



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIB
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	ND
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	ND
CARR, James	Crescentwood	LIB
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIB
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	ND
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	LIB
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	ND
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	ND
DOER, Gary	Concordia	ND
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIB
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	ND
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	ND
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	ND
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIB
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	ND
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	ND
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	LIB
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	ND
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	ND
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	ND
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	ND
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	ND
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	ND
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	ND
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	ND
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	ND

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 8, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Routine Proceedings, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today from the Canadian National Freestyle Ski Team, Manitoba's own Miss Nancy Wankling who has just become the gold medalist in ballet skiing at the Canadian National Championships in Vernon, B.C.

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

Also with us this afternoon, we have from the Pinawa School thirty Grade 9 students, and they are under the direction of Brian McKenzie and Hardy Vellie. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik).

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

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TABLING OF REPORTS

Mr. Speaker: Pursuant to subsection 13(5) of The Provincial Auditor's Act, I am tabling the St. James-Assiniboia School Division Special Audit - Report of the Office of the Provincial Auditor.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review package for the years '91-92 for the Department of Natural Resources.

* (1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Unity Committee Manitoba Participation

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the last four or five days we have been hearing, through the central Canadian media, some news that the so-called unity task force or cabinet of the federal government would be meeting with

people in Manitoba to talk about the future of our country.

Mr. Speaker, we assumed that would be a meeting with the all-party committee that has gone out and listened to all Manitobans across the province. Since that time, rather than having an invitation to an all-party task force, we find invitations to an entry-upon-invitation-only, a reception at the Westin, from the federal government and the federal lead minister in Manitoba, Minister Epp.

I would ask the Premier whether he intends to have any of his members of caucus or cabinet attend that session and whether he will, in turn, say no to this reception and yes to the federal committee meeting with the people who have listened to Manitobans across our province, who have listened to the many presentations that have been made by Manitobans, and say no to the closed-door reception at the Westin hotel.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I am not certain who is on the invitation list. If by virtue of the fact the Leader of the Opposition has an invitation, that means that MLAs are invited, then I say that is a good thing. I think that the members of that committee ought to meet with many publicly elected officials who may be influential in future decisions and have a role to play in decisions in this Legislature. I say that is a good thing.

The gesture of the unity committee meeting in Manitoba I think is a good one, to suggest they are interested in coming to Manitoba and meeting with as many people as they can with respect to people who will ultimately be influential in decisions and recommendations with respect to constitutional matters.

This is not a partisan issue. This is not an issue whereby this is the consultative body of the federal government. Clearly the Spicer committee is the consultative body. This is a body of the cabinet of the federal government that is going to be discussing matters with other elected officials and other elected people throughout this country. They will decide whom they are going to be meeting with, but the venue for their meeting is that of a cabinet committee of the federal government meeting here

in the city of Winnipeg, which I think is not something that we should discourage. I think the more that they come out of their glass house in Ottawa and see themselves meeting at other places in the country—we believe in that sort of process.

We instituted cabinet meetings outside the city of Winnipeg for the first time of any provincial government, and in the past three years, we have met on average five or six times a year at places outside the city of Winnipeg to ensure that we took government throughout the length and breadth of this province.

If the unity committee of the federal cabinet is going to be meeting in Winnipeg, I do not think that is something that should be boycotted or something that should be in some way criticized or chastised. I believe it is a good thing for them to meet—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Doer: We do have an all-party, nonpartisan task force that went out and listened to Manitobans across the province, heard the opinions of people hour after hour, day after day, week after week.

This whole issue of our future is, in our opinion, a very, very worthy challenge, but what we do not want to see is going from a glass house in Ottawa to a glass house in Manitoba with an invitation-only reception or cocktail party, Mr. Speaker. We think that is just inconsistent with the kind of feelings Canadians have about a closed-door meeting. In fact, the Premier in his Speech from the Throne in October of last year said, Canadians said no to the old-style elite accommodation and closed-door politics.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Premier—in a nonpartisan way—whether he will contact the federal minister responsible and the lead minister in Manitoba and suggest we cancel the cocktail parties and receptions and have a working session with the all-party task force, the nonpartisan task force, that went out and listened to Manitobans and heard Manitobans in terms of what Manitobans are saying about the future of our country.

* (1340)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I think that the member does not recognize the relationship. This is not a committee of cabinet that is going to be dealing with public input. This is a committee of cabinet that is going to be having discussions with other elected officials throughout the country. They will be having

their own meeting here. This is not the meeting portion. This is a social event in conjunction with it.

The member knows full well that whenever he used to go, when he was a member of government, to federal-provincial ministerial conferences that they would have social events in conjunction with those ministerial conferences, that those conferences that he used to attend which were closed door, I might say, just for the other ministers, just for the ministers of the various portfolios that he was involved with, they would have their meetings, and then they would have a public social event in conjunction with it.

I would assume that this is all that the Clark group is doing, and I have no other information on it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Doer: I guess we just agree to disagree, and that is fine.

