of the Human Resources Opportunity Centres, the one on King Edward in Winnipeg. I found that tour to be quite interesting and quite helpful. In fact, before that I did not know that the provincial government under Economic Security was involved in training people who were on provincial social assistance, who until January 1 of this year, I guess, were all deemed to be unemployable, at least those in the city of Winnipeg, and if they were employable, they stayed on City of Winnipeg social assistance.

We toured the King Edward Human Resources Opportunity Centre. We talked to the students, we talked to the staff and we heard about this program. From the evidence that was presented to us, it looked like a good program. In fact, the staff, the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), who was the minister at the time, said that six months after the students graduated, 62 percent of them still had jobs.

House Business

Mr. Manness: I apologize to the member, Mr. Acting Speaker, before five o'clock—and I understand the member will probably be going to five o'clock—there was an agreement between House leaders to waive private members' hour, and I would ask the House whether or not they would sanction that agreement as between House leaders and waive the private members' hour from five to six.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour? Agreed.

* * *

Mr. Martindale: The students that I spoke to at the Human Resources Opportunity Centre said that they very much appreciated the program that they were enrolled in because it was giving them hope, it was giving them a chance, it was giving them job training so that when they graduated, they could get back into the work force or get into the work force for the first time. Many of those people were single-parent women who were very appreciative of the supports that they were getting while they were going to school that enabled them to get training, that enabled them to get skills and job upgrading.

The recent throne speech of the government said that the government believed in helping Manitobans to help themselves. I believe that the Human Resources Opportunity Centre is helping Manitobans to help themselves. It is giving them the skills that they need in order to get back into the workplace.

I would have to ask the government why are they eliminating the Human Resources Opportunity Centre. If there is a good reason I would like to be apprised of the reason. If, for example, the job creation rate is not as good as I have said it is, I would be interested in having that information. If the program is not as successful now as it was five years ago, I think that would be interesting and helpful information to find out, but it seems to me contradictory to cut out a good jobs training program for people on social assistance.

There are many things that the members opposite and I disagree with and disagree on in this House, but there are some things that I think we can agree on, and I think we all agree that we should help Manitobans to help themselves, to use that phrase from the throne speech. I think we can all agree that we should help people who are on social assistance to get off social assistance and get back into the work force, and that is what the Human Resources Opportunity Centres were all about. If there is a rationale, if there was an evaluation, if it is not doing its job, I would be interested in getting that information, reading it, studying it and finding out why.

Perhaps it fits with their philosophy of education. I am not sure what the members' opposite philosophy of education is. Perhaps it is moving toward a much more elite model where you give funding to universities, you match funding with

corporations and you only put it into things that have practical application in the business world.

* (1650)

You give lots of money to the business faculty, and you starve everyone else like the Classics and Arts courses—as my friend from Transcona (Mr. Reid) says, industry driven. That is another model of education, I suppose, not one that we here agree with though. It would seem that maybe eliminating the Human Resources Opportunity Centres fits with that model of education, that you give more to those who are in the best position to get their own jobs and employment anyway, and you take away from those who are the most vulnerable, who are at the bottom and who are the least likely to get into the work force.

I am going to conclude with those remarks, but I will be following up and talking on these topics again because I think they bear repeating, and in estimates I will be asking much more detailed questions, and as we go through the various stages of supply, I will be asking the minister for answers to the questions that I have raised today.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I would like to make a brief contribution to this Interim Supply debate and as is usual, discuss various items of concern to myself as a member of the opposition and to take this opportunity to dwell on some of these matters, an opportunity that is afforded to us particularly when we go into general debate such as this, such as provided by Interim Supply. I want to touch on a number of topics.

It is not my intent to engage in personal attacks and make unwanted allegations as a certain particular member of this House did and actually abuse this time that is allotted for the opposition to ask questions in this House and to make statements in this House with regard to government spending. This is the opportunity for members of the opposition to engage in this. It does not matter which party, this is the opportunity that opposition parties have.

As I understand it, there was some agreement that we would try to be expeditious in our debate so that we could conclude the Interim Supply, which the government must have for the end of the month, hopefully by tomorrow. But, when certain members of the government's side get up in an unwarranted fashion, making serious allegations or putting innuendo on the table, I think that it is totally uncalled

for, and it is a type of speech that makes one want to spend a lot more time here in discussing these Estimates and to perhaps not be so accommodating in this whole matter. I would ask the government House leader (Mr. Manness) in particular to inform himself as to what happened here earlier this afternoon.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to touch briefly on this whole question of access to the building and access in particular to this Chamber because as our House leader so eloquently expressed yesterday, this really is an infringement on the rights of members of this Legislature, and it is a diminution of democracy as I know it. It is an infringement in my judgment on the freedom that we should have and are used to having in this particular Chamber and in this particular building.

I have been in this building as a member of the Legislature since 1969, and I have seen many a demonstration over the years. Some were not very pleasant, some were rather ugly and some very big. I recall probably my first experience of a huge demonstration and that is when the Schreyer government attempted to bring in Autopac, when we first put the legislation before the House to introduce public automobile insurance. I recall one day in particular when you had a demonstration, I think it totalled nearly 5,000 people. You could not see the front lawns of this legislature for people. They were mainly employees of the existing private automobile insurance companies and the automobile insurance agents, but the fact is, Mr. Acting Speaker, they were outside of this building, and they were inside this building. I recall many a time when this Chamber was totally filled with Autopac agents wearing black armbands.