Western Premiers' Conference Constitutional Affairs

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, a final question to the Premier, the matter of constitutional affairs may be on the agenda next week at the western Premiers' meeting. I would ask the Premier whether it is on the agenda, and I would ask whether the Premier will refuse to take a position at the western Premiers' meeting until the all-party, nonpartisan task force reports to the people of Manitoba, so that we can protect the position that we will be taking as a province together in that all-party task force.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, that is the position I have stated publicly consistently. That is why I have not spoken in interviews. Many people have asked, why is the Premier not taking strong positions in response to Belanger-Campeau and in response to Allaire? Why is he not taking a position on the constituent assembly? Why is he not saying all this?

I said that until we have the response, the recommendations and the advice of the all-party task force, which I commissioned because I believe it is important to the people of Manitoba to go through this process—this is the kind of open process that is designed to achieve consensus, that is designed to depoliticize a very important issue, the Constitution of our country, and I have steadfastly said that I am not going to be going to the Western Premiers' Conference.

I have given a number of interviews to media in anticipation of the Western Premiers' Conference, and I have said I am going there to report on the progress of the Manitoba Task Force and not to take a firm position on behalf of Manitoba. That is why I set up the all-party task force.

Pinus Project Conditional Funding Reversal

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, if this was baseball, the Rotary Pines and the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) would have more strikes against them than Casey at the bat. The Rotary Pines, we now know, is simply a front for a developer who wants to put 10 condominiums on the Assiniboine River and a strip mall of 36,000 square feet. The condominiums will take up 55 percent of the site space and the Rotary Pines only 15 percent.

Given the problems with the developer's application—and we still do not know the date of incorporation—will the Minister of Housing table the Rotary Pines application form, and did cabinet this morning reverse their decision on conditional funding?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, the detailed information related to any Seniors RentalStart project—and we have had a number of them brought forward—I would be pleased to go through in great detail with any member of the House who wishes to attend the Committee of Supply when the Estimates of the Department of Housing will be dealt with. That will occur sometime very shortly, so in that respect, I would be pleased to deal with those detailed questions in that regard.

* (1345)

Seniors RentalStart Program Transcona Application

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I also—while I am on my feet—took as notice several questions from the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) with respect to the legion Seniors RentalStart project at that time. I can tell you that their first contact, as indicated by the member, came from the legion's TRG, Technical Resource Group, on March 6, 1990. First contact with the Rotary Pines occurred on February 23, 1989.

In the fall of 1990, St. Michael's Villa, a Seniors RentalStart 57-unit project, opened in the community of Transcona. At the time it opened, it was not fully subscribed. All of the units were not taken. Staff at that time were concerned that to follow that up immediately with another project in a limited market was inappropriate and, as a result, did not proceed with the Seniors RentalStart application at that time.

Mr. Speaker, I can also report that all projects that were in the works at that time, including the one from Transcona, were invited to resubmit their application under the private nonprofit section in order to keep their application alive.

Seniors RentalStart Program Funding Criteria

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his answer. I look forward to going over in detail in Estimates the Rotary Pines application.

Will the Minister of Housing tell the Elks Lodge in Neepawa and the Canadian Legion Branch No. 7 in Transcona why they were turned down for Seniors RentalStart funding when the deputy minister said their submission was very thorough? In spite of that, they were diverted into another program that had 107 applications.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I just, in my first answer, answered that question.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Speaker, why did the Minister of Housing put all of the remaining funds into two projects including Rotary Pines when he could have approved Neepawa and Transcona or Neepawa and Flin Flon and helped two communities instead of one, especially since the minister is on record alleging severe financial constraints and limited resources?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, these projects—and again, when we go into the Estimates process, I will be pleased to advise him where all these projects were built, the distribution around the province, so that we tried to accommodate as many people as we can.

This is a market-driven project, these Seniors RentalStart projects. When the NDP introduced the program several years ago, there was a 10 percent forgiveness of the capital cost, a grant and a mortgage at below the government's borrowing rate.

When we have dealt with this program, we changed that to a 5 percent grant and mortgage at the government borrowing rate at no cost to the government, because it is a market-driven program, and it is meant to stimulate construction to create jobs, to create seniors housing projects, quite different from the private nonprofit program where, in fact, the government, both Canada and Manitoba, subsidized the rental of the property above 25 percent of income.

Pines Project Unit Deposits

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Housing has just indicated that the Rotary Pines project is a market-driven project. It is so market driven that when a senior phoned this morning about making an application, they were so anxious to get her \$250 deposit that they were prepared to immediately rush over personally in order to sign her up.

Can the minister tell the House today how many individuals have signed for an apartment, have reserved an apartment by the payment of a \$250 deposit as has been indicated in the prospectus of the Rotary Pines project?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, at the time of the application for Pre-Development funding, which was a requirement then of Pre-Development funding to provide for indications of expressions of interest by a \$250 deposit, there were 104 applications.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, will the minister tell the House today how they can accept the deposits of 104 people when their own prospectus says that if they pay a deposit of \$250, their spot is reserved? It is not possible to reserve spots for 104 applicants when you only have 86 units.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, as is common practice in these kinds of projects, there are waiting lists associated with that. If someone chooses at the time that they have to put up the full amount of their money that they do not wish to proceed, that they wish to stay in their own home a little while longer, that they choose to move to Victoria instead of staying here, then they may withdraw their \$250 deposit. It is a refundable deposit.

It is common practice to exceed the limit where possible, to take a waiting list of people so that, in the event that someone decides not to proceed, the next person on the list will automatically move up.

Mrs. Carstairs: That would put them in conflict with their own agreement.

* (1350)

Public Interest

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the minister has consistently told us about the vast number of people who are in favour of this project in St. James-Assiniboia. The other day, I tabled a petition with some 309 names. Today I would like to table a petition with some 636 individuals' names in opposition to this project. That makes nearly 1,000.

Can the minister present to this Chamber similar documentation of people who have indicated that they are in favour of this project?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, there were obviously quite a number of people who were prepared to support the project by paying a \$250 deposit towards the rental of a suite in that particular building.

I am pleased to review the petition filed by the member for River Heights. I will review it.

Education Funding Property Tax Increases

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, during the Estimates process, the minister admitted that education property taxes, the GFT or Gary Filmon taxes as they are called by some people, will increase by an average of 10 percent per homeowner this year alone. This will amount to a minimum tax increase of \$100 to \$150 per taxpayer.

Will this minister now admit that the Tory policy is to increase taxes through offloading through the back door of property taxes?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated yesterday, when you table something with the member for Kildonan, he misconstrues it in every way possible.

Let me indicate, Mr. Speaker, that when we established our funding to schools, we indicated very clearly that we were also asking school divisions to set their priorities very clearly. We also indicated to the teachers of this province that they would have to dampen their expectations so that jobs could be preserved and so that services could be provided.

Mr. Speaker, the salary settlements throughout this province for teachers were in excess of 5 percent. That meant one of two things for school divisions: either they increase their special levy or, indeed, they had to lay off teachers. We had indicated a year ago that the funding levels to schools could not be expected to be at 4.6 percent because of the recession and because of the fiscal situation that the province was facing.

Indeed, we did the responsible thing, and we have asked school divisions to set their priorities and do the responsible thing as well.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Speaker, we have the worst of both worlds—high property taxes and laid-off teachers.

Will this minister confirm that not only have taxes gone up 10 percent this year alone, but for the past three years since the Conservatives have come to power, property taxes are at an all-time high?

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, please. It is up to the member to confirm his own facts, to ascertain the veracity of the statements that he makes, and he is called upon to do that.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised by the honourable government House leader, the honourable government House leader is referring to Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, Citation 362. The honourable member should ascertain the accuracy of his facts before bringing the matter before the House.

The honourable member for Kildonan, kindly rephrase your question, please.

* * *

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Speaker, after three years of tax increases, how can this minister justify a 10 percent property tax increase on education property taxes alone?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, during the Estimates process yesterday, I read into the record for the edification of the member for Kildonan that when his government was in office, the increase to school divisions ranged at about 2 percent in 1985 and 1986, at a time when revenues to this province were in excess of 7 percent.

Mr. Speaker, when the CPI and the City of Winnipeg was running at 4.5 percent, we were

funding education at above 7 percent. We have done the responsible thing. We have supported education as much as we can. We have set our priorities, and we have asked that school divisions do the same.

University of Manitoba Funding

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is to the same minister.

Mr. Speaker, not only public schools are hurting, but universities as well. Will this minister now meet with the Board of Governors of the University of Manitoba and the president to deal with the concerns raised by those individuals about differential funding from the Universities Grants Commission to the University of Manitoba?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, once again the member for Kildonan would interfere in every autonomous body that there is with respect to education.

The Universities Grants Commission is the body that is responsible for allocating the funds to the university. The University of Manitoba, the Board of Governors, can certainly meet with the Universities Grants Commission to discuss those issues. That is the proper body that they should meet with to discuss how funds are allocated in terms of the grants that are made to the universities.

* (1355)

Motive Fuel Tax Increase Impact Transportation Industry

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, on May 1 of this year, the Minister of Finance increased taxes on motive fuels purchased in Manitoba. The budget document indicates that this will generate over \$23 million in additional revenue.

I would like to ask the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), what impact studies were done to determine the effects of this tax increase on the transportation industry of this province?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, for the subsequent question I will dig out the impact of budgetary decisions in other jurisdictions in this province and will indicate to the member that probably no province in Canada has

increased fuel taxes less than the Province of Manitoba.

I find in passing strange also, to use a term that is endearing to certain members of the House, that the locomotive fuel tax—I think the member for Transcona particularly would be keenly interested in—was not increased and has not been increased in this province for four years.