An Honourable Member: I remember.

Mr. Leonard Evans: You remember—and we did not, Mr. Acting Speaker, attempt to bring in rules that they could not be up there and stare us down, or whatever they wanted to do. They were not to make any noise. They were not to shout. They were not to throw things. That I understand, but they had a right to be up there. I might have been unhappy with those agents up there, but they were there.

Again, I would remind some members of the House, if they recall, the beef cattle producers were very upset at some time years back, and they were here en masse, and they too were in this Legislative Assembly. No one made an effort on the part of the

government—we were in government, we did not attempt to prevent them from coming into this Chamber. You want orderliness and certainly you want safety—nobody is going to argue that—but the fact is these people were very hostile at that point on that particular piece of legislation and government policy.

Most recently, and all members of this House pretty well—and most members would remember, is the Meech Lake episode when we were in here in a special sitting for two weeks last summer. The building was loaded with people, not one day but for two weeks. There were demonstrations outside, thousands of people, and indeed it seemed like there were thousands of people inside. There were hundreds of people coming in and out of the gallery. Some were very emotional. Some were very intense. There was no effort made to keep them from coming into this Legislature. There was no effort made as long as there were seats available and as long as they behaved orderly, as all people are supposed to in the Chamber. No one was prevented from coming into the Chamber.

Yesterday, we had a demonstration. As I understand a number of those students had passes to come in here. Either we have rules allowing people to come in with passes, or we do not have rules. You cannot say one day that anyone who wants to come to the Chamber must go to a guard at the entrance of the building, apply and get a card to come and sit in the Legislature and then the next day decide that, sorry that rule is out the window, we are not going to allow you to come in. -(interjection)-

You know members opposite can call from their seats, but frankly what you have done is you have infringed on the democratic rights of citizens of Manitoba. The point, Mr. Acting Speaker, is that this government has infringed on the democratic rights -(interjection)- the member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) can joke about it, but this is a very serious matter. You have infringed on the rights of some citizens of the province of Manitoba, you indeed have, by the actions yesterday.

I, for one, want to see safe procedures. I do not want to see anyone hurt, but frankly, Mr. Acting Speaker, to use that argument is a cop-out. The only safety that was jeopardized was the political safety of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and perhaps of this government and the Minister of Education and

Training (Mr. Derkach) perhaps on these policies, on the cutbacks in education.

The students, I deem—and I was not out there. I have not talked to any of them, but I surmise that if the leaders or if some of them who had the passes could have at least come in and observed this session, you may not have had the continued demonstration down the streets, including Portage and Main, by those students.

What we did, Mr. Acting Speaker, by taking the action that the government did, I think they made matters worse. It could have been explained very easily that those who could come into the building at this time or into the Chamber had to have passes. Some indeed had passes. They should have been allowed to come.

The fact that they were prevented from doing so is, as I said, an infringement on their democratic rights. It is an infringement. Democracy has withered by the action of the government yesterday.

I hope that this matter will be considered very carefully by the Speaker of the Assembly and that it be made very clear that this is a Parliament open to the people, open to the public, and that they may come in here, whether they agree with what the government of the day is doing or not, and sit and listen to the debates and to the questions and answers, if we are in the Question Period. They should be allowed to do that.

* (1700)

To prohibit this is a step backward, Mr. Acting Speaker. I see the march of authoritarianism. I see us moving towards more and more of a police state. Really, we are moving more and more into a police state. I -(interjection)- you are, by engaging in the actions that this government did yesterday. You are moving towards more authoritarianism, more control, more police-like activities. I say that it is a sorry day for the people of Manitoba, it is a sorry day for democracy in this province.

This matter has to be dealt with. A 10-minute speech by me on this subject is not the end of it. This matter has to be very carefully considered, and the whole policy of access to this building has to be reviewed. You know for those people who say, well, you can get extremists, terrorists and so on, well, you can get one person that can come in by himself or herself and perhaps engage in an act of terrorism. I hope that never happens, but the fact is the actions

yesterday are totally unforgivable, absolutely unforgivable.

As I said, Mr. Acting Speaker, I hope this matter is seriously considered and not in a way that I am getting up here complaining about it and some ministers opposite yelling from their seats about it. We have to sit down very carefully and delineate rules to provide access to this Chamber. I say that with all sincerity, and I hope that this matter is summarily dealt with at an early time because it is simply not acceptable. As I said, over 21 years beef producers, people who demonstrated about Meech Lake and way back when, in 1970, with automobile insurance—this Chamber was open to those people.

An Honourable Member: And it still is, Len.

Mr. Leonard Evans: It was not open to those people who had passes for the Chamber yesterday. It was not open to them. Why do we issue passes? Passes are issued to the university students—

An Honourable Member: What is the point, Len?

Mr. Leonard Evans: What is the point? The point is that democracy is being withered away here. It is being infringed. We are withering away. We are witnessing a withering away of the democratic rights of citizens of this province, we really are. You can laugh, you can be defensive but you have moved a step in that direction. Democracy has shrunk in this province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the members opposite are so defensive on it. Well so they are, perhaps so they should be because maybe they do have a twinge of guilt about what happened yesterday.

I would like to go on and express my concerns about the whole rural decentralization thrust, and I note the minister presumably responsible for this is here to listen to my remarks. As I understand it, a very small percentage of those who were slated to go to rural Manitoba, to be transferred out of Winnipeg, have actually been moved out—

An Honourable Member: 250-some.

Mr. Leonard Evans: A very small percentage. In the case of Brandon, I know there are about 104 positions supposedly to be moved to the city of Brandon. I think the minister himself the other day reported a number which is nowhere near that. I think it was what—13 positions. Well, you are looking at about 10 percent. We have had—you know, it is almost a year since this policy was

announced, and we have 10 percent only in the city of Brandon.

In the meantime, there was a report done on the Brandon General Hospital about scaling back on the number of beds, so they actually—we have fewer beds at the Brandon General Hospital today than we had a year ago. There has been a reduction in the number of beds and therefore a parallel reduction in the number of nurses and support staff at the BGH. I say we are losing on that side. This is a publicly funded institution, funded by the Province of Manitoba.

Brandon Mental Health Centre, we get reports all the time of positions not being filled and fewer people working at Brandon Mental Health Centre. We have well gone beyond the 13 positions that the minister announced by this time, and I would point out that a couple of years ago this government closed down the International Nursing Home, and there were over 40 jobs eliminated when the government refused to continue to fund that facility.

Today we learn of positions being terminated at ACC. When you add all that up for the city of Brandon and you look at the paltry 13 that have come to the city of Brandon you ask, Mr. Acting Speaker, if this is real decentralization we do not want any of it. We do not want any of this if this is what rural decentralization means because we are into the negative numbers. We do not have 13 plus jobs in Brandon. We have a negative figure. We have minus jobs, and I would suggest it is probably over 100 negative—a figure of over minus 100. That is the balance sheet in terms of the jobs from this government in the city of Brandon.

I say, you could go to other communities—my colleague, the member from Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) also complained about jobs being lost and those promised to be coming have not been realized, and so all that Swan River has seen is jobs leaving that town. It is possible that we could get a lot of other examples as well, Mr. Acting Speaker.

So I say that the rural decentralization program effectively is meaningless, effectively it is dead. It was not well thought out. I certainly want to see rural decentralization. In fact, we suggested that the government should plan to move entire departments. The head office and the entire Department of Agriculture, I would suggest, should be moved to the city of Brandon. Perhaps consider the Department of Highways for removal to the city

of Portage la Prairie, possibly the Department of Natural Resources to the town of Dauphin. I am using these as examples of what can be done through careful, careful planning and effective decentralization.

The kind of decentralization that has been announced, Mr. Acting Speaker, is really a hodgepodge. There are so many jobs here, so many there. There is no rhyme or reason as to why those particular positions are going to the particular communities. Frankly we have a real mess on our hands. We do not have a real effective plan for rural decentralization. We had an announcement, objectives, so many hundreds of jobs, and really, really that has not been fulfilled, and now we are told everything is on hold. Now we understand that there are going to be announcements of government layoffs. So with that I have safely come to the conclusion, I am safe in saying that what we have is a meaningless rural decentralization program.

I am particularly concerned about the Brandon Mental Health Centre. I appreciate that a lot of the buildings are old and have been in need of repair. In fact they have been repaired and maintained over the years, billions of dollars have been spent, and I appreciate the need for community mental health services, and so on. Mr. Acting Speaker, there is also a need for a base institution. In fact that is demonstrated by the fact that the government is building a new psychiatric facility in Winnipeg. That is a recognition that there has to be some balance. Admirable as community mental health services may be, there is still a need for balance, there is still a need for some institutional base.

In the case of Brandon, BMHC provides a very sound, solid base for continued outreach, indeed, into the community for all kinds of support services for the mentally ill and post mentally ill that live in the community in the Westman area. It would be very sad, Mr. Acting Speaker, if the government were to decide that BMHC should disappear as an entity, as we know it, for it to rapidly disappear. Yet rumours are rife, rumours abound that the government has slated a rather short period for the demise of Brandon Mental Health Centre. I hope that rumour is not correct.

* (1710)

I would like, at some point, to get more information from the government exactly on what its plans are for BMHC. If they could tell us precisely

what policy position they have come to? How long will it continue to exist? If they have decided they do not want it to exist any more, what is the time frame for dismantling it? What is the time frame for virtually terminating that institution?

As I said, that institution has played an important role in Manitoba, particularly in Westman over the years. I hope that it will be maintained. It has excellent staff. There is a major problem, of course, and that is the inability to attract psychiatrists. I am reminded that the minister, for the last year or two, has been telling us how he was going to bring psychiatrists at last to BMHC, and we had difficulty over the years.

There has been difficulty for years and years getting psychiatrists, and I was so pleased when the minister got up—I think it was about two years ago—saying we are now going to have some psychiatrists. I thought that was great, but now I find that this is not the case, that they do not have any full-time psychiatrists, except Dr. Sloan, who is the director, but apart from him, we have no one. Now if I am wrong, please correct me, but this is what I was told by one of the staff there. This, therefore, is a great disappointment because we were led to believe in this House that all would be well, that the minister had a plan, and more power to him, if he could bring the required number of psychiatrists on to staff and locate them at the BMHC or affiliate them with the BMHC.

Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, we have heard a great deal about debt and deficits in this House in the last while—

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Rural Development): Well, you sure know all about it because you gave it to us.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, the member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) says from his seat that we gave them to us, but I cannot help remark that when the Filmon government was in a minority position for two and a half years that spending, indeed, carried on. We had considerable increases in expenditure under this government. I look at the report issued by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), the last budget document, the 1990 Manitoba Budget showing program expenditures increasing at the same level that they were increasing in some of the earlier years, just prior to them coming into government.

Therefore, I noticed also that under this particular government they caused the total net debt per

capita to rise to a level that we have never achieved before, so the net debt in this province went up by nearly a thousand dollars per capita between 1989-90 and 1990-91, from \$9,165—this is net debt per capita—to \$10,151 net debt per capita. That is a jump of almost a thousand dollars per person, Mr. Acting Speaker. I think that is one of the biggest jumps that we have experienced for the last couple of years.

For the members opposite to continually criticize and say, well, all the debt relates to the previous government, the fact is, according to this document, debt increased under the Filmon government. We increased to \$10,150 -(interjection)- no, it is not. What happened? You had program spending -(interjection)- I am trying to make a speech here. Mr. Acting Speaker, I would ask for your help. I am having difficulty in making my own self heard in making a speech here. I am being interrupted by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) from his seat all the time.

Well, the figures show, Mr. Acting Speaker, in the 1990 budget our debt per capita went to an all-time high under this government last year. I would suggest that—and we have had debt at the federal level, and it seems to be handed down from there, this fearmongering that I say goes on about debts.

I was looking at some comparisons. This is from a budget document issued by the Province of Quebec. The various provinces issue budget documents similar to this one, similar to the one that is issued by this government. They happened to put a chart in their report comparing Manitoba's debt position with the other provinces. This is for the year ending March 31, 1989-(interjection)- no, Mr. Acting Speaker, it is not in the budget document of the minister. I said this is from the Quebec Department of Finance -(interjection)- well, Mr. Acting Speaker, the figure they got for the Manitoba situation came out of the Manitoba report. Manitoba has to come out of the Manitoba situation.

At any rate, the debt of the provinces compared to the GDP, as a percentage of the GDP, that -(interjection)- well, that is not meaningless, because the debt that you incur has to be related to your income. The GDP, the gross domestic product, is the measurement of the ability of this province to produce goods and services. Certainly a person who has \$10,000 debt does not have the same burden if his salary goes up from \$50,000 to

\$100,000. The fact is, at \$100,000 that individual can sustain more debt, and what you have to do to have a meaningful figure, you just cannot use these numbers in a raw form, you have to relate them to the population. You have to relate them to your ability to earn.

As of March 31, 1989, which was the latest I could find in that report, they showed that Manitoba had the fourth lowest debt burden of the provinces. Of the 10 provinces, Manitoba had the fourth lowest. Worse off than Manitoba was Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Only B.C., Alberta and Ontario were in a better position.

What I am suggesting is that the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and this government are causing the debt problem to be exaggerated. In fact, for the same year—I think this is out of the Newfoundland budget, because they—unfortunately our budget document no longer makes provincial comparisons as we used to. In fact, I would recommend to the Minister of Finance that he put in some charts comparing Manitoba's debt position with the other provinces' per capita debt or debt as a percentage of GDP so we can have some real comparisons.

At any rate, looking at the figures from the Newfoundland report on their budget—they have a chart—and by using per capita, they show Quebec and Saskatchewan with higher per capita debt than the Province of Manitoba. In fact, Saskatchewan is considerably higher than Manitoba, and I dare say for the year ending March 31, 1991, Saskatchewan is going to look a lot worse compared to the Province of Manitoba.

What I am suggesting is that, yes, we should all be concerned about deficits and debts, but we should not be concerned to the point that we are going to undermine important social programs or where we feel paralyzed that we cannot do anything to provide some stimulus to the private sector to provide -(interjection)- well, there has to be a judgment made. A lot of jurisdictions over the years have utilized fiscal policy to stimulate the economy.

* (1720)

I would say, incidentally, that when you do spend money to stimulate the private sector in whichever way, and there are various ways you can do it, but regardless, there is a feedback. There is some return, because whatever you do with the greater

amount of activity, you do earn income tax on that, you do earn sales tax on that and so on. So it is not as though you have increased spending by the amount of the incentive, by the amount of the stimulus, because there is some payback. Certainly if you can do anything to alleviate unemployment in a meaningful way, then I think that the governments have a social responsibility to do so.

I think a lot of the present concern about debt comes out of the Ottawa situation. It is interesting to note that there was a recent study done by Statistics Canada which really undermines and frankly shows the federal government's argument to blame medicare and other social programs for Canada's debt or deficit crisis. I mean, this is the theme coming out there.

We are spending so much money on medicare, so much money on social services, that we have got all this debt, but this study done by Statistics Canada shows that 44 percent of Canada's \$400 billion debt—it is a colossal debt—is a national debt; 44 percent of it is due to tax breaks for corporations and the wealthy. This is a study done by Statistics Canada. Another 50 percent is caused by compounding growth of interest payments piled on interest payments and on certain revenue shortfalls, so that accounts for 94 percent. So only 6 percent can be attributed to "living beyond our means" or out-of-control government spending. Only 6 percent can be attributed to those causes.