CP Rail Traffic Diversion

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, today we are notified that CP Rail will be diverting its potash and coal train traffic around Manitoba via its subsidiary Soo Lines.

When was the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) notified by CP Rail of their intention to move trains around Manitoba instead of through this province, and what studies have been done to determine the impact on our employment levels in this province?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, again I find it unbelievable that the member would ask this question, because indeed the first budget that we came down with and indeed in the defeated 1988 budget, Mr. Kostyra at the time had proposed that the motive fuel tax, charged to CP and CNR, would be increased from 13.5 to 15.5 cents a litre.

We saved that increase and it has been represented to us by the companies that that represented an incredible saving and maintained economic activity in the transportation sector for some several years since. You know what happened to that budget.

Mr. Reid: It is unfortunate that the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) has been gagged, and he cannot answer the questions that were directed to him.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Transcona that questions are put to the government, and I believe any cabinet minister can respond.

The honourable member for Transcona, kindly put your question now, please.

Winnipeg International Airport Cargo Potential

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): In light of the many proposals for residential development around the airport, what impact studies has the Minister of Highways and Transportation undertaken to determine the future employment possibilities in the air cargo industry?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, my staff have been working continually with the Winnipeg Chamber, with the various components of the air industry in terms of seeing whether we can expand the cargo industry, and I think there is great potential there.

If the member wants details on the companies that we have been making contact with or an update on it, I am prepared to give that at a future time.

* (1400)

Child and Family Services Deficit Relief

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, in the throne speech and then in the budget, this government promised to prioritize Family Services. In fact, they have written many times saying that they are going to preserve and enhance the services delivered to the most vulnerable people in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the implementation of that policy is a 25 percent cut in special foster care rates, a 50 percent cut in the preschool program for handicapped children, a layoff of 65 homemakers with Family Services of Winnipeg, no follow-through on their agreement with the foster parents to provide a Phase 3 increase. Now Winnipeg South Child and Family Services is forced to call an emergency meeting with their creditors this Friday because they can no longer pay their bills, but they met the criteria established by this minister.

I would like to ask the minister why he has chosen to put them in this position.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): It is of great concern to me that there are agencies that have run up a deficit in recent months of over half a million dollars. At the same time, we have agencies that have operated for many years within a balanced budget.

We are very concerned that these debts have been accumulated by the agency that he references. We have also heard from some of the treatment centres that are trying to collect these funds for services rendered. My department has assured MacDonald Youth Services in the last few days that the department would certainly be working with Winnipeg South to work on their budget, to have a service plan adopted and have deficit funds flowing to them. We have also assured them that debt will be paid.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, the minister set some conditions for the agencies, including Winnipeg South. Winnipeg South has met those conditions. Why has their deficit relief money not been paid?

Mr. Gilleshammer: This agency, along with others, was notified at the beginning of the fiscal year to come forward with a plan by which they could operate within a balanced budget. Not a great deal of progress was made through the spring of 1990 and the summer of 1990. Sometime in the fall of 1990, they became more involved with trying to bring forward a balanced budget.

Because the debt situation, the deficit situation, was so large there that their plans were not immediately accepted and adjustments and modifications had to be made, only in recent weeks are we in a position to finalize the plan that they have brought forward. We are continuing to work with them and the deficit funding, and additional funding will be flowing, we hope, in the near future.

Mr. Alcock: While they continue to work with these agencies, they incur ever-increasing interest costs.

Foster Parents Funding Agreement

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, this government bargains in bad faith. They made a deal with the foster parents that, on April 1 of this year, they would receive Phase 3 of that agreement. They have not delivered it.

My question to the minister is: When will the foster parents of this province receive the support they were promised?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): This government entered into agreement with the foster families of Manitoba over two years ago, which was a very, very generous one. We are now entering into the third year of that agreement, and I can assure the honourable

member that we will be living up to our agreement. We are going to see, in the province of Manitoba, the highest foster rates paid anywhere in Canada. The agreement that was negotiated over two years ago was one which the foster families accepted and, I believe, feel was a very fair agreement for them. I can assure the honourable member that we will certainly live up to our obligations.

Brandon Mental Health Centre Education Programs

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

The Minister of Health has decided to terminate the Pine Ridge School program at the Brandon Mental Health Centre for children with serious emotional and behavioural problems without any consultation from the Westman community, including the Brandon School Division. Now we learn that the Westman Regional Mental Health Council, a body appointed by the minister himself to advise him on mental health matters, was not even consulted which makes you wonder what is the point of having these regional councils.

In light of the publicly stated opposition by the Westman Regional Mental Health Council, will the minister now reverse the ill-conceived decision to eliminate this program?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, on a number of different occasions, I have given this response to not only my honourable friend, but indeed to others, that when government makes budgetary decisions, we do not have the luxury of wide consultation prior to budget decisions. I have indicated to my honourable friend in previous questions approximately 10 days ago that meetings are established at this time—I believe for Monday of next week—with departmental staff and those individuals concerned about the public issue of the consolidation and the move of this school from Brandon Mental Health Centre.

Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of consultation for implementation of decisions that will take place to prepare the way to make this decision work for this coming fall in the school year. Those consultations are scheduled and will take place.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, has the minister now perused the letter from Dr. Parker, the former chief psychiatrist of the Brandon Mental Health

Centre, who urged the continuation of the program and who said it was unthinkable to try to mainstream the psychiatrically ill children in the school system? Does the minister now appreciate the problem?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, that is exactly why we are meeting with individuals in the Brandon Mental Health Centre, a regional service delivery community and the Brandon School Division, because education is a function of the Department of Education, not the ministry of Health. That is why an integration of the program so it meets goals and standards of the agenda of Education is appropriate.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the details of working through that decision to move an educational function from the ministry of Health to the ministry of Education is exactly the process of consultation that will go on following a budgetary decision. You have to make a decision before you can start consultation around the implementation, the parameters and the reality of that decision and how it will be undertaken.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, has the minister had an opportunity, in light of his last answer, to read the letter sent to his deputy minister from the Brandon School Division which states that the government's plan would be an injustice to the children and that it would produce negative results with increased costs and increased hardships for the education system in the entire Westman area?

Did the minister consult with the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) on whom he is trying to offload these costs?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, all of that correspondence has come in.

What I would like to ask my honourable friend, and I know he will not have the opportunity to respond, has he read a recent letter to the editor in the Brandon Sun wherein individuals have indicated that this current swirl of controversy does not do the children we are trying to help any good whatsoever?

I have indicated continuously that the children will not receive education from the ministry of Health. The details of how that education will be delivered will be worked out with the school division, Brandon Mental Health Centre and the Community Services.

The children will be well served with this move. They will not be abandoned as is the allegation made by some, not my honourable friend. Mr. Speaker, those discussions around the decision making start next week.

Home Care Program Understaffing

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, today at the Centre on Aging symposium entitled Health Care: Is the Crisis Real?—which I highly recommend to all members—a finding was presented that showed a clear correlation between geriatric assessments and the health and well-being of the elderly. In other words, the fewer the assessments, the higher the mortality rate.

Given that the minister admitted in last year's Estimates on December 13, 1990, that home care assessments are now only happening once a year instead of the every three to four months as previously the case, will the minister now address the serious understaffing problem of the home care program and show he is serious about health promotion and preventative services for the elderly?

* (1410)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate my honourable friend's question because the symposium that is taking place today—and unfortunately, I could not be there because I wanted very much to attend that session in its entirety. There are issues that are coming out which demonstrate how we can make our system in Manitoba, which is reputed to be the best in North America and possibly the best in the world, better.

Mr. Speaker, that is why symposiums like that take place. That is why we have established some of the research capability in this province, to identify positive program changes within the budget of the Manitoba ministry of Health.

As my honourable friend will not indicate other findings in there—is that the seniors of Manitoba are also overserved in some capacities in the health care system because of the method of billing and payment, et cetera. Those issues will be addressed in their entirety, not picked and chosen, as my honourable friend wishes in her narrowed focus—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Health Advisory Network Home Care Program Report

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, home care was the best program in this country, but it is now being eroded by this government, and our seniors are not being served to meet their needs.

I want to ask the minister if he will now table the report that I know he now has on his desk by the Health Advisory Network on options for living, housing and home care which clearly states that home care is suffering from serious understaffing caused by increased demands without increased resources, resulting in high demand, high pressure and high potential for staff—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I do not have a Health Advisory Network report on my desk as my honourable friend indicated. I will go through for my honourable friend, yet again, the process.

The task force holds hearings and discussions, comes up with an interim report. That interim report, once written, is circulated to those individuals, groups, associations, professional entities who have made presentations to the taskforce to assure that their suggestions, their statements are accurately reflected. The interim report is upgraded to report to the Health Advisory Network which then reports to me. Mr. Speaker, when that happens I hope my honourable friend will offer her constructive advice on how government deals with issues addressed—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Report Completed

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, the minister has not been straightforward with this House. He has received the final report on this matter, as well as two others: one dealing with preventative services for the elderly and one on health promotion.

I want to ask the minister, since he has all three reports, if he will table those three reports in this House. Will he provide us with a plan of action for addressing the numerous and serious recommendations of those reports?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I cannot account for the inaccurate information my honourable friend constantly brings to the House. If my honourable friend would care to provide to me who it is who says that I have a final report from the Health Advisory Network, not one, not two, but three of them—I would like her to tell me who that individual is.

The chairman of the Health Advisory Network would like to talk to that individual to indicate that no

final reports except one have been made available to me, and that was the task force report on extended treatment bed review which we received in June and dealt with in July of last year.

No other Health Advisory Network reports have been finalized and presented to me. Her information is false.

ACRE Storage Site

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, this government has said on many occasions that they are concerned about the environment and specifically with the disposal of chemical cans. In fact, I believe the Premier (Mr. Filmon) was in Swan River during the election to support the work of ACRE and shredding of chemical cans.

I would like to ask the Premier if he is aware that these bags containing the shredded chemical cans are being stored within 75 yards of homes in Swan River and leading to complaints from local residents about smell of chemical from them, and what he is prepared to do about that.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Yes, a number of things have evolved rather rapidly in the disposal of these containers that ACRE removed from the waste disposal grounds last fall and over the course of last summer. One of those developments is that the value of the product and ultimately the cost of disposing of it has changed dramatically.

My contact with ACRE is that they will be moving that material very shortly, and the concern that the member raises will be addressed.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister responsible for Sport): Could I have leave to make a ministerial statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable minister have leave to revert back to ministerial statements? Leave. It is agreed.

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to recognize the achievements of a young Manitoba athlete who proudly represents our province and our country at a world-class level. While Manitoba is not known as the skiing centre of our country, Nancy Wankling, who is a four-year

member of Canada's National Freestyle Ski Team, has just recently won the gold medal for ballet skiing at the national championships in Vernon, British Columbia.

In her years with the national team, Nancy has always prided herself in being from Manitoba. Her teammates recently presented her with a sash reading "Miss Portage and Main" in recognition of her determined support of her home.

Prior to an injury that kept her out of competition for a year, Nancy was ranked ninth in the world and, since this year's return, has culminated the season by winning the Canadian Nationals.

I would hope that we would see her at her very best at the 1992 Olympics at Albertville, France. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, I would like to, on behalf of the New Democratic caucus and the opposition, add our congratulations to Nancy for her achievements and perseverance. Having also been an athlete for some 12 or 15 years myself, I know the pleasure and the sense of accomplishment that comes from participating in athletics. I would wish her well in her future career. Thank you very much.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the minister and the member for Radisson in wishing Nancy Wankling the best in the future and saying that she has done a tremendous job. As I said many times, sports is one of the best things which brings out the best in people in their efforts and their contributions. Especially as Manitobans, I think we should be proud of Nancy, wishing her all the best in the future.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you call the bills as shown on the Order Paper in the order as shown: 5, 6, 8, 12 and 20.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 5—The Mental Health Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), Bill 5, The Mental Health Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé mentale, standing in the name of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed? Agreed.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to rise today and speak on behalf of the NDP caucus and the party that I represent on this very important issue, speak on behalf of the caucus and the people of Wellington and myself.

The issues before us that are addressed in Bill 5 and in the amendments to Bill 5 are of vital importance to all members of our society. I think we are beginning to understand, beginning to have a historical perspective about the issue of mental illness, the concerns that are raised about mental illness—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There are several members carrying on private conversations. It is extremely difficult to hear the remarks of the honourable member for Wellington. I would ask all those who want to carry on those private conversations to do so outside the Chamber.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I will try and remain calm in the face of all of the rude interruptions from across the floor.

As I was beginning to state, Mr. Speaker, the issues of mental health and its converse, mental illness, are becoming more important in our society today. The amendments to the mental health bill, and the mental health bill itself, are and should be of deep concern to all of us here in this House and to the people that we represent, whether they have had a direct connection with the mental health profession, have had contact with people with mental illness, or not.

Statistics show that at the very minimum, one in 10 people in our society either have had at one time or another a mental illness, or a member of their family has suffered from one form or another of mental illness. I think that is a really shocking statistic. It speaks a great deal to the problems of living in our society today.

On the positive side, it also speaks, I believe, to the fact that we are beginning to understand, reflect on and accept this as an important problem for us in society, are beginning to recognize some of the issues that are dealt with in the whole problem of mental illness and mental health. If we can as a society at large, and as legislators in this House, begin the process of demystifying, destigmatizing

the whole issue of mental health and mental illness, we will have gone a long way towards making our society a better place for all of us to live.

* (1420)

Generally on our side of the House we are certainly not opposed to the range of amendments that are being proposed. We do have some major concerns about the process that it has gone through and will be interested in more detailed discussion of some of the concerns that we have on some of these amendments.

I do think it is important to put this bill into its historical context. The whole issue of mental illness, as I stated earlier, is one that we are just now beginning as a society to grapple with. Actually, I should restate that. We have, as a western society, always dealt with the issues of mental illness and mental health. In many cases, we have not talked about them in those terms. People who were suffering from what we now call mental illness, we have called them witches. We have called them heretics. We have said that they were deranged. We have said that they were filled with evil spirits, that they were suffering under the influences of the devil.

We have had a wide range of answers for the always perplexing question of why some people are not able to cope with the stresses of their society in a way that the society of the day deems normal or average or acceptable.

In earlier times, when people did not have the understanding of physiology and psychology that we are beginning today to have, they used reasons such as demons or devils or evil to rationalize this unusual and abnormal behaviour—behaviour, I might add, which is abnormal largely in societal terms. What was considered normal or abnormal in the Middle Ages, today would be considered abnormal.