I will say that the debt problem started back in Pierre Trudeau's time. In 1975, again this is according to the Stats Canada study, in 1975 Ottawa indexed the personal tax system to respond to inflation. Of course, this is a very general tax break which curtailed revenues to governments, federal and provincial. This was quickly followed by a series of special loopholes for corporations such as accelerated depreciation allowances. So when you do all this, you are giving up a great deal of revenue. In fact the Liberals at that time lowered the top combined federal-provincial marginal tax rate for individuals from 56 percent to 50 percent and introduced the benefits for a lot of rich and upper-income groups as well.

At any rate, Mr. Acting Speaker, with the Tories in government under Michael Wilson's stewardship in the Ministry of Finance, we see the \$500,000 or half a million lifetime capital gains exemption. They lifted about \$6 billion in energy taxes from firms in

Canada's oil patch, and in 1987 the tax reform so-called in that year sliced the tax rates for Canada's wealthiest citizens down by 45 percent. What has been happening is our debt problem can be seen to be a result of giving tax breaks to corporations and tax breaks to the very wealthy in this country, the wealthiest citizens. Really, according to a study done by a Carleton University economist, Allan Maslove, the only real beneficiaries of Tory tax policies have been the highest 1 percent of income earners.

There was a study done by the Institute for Research on Public Policy, Mr. Acting Speaker, by this Professor Maslove, and he concluded that Canadians with incomes over \$114,000 had their taxes cut by \$1,570 a year, while virtually all other Canadians experienced a tax increase. There is no question that there has been a shift in the burden of taxes from the rich to the middle, lower-middle and poorer income groups.

There has been another study by Dr. Neil Brooks, who teaches tax law at York University in Toronto at the Osgoode Hall Law School, and he has projected that if we introduced a truly progressive tax system that the federal government could raise \$13.2 billion more revenue each year. So that is something worth considering. I say we have to be concerned because Ottawa's financial situation has a bearing on transfers of income to the provinces and therefore has an impact on this province. Then, of course, combining that revenue that was foregone along with totally unacceptable interest rates that ranged from a low of 9.5 percent to a peak of 19.3 percent back in the early 1980s, you have created this deficit and debt monster that we have today in Ottawa.

I am concerned that what has been happening is that this debt-deficit monster has been an excuse. It has created a situation for neoconservatives—and I use that with a small "c", wherever they may be—to have an argument that they have to get rid of Canada's social safety net, that there has been an excuse manufactured that Canadians have to scale back on social services. I think that this is very, very sad, but it is happening, the propaganda. The word is out there that we are living beyond our means, so now we have to cut back on social spending.

What has the Finance minister, Mr. Michael Wilson, done? He has torn several holes into the safety net of Canadians in one budget after another.

He cut—you remember?—and froze payments to the provinces for health and post-secondary education. He capped Ottawa's contribution to a wide range of social welfare measures in the three so-called have provinces of British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario, even though these provinces contain one-half of our so-called poor citizens.

Another example, you know, pensions were a sacred trust. I remember Brian Mulroney saying, do you think I would take the pension away from my mother? I remember him referring to that in the election campaign. I saw it on TV.

Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, what happened after the election? We got the clawbacks. He is taking the pensions away from the old folks, from the senior citizens of this country. So much for the sacred trust. We have clawbacks of family allowances. Going further, we have had an elimination of the federal government's contribution to unemployment insurance, making it a lot more difficult to obtain and lowering the benefits to Canadians who happen to be out of work.

Mr. Acting Speaker, now we have Bill C-69, which became law at the end of last year, which could change our society permanently. I think it is a major threat to the social security system that we have in this country, which has been built up over the years in the co-operation with the federal and provincial governments, that we see this threat, this freeze on medicare, higher education and welfare. We see that measures are being taken to extend these freezes.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have experienced a decade where the rich have become richer and the poor became poorer. What has been happening is that the equity of income distribution has been reduced. This is totally unacceptable, not only from a point of view of social welfare, not only the point of view of social desirability, but from the point of view of economic benefit as well, because it is a well-known fact that people on the lower end of the income scale spend their money and make sure that the money and income is generated in the economy. From an economic point of view, this move to a more inequitable income distribution has been bad for the Canadian and indeed the Manitoba economy.

Talking about the economy, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would be very remiss if I did not take the opportunity to note that this province continues to

decline, that the Manitoba economy continues to get weaker. There are official statistics coming out from various agencies just about every day of the week. Today, we read about business bankruptcies that have been increasing over the last year or so.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I gather I only have one minute, so I will have to draw to a conclusion. I did not realize that I had used up so much time.

* (1730)

Mr. Acting Speaker, whether you look at manufacturing statistics, housing statistics, private investment, you will see that the economy is in bad shape. It is not just because we are suffering a recession. It is because of the Free Trade Agreement, and there may be other reasons as well.

In conclusion, Mr. Acting Speaker, I say that there is a responsibility that this Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has and that this government has to stimulate the Manitoba economy, to stimulate the economy, to alleviate the unemployment, to work with the private sector providing incentives and so on to provide a much higher level of economic activity.

Mr. Acting Speaker, unfortunately we have policies of a government that is sitting back and letting the situation get even worse. Thank you.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): I will just speak for a few minutes, as is my right, I believe.

Mr. Storie: I assume that the minister is not closing debate.

Mr. Manness: It is on the resolution. It is not my resolution.

Point of Order

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Acting Speaker, on a point of order, could you clarify, is that correct? We have a resolution introduced by the minister. Is he closing debate on this resolution? I would like a ruling on that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): The honourable member for Brandon East does not have a point of order.

Mr. Leonard Evans: It is a point of order. It is a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): He is not closing debate.

Mr. Manness: I am not closing debate. I can speak any time I want to.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I fully understand that traditionally I would be closing debate on this issue. Actually I am not now, because I am asking for my privilege to speak, so certainly I will not close debate. The government will not close debate on this motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. If the minister were to speak, he would be closing debate, because you are only allowed to speak the one time to your motion, and you would be closing the debate on your motion if you were to speak, so I cannot allow you to speak unless you are closing debate. Thank you.

Leave? Is there leave to allow the—

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Acting Speaker, we are prepared to give the minister leave and suspend that particular rule for this occasion with the understanding that this will continue to be debated until at least six o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is there leave for the honourable Minister of Finance to debate this matter? Leave? Agreed? Agreed.

* * *

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Speaker, I am just trying to recover whatever might be left of today, and I thank the members for granting leave. I am not going to speak very long. I know that the member for—let me get this right—Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) wishes to address the issue.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to portions of the presentation made by my colleague the opposition Finance critic. I sense what he seemed to be saying was this: The province does not have great debt vis-a-vis other provinces, No. 1; No. 2, the province does not have great debt, taking into account an economist's measure, that is, debt as a percentage of gross provincial product. I, too, had my training probably in the same orthodoxy as the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) and I am mindful of all the arguments around, particularly the measure of indebtedness and the terms of debt as a percentage of gross national product, but I have had a chance to see that practice.

I have had a chance to see that practice in business, plus a chance to see that practice in government. Let me say, Mr. Speaker, it does not work. It just does not work. The only point, I think, that—and I will not go into why it does not work here. Another time would be better, but today I want to share something that happened today in Estimates review. Who has heard of the Jobs Fund? Today, in consideration of The Loan Act, the schedule of which I want to table with the budget, decisions were being made as to what to include in The Loan Act. We went through and there was somebody from the Treasury Division in my department plus somebody from Treasury Board, and we had actually a Crown corporation counsel who is becoming sort of our treasury board of the Crowns.

We had them bring in the proposals from the Crowns dealing with what capital program they wanted, the Crowns want for the 1991-92 year plus bridging into the next year, so that we could print a schedule of loan authority. Mr. Speaker, there was a little item called Co-op Promotion or something, \$2.7 million. It was not Co-op Promotion but it was an old vestige of the Jobs Fund that had been borrowed, and there was still \$2 million left in unexpended authority.

Mr. Speaker, I asked a member of the Treasury Division, I said, I was in this House when the schedules were brought down for the Jobs Fund. I want to ask the question, what was the total amount we borrowed in capital authority, capital, in support of the Jobs Fund? \$250 million was the answer. This was capital authority. This did not go into building, into a contribution to Limestone. This was not a contribution by way to the Water Services Board. This was not a contribution to the updating of the plant of the Manitoba Telephone System, and it certainly was not a contribution that we have started under the latest Crown corp, that meaning the Hazardous Waste Corporation.

This was \$250 million. I asked the man from Treasury. I said, have we paid any of this yet? Of course, we have not. We have put into a sinking account about 1.5 percent a year. This was out now eight years, so we have about 10 percent set aside for the repayment of this \$250 million of Jobs Fund money spent through the period 1982 to 1985. That is how governments abuse their authority, and that is exactly what the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) wants us to do today. He is not telling us to go -(interjection)- Yes, he is. He is telling

us to employ people, to borrow more money to employ people -(interjection)- well, incentives to the housing, what is the source of funds of incentives? It is either the provision of grant money which is borrowed, or it is the forgiveness of taxes which, of course, causes a greater deficit which leads to greater borrowing. The source in either way is borrowing.

An Honourable Member: We get more housing and less unemployment.

* (1740)

Mr. Manness: I see. So the member says, go out and borrow more money and inject money into this industry, and it will all come back. Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe in countercyclical spending. I do not have a problem with it except when you are broke.

Today I can tell you, as sure as I stand here, that if the indebtedness of the total debt of this province was in the realm of, on the general purpose side, was a billion dollars and a billion and a half versus five and a half to six, this government would have a public works program in place just like the member would want, because there is good logic in building highways, and there is good logic in building desperately needed infrastructure during this time.

I have said it before, but in reality, when you cannot even service the debt you have—I cannot service it, Mr. Speaker. If I could service it, then we would not be looking at a multihundred-million-dollar type of deficit like we are this year, if I could service it.

An Honourable Member: Why did you spend so much?

Mr. Manness: The member says, why did you spend so much? So far, I have tallied the level of expenditure requests from the members opposite, and it is roughly within five hundred to a billion dollars in additional spending. The member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), the seatmate of the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), has said, guarantee farmers cost of production under the GRIP program. Do you know the cost of that? That is an extra \$200 million. Cost of production means cost of production. -(interjection)- I see. So if you are a 60-acre farmer you get it. If you are a 600-acre farmer, you are capped. What do you mean by capped?

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite caused me to digress. The only point I am trying to make is that

in preparing for the 1991-92 budget and sitting down today at Treasury Board, we had to deal with something called a vestige of the Jobs Fund that has been long spent on make-work, makeshift jobs, and yet the indebtedness of a quarter of a billion dollars is still on our books. Not one dollar has been directed toward the paying back of that debt. So I say to the members opposite, it is so easy to spend.