To use only one example of that, in the feudal Middle Ages of Europe, the feudal lord was able, with agreement of the entire range of society, to practise something that was called—and excuse my pronunciation—droit de seigneur, which meant the right of the Lord. The way that was practised in large manner was the feudal lord would have at his pleasure and for his pleasure any woman that he wished. This was accepted by all members of the feudal society. It may have been, I would venture to say as a little aside, probably not as accepted by

the women upon whom this was visited, but by and large society as a whole agreed that this was normal behaviour and the feudal lords were not persecuted for that action.

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

Today, more times than not we are beginning to understand that men in general do not have or should not have that same right over women or other less powerful members of society. That is one small example of how our social views have changed, how what we accept as normal, ordinary, reasonable behaviour on the part of our citizens has changed drastically. I am afraid that in some cases our understanding and our acceptance of those people that have mental illness in our society has not gone forward as far as we, on this side of the House, would like to see it.

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

There is still, in our society, a great deal of blaming the victim, of rationalizing the behaviour of individuals with mental illness as them knowing that they are doing wrong, as that they should be responsible for their actions, again still the idea that people with mental illness are, by definition, incapable of handling their affairs on their own, that people with mental illness and as well mental retardation, which is another element of this act—not that we are dealing with it directly here today—part of the whole mental health, mental illness or retardation area is all of a piece, that people who have these problems are totally incapable in all areas of their life of functioning in any way that is at all normal.

I think these kinds of ideas need to be changed. We feel that some of these are addressed in these amendments. We feel that they do not go far enough and we would like to have further consultation with groups in the community, further dialogue with the government on these important issues.

In the historical context again, not only have definitions changed about what does constitute mental health and its converse, mental illness, but the way we deal with and handle those individuals that society deems to have a mental incapacity of one sort or another has also changed, marginally I would say, over the last century in North American society.

It was not too long ago when I believe there was a book and a movie, very powerful movie, out in maybe the mid-to-late '50s called "The Snake Pit" that was a very powerful explanation, a very powerful stating of the -(interjection)-portrayal—thank you very much. The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) has given me a word which I was searching for, and I appreciate his assistance in this manner.

This movie and this book was a very powerful portrayal of the ideas of treatment for people with mental illness, less than a—well, maybe just a little over a generation ago. Most members in this House would have been at least teenagers at the time that movie took place, and so it is well within our lifetime that this kind of behaviour was still happening.

Mental institutions were snake pits. The whole concept, the whole idea of bedlam, the word bedlam, which in our context today means babble, large amount of noise, perhaps could be used to describe some of the sights and sounds that occur in this House every afternoon for 40 minutes. Originally the word "bedlam" came from a mental hospital in England, named Bedlam.

An Honourable Member: What city was it in, Becky?

Ms. Barrett: It was in London. The point I am trying to make here is that not too long ago, well within the last 150 years, the way people with mental illness were treated was to put them in an institution, the name of which has now come into our language as identifying something that is completely out of control, completely nonfunctional and completely without any socially redeeming elements at all.

So we have not progressed that far, I am suggesting, in our treatment and our understanding of those with mental illness.

* (1430)

Our mental institutions today do not luckily correspond to the conditions that were prevalent in either "The Snake Pit," or in the Bedlam mental hospital in London of the last century, but some of the same societal ideas are still pervading our system and the way we deal with people with mental illness. We are concerned that these amendments to The Mental Health Act are more tinkering with a concept and an ideal and an underlying philosophy about how you treat and work with people with mental illnesses than really taking a serious look at

the whole idea of this and how we could and should treat this very serious social problem.

We still have blaming the victim, we still have stigma attached to individuals with mental illness, we still have, very basically and shown in this act too, a concept of treatment of mental illness that is a very institutional medical model.

The whole phrase, mental illness, is a concept that is, in our language today, related to the medical model. We do not think of mental illness—when we say mental illness we still think of institutions, we still think of psychiatrists in very powerful positions and patients in very powerless positions. We are concerned that these amendments to the act do not go far enough, or may not go far enough in changing some of those wrong-headed, outdated, unnecessary views about how one works with people with mental illness.

The classic medical model presupposes a professional, i.e., a doctor or a psychiatrist who has, if not all the answers, more answers than anybody else that is relating to that individual, that the medical professional knows what is best. It is a very patriarchal and in some ways as it is implemented, patronizing system. It is also a system based solely on power—legal, moral, knowledge power—making assumptions, as I have stated, that the professionals involved in the case know what is best and know more than either the individual or the individual's family and friends about what is the best treatment for this person, what is the best way to handle this situation, how best do we deal with the illness or the situation, or the concern.

I prefer, frankly, not to even use the word illness because I think it does have all of those, what I hope are soon to be old-fashioned, connotations attached to it.