Mr. Speaker, I said on January 21, when the members were saying, well, what is the problem, how come the revenues are flat in total? I said that the corporate income tax is down and that is why, when these members say, jack up the corporate tax rates, make sure that there is a minimum tax in place, which I can agree with in itself, it is not going to manifest in large significant additional revenue. They know it and the members opposite know it, but of course they are trying to build this spectre that somebody out there has means and it should be taxed.

I do not want to take the time away from the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), but I sensed it was very important, particularly hearing the thesis of the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), who seemed to be saying the indebtedness of the province is not that bad, and that to me meant go much further into debt and today spend money to help us get out.

I just wanted to tell him that would be great if his party, during those very robust years, '66 through

68—pardon me, '85 through '88, those very robust years, had paid back that \$250 million associated with the Jobs Fund of the early '80s, today we would be in some better position to maybe listen to some of his advice.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): I welcome the opportunity of joining in on this debate in the House. I find curious the comments of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), the member for Morris, because I frankly doubt—while I am not going to get extensively into the debt argument, because that is clearly the only thing that we hear from the other side, I note that in 1982 the member for Morris was espousing very strongly the dictates of one President Reagan. I have him quoted in Hansard of March 25, 1982, praising the strategy of his mentor, Ronald Reagan, and numerous quotes indicating at that time that the dishrag was dry, to quote the

member for that time, and that Ronald Reagan was the way to go.

I add, the legacy of Ronald Reagan in the United States is a \$3,000 billion debt. If we follow the precepts of this government and this Tory policy, we are going to not only be in a situation where our social programs cannot be funded, but the debt is going to continue to mount and mount, because that is the result of Ronald Reagan and the Tory fiscal management.

I would like to start out, basically, by commending the government. I would like to commend the government for finally listening to the students of the ESL program, finally listening to the teachers in the ESL program, finally listening to the public in the ESL program and finally coming around after much protest, after much agonizing, after much unfortunate circumstances in many peoples' lives. Finally, the government did come around. Finally, they heard the people on this, Mr. Speaker, and finally, albeit the last moment, they decided to reinstate funding to the ESL program for another year.

I am happy that has happened. I am happy for the students. I am happy for the immigrants, the refugees and all of the teachers involved. It is an excellent program, and it just shows that democracy can work, Mr. Speaker, that when the people have their voices heard, even Tory governments on occasion will change their mind and will listen to the people in the street, to Manitobans, so I am happy to hear that. Unfortunately, that does not extend to all groups.

Very unfortunate incidents occurred at the Legislature here yesterday, Mr. Speaker. I felt dismayed when I witnessed the events here. I went back and I had an opportunity to review the rally newsletter of the UMSU, the University of Manitoba Students' Union, because I tried to get some kind of grasp, some kind of idea where the government gained the remote impression that somehow this group was going to provide difficulties or result in discord in this House or this Chamber.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I looked at their pamphlet, the pamphlet that they handed out with respect to the rally, and do you know whom they quoted here? They quote the Premier, Gary Filmon. Pardon me, they quote our Premier, the member for Tuxedo, and they quote him in here. That is the radical stand of the students, quoting the Premier of

the province. What they do in this pamphlet is they go through the Premier's promises to the students and they analyze them, and they ask the Premier to reassess his promises of about a short six months ago.

I presume, given the remarks also of the Minister of Finance, the member for Morris (Mr. Manness), yesterday that somehow this kind of activity was perhaps the basis for the government's overreaction to the events of yesterday. I just want to quote from this document since the students did not have the opportunity to present their claims to the government. I would like to just quote from this document where they indicate that, I guess, during the election campaign the member for Tuxedo, our Premier, promised that special funding initiatives would be undertaken by this government for the universities. Let me quote from the document, the students stating:

The Faculty of Dentistry was in such bad shape that it was going to be shut down. The \$3 million for Dentistry, the \$10 million for Fort Garry are both emergency expenditures. The U of M's steam tunnel that supplied several buildings with heat was built 80 years ago and has been on the verge of collapse. The province's approach to funding is best compared to physicians who refuse to operate until the patient is actually dying. They put off what is necessary until emergency measures are required.

This is the kind of discussion that the students wish to have with the government, Mr. Speaker. This is the kind of issue that they wish to present to the government, and it is very, very unfortunate and very sad that they did not have the opportunity to do so and perhaps to get the government to live up to its commitments made during the election campaign and, in fact, live up to its commitments of 1988, when the member for Tuxedo, our Premier, the First Minister, indicated, and I quote from April 2, 1988, the Winnipeg Free Press that the government would fund increases at least equal to the rate of inflation.

They have not done that in the public school system, although I must admit that the private school system has seen a twofold increase over the rate of inflation this year, Mr. Speaker. The public school system certainly is far, far below the 6.8 percent rate of inflation in this city. Certainly, the funding to public schools generally is seen as a precursor by the universities for their funding, so I believe that all involved in the university system are

quite rightly looking with concern at the government's deliberations as it determines what funding will be to universities this year.

I noted that it is very interesting, Mr. Speaker, that we would have comments from members opposite during Question Period when we try to raise valid points about potential cutoffs, potential funding difficulties, potential layoffs, so members opposite keep saying it is not a fait accompli.

* (1750)

I just add that if not for the intervention of the people, the students and the teachers on the ESL program, for example, perhaps there would be no program today after March 31 and, consequently, I think it is incumbent upon us as members of the opposition to raise at every opportunity the misguided direction and the misguided course of this government as it stumbles along in its total and complete preoccupation with the debt to the detriment of the people of Manitoba.

I have had occasions to quote in this Chamber the First Minister on several occasions, and I cannot resist the opportunity of just once again putting on the record comments of the First Minister, which he made in this Chamber on April 5, 1982, and it is almost pathetic, Mr. Speaker. I quote page 1129 of Hansard, "We have, this year, almost every jurisdiction, almost every school division in this province, looking at an increase in mill rate for education property taxes, an average from the figures that are made available to us." Then later on he says, "Throw it onto the property taxpayer where it shouldn't be; where they have argued in the past that it's inequitable, that it doesn't bear any relationship to one's income," et cetera.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have the situation where precisely—what the member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon) spoke so eloquently against a few years ago when he was opposition, now he is doing precisely to the people of Manitoba, totally contrary to what he had stated in his comments.

We often have members opposite say to us, where does the New Democratic Party stand on issues of education? I just want to point out for you basically what our position is in terms of education. Basically, it is that it is one of the foremost means of economic development in the province, and the provision of equal education opportunities to all Manitobans is a major factor in all education, training and economic platforms. We also believe

that education is one of the foremost means of social development in the province, and a provision of equal educational opportunities to all Manitobans is a birthright. Finally, we believe that equal access should mean no one is excluded and no one is overlooked. Unfortunately, that is not happening in Manitoba today, and we are seeing an erosion of our public education system.

You know, as I go about my constituency I find the public saying to me fairly frequently that they want the government to preserve the education system and they want the government to preserve the health care system and make it better. In fact, I know members opposite sincerely believe that, and I know members opposite sincerely espouse that in their rhetoric, because I am sure their polls indicate that. Whenever their polls indicate that, I am certain that we will hear it from members opposite. I do believe they think that their path is the correct path, but I could tell you that the effect of what they are doing, particularly in the education system, is not living up to their rhetoric. The effect on the education system probably moves towards a two-tier system which goes diametrically opposed to everything that we have always stood for in this province and everything that we have always understood that our public education system should be doing.

As I indicated earlier, the government have finally listened to the people, finally reinstated funding to the ESL program. There is another very precarious situation occurring, Mr. Speaker, and that is in relation to the ACCESS programs. We still have not heard anything with respect to the ACCESS programs. We have heard the minister indicate that they are looking at it but there are no hard facts.

The government has been looking at it now for years. For the last year, they have talked about it. We, of course, have urged the government to seriously look at the effect of the ACCESS programs, because what it does, and what members opposite always fail to understand, is that by investing at the front end and yes, it does take investment and the minister talked about job creation and the Jobs Fund, but when you invest in the front end, it pays off in the long run and you have an investment back.

When you provide someone with a job, Mr. Speaker, when you educate someone, when you train someone, that person comes back and pays taxes and contributes to society and is not forced to

be in the situation that many people are forced to be in today. That is the difficulty with the convoluted thinking of members opposite. Somehow, to use the old phraseology, they cut off their nose to spite their faces, when it comes to investing in people and projects.

When we talk about the ACCESS program and the New Careers program, we find that 80 percent of New Careers students graduate and 95 percent of the graduates are employed in fields related to their training. That is an outstanding success and that is an investment in people, several million dollars, and that several million dollars assists people in getting jobs, assists them in contributing properly to society.

This government in its narrow-minded approach and its preoccupation with debt fails to see this. What they do is they cut off valid programs that in the long run benefit all of us, not just financially but it does financially, but certainly socially in terms of the return end of our society and the benefits that all of us obtain from people out there leading useful and proper lives, Mr. Speaker, and that is—to use the phrase of an old friend and mentor of mine—the conundrum that I encounter when I try to understand the—my adult friend, a prominent member of this House—that is the conundrum that I encounter when I hear the members opposite continue to go on and on with their preoccupation.

I do not believe it is maliciously held, I just think that it is held to such an extent that they have blinders on and they do not see the effect that their preoccupation with the debt problem can have on the public, preoccupation in fact to the exclusion of all. Every question is answered with a reflection on the debt or in the other extreme, every question is answered by an attack on the previous NDP

governments in this province, governments for the most part that have governed the province well and will ultimately do so again. I can you assure of that. Particularly, if one looks amongst the groups that have been alienated by this government, be it the teachers who are being blamed by this government, be it the nurses who are being blamed by this government, be it the average Manitobans, all of the have people of this province who are being blamed by this government for the fiscal woes.

The government fails to do one thing. They fail to look in the mirror. They fail to see the effects that their preoccupation with the debt and their blindly following the lead of Brian Mulroney and blindly following the lead of Ronald Reagan can lead them to.

Mr. Speaker, do they not realize that what they are trying to do in Manitoba will result in what Brian Mulroney has managed to do in this country? In the six or seven short years that the Prime Minister has been in office, he has managed to alienate more people in this country than probably any previous leader, any previous Prime Minister. That is the leader of their federal party, that is the man that they supported and that is the same process that they are following in terms of their approach to government and their approach to people. I dare say that is tragic, and unfortunately we are feeling the consequences.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 25 minutes remaining.

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

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Thursday, March 21, 1991

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