People have—as I have stated earlier, one out of 10 people in this province will have or have had connection, either of a very personal or family nature, with people who have problems and difficulties in coping. These problems can range in seriousness from—although any of these problems are serious, particularly to the individuals involved. They range from a crisis that an individual faces in their life that is short term, they need assistance on a short-term basis to get through that crisis. Perhaps it is a family member dying very suddenly, and they are having difficulty dealing with the feelings of loss and grief that entails. That is

perhaps a short-term crisis where you need some help to get over that developmental, that life crisis. There are, ranging all the way through to people who have serious, debilitating conditions that will follow them throughout their life, where society does need to provide long-term, continual care, not for that person but, I suggest, with that person.

That is what we, here, are looking for and are not finding with these amendments to this act. We are looking for an understanding on the part of the government, as shown through this Mental Health Act, that what we should be striving for is a working together with rather than an imposition on—working together with the individual who is having the problems, with the individual's family and friends and network, and with the professionals who are involved in the situation.

We need to start realizing and understanding that, no matter what their degree of difficulty, no matter how chronic it is, how serious it is, how severe it is, all individuals have some ability to take a degree of control over their lives. They have an ability to understand more than anyone else what is happening with them. Whether they can share that with others or not is another situation, but we really need to change our mind-set from a patriarchal, patronizing, medical-model way of dealing with people with mental problems to a more co-operative, community-based, peer model of dealing with these situations.

We are concerned that some of the situations, some of the issues that we are concerned with are not being directly addressed. As I have stated, this is more a tinkering with an institutional model than it is a serious looking at the underlying values and ways of delivering service with these people. We are concerned about the lack of decentralization that is shown in these amendments. We are concerned with the lack of a focus, the changing focus under community-based services that these amendments do not relate to. We are concerned about the consultation process that has been undertaken. We are concerned about the consultation process and the co-operative spirit that individuals have to deal with situations under this act are not going to be able to involve themselves with.

We are very concerned that the rights of the individual, the rights of the individual's family and friends are at least as important and are at least as protected as the rights and the needs of the institutions and the professionals. Historically, that

has not been the case in the situations of people with mental illness. Historically, they have been considered legally in many ways as children, that there are guardians appointed for them, that the institutions act in loco parentis. In virtually all of these cases, they are not consulted before treatment is laid on for them. They are not seen as anything but the object of something, rather than a participant in something.

These kinds of issues, we feel very strongly, need to be addressed, not only in the issues of mental illness, but in all of the issues that we as social animals in our society deal with, particularly today in this regard.

The community-based services is something that we as New Democrats have been concerned with and have been working towards for a very long time. We have had it as part of our party philosophy, as part of our party principles. We have, to a greater or lesser extent, tried to—when we have been in government—implement or begin the implementation of those community-based services.

No one on this side would argue the fact that there is a long way to go, that many changes need to be addressed, that it is a very broad-ranging problem. You cannot just address it in one small set of amendments to one act. However, you can begin to do things about it.

I would like to read into the record a press release that was given out last month by the Canadian Mental Health Association that deals with the community-based resources, and I think, directly responds to some of the amendments to this act and the philosophy behind the amendments to this act.

* (1440)

This is from the Canadian Mental Health Association, Manitoba Division, on April 10 of this year. The headline reads, Manitoba spends the most on mental health with the least return. "A national study released today, shows that Manitoba spends the most of all provinces on hospital care and the least on community mental health services.

"The study, entitled Community re-investment towards rebalancing Canada's mental health system, outlines the progress made by provinces in establishing a community resource base for people with serious disorders. Manitoba, in common with other provinces, has established progressive policies, but has not supported these policies with

adequate funding. This benefits no one said Dr. Ron Richert, CMHA Manitoba Division President. It has only negative effects for consumers, their families, for mental health professionals, for the hospitals themselves and for taxpayers.

"Because Manitoba spends so much on hospitals, there is little or no support for disabled people who live most of their lives outside of hospital. They must cope with poor housing, inadequate case management, little or no rehabilitative supports, few opportunities to work, little or no support for self help and a very poor and a very limited crisis response system. Clearly, disabled people and their families lose the most, because Manitoba gets a very poor return for the dollar spent on mental health. But the hospitals are victims of this imbalance, too, said Dr. Richert. Because of the dearth of community supports, psychiatrists and nurses in hospitals are faced with a terrible dilemma of discharging people to a community system that fails to provide the support needed. It is a vicious circle, said Dr. Richert, that must be broken now.

"We have the resources to have the best mental health system in North America. We have progressive policies. We now have regional mental health councils and our government has made commendable changes in the administrative structure of the mental health division. Everything is in place. Disabled people, their families and their friends can wait no longer. It seems apparent that the system cannot change itself. The Legislature must demand a definite staged remedy."

I would like to suggest today that the amendments to The Mental Health Act that are being proposed by this government, do not adequately address the concerns raised by CMHA. They still are based on a centralized institutional medical model system that must be changed if we are going to bring our treatment, our working with people with mental illness, into the 20th Century. It is really tragic that this is the case, because unlike some other problems such as many forms of cancer where we are only beginning to understand what it is, we are very far away from an understanding of the problem, much less a cure.

In the case of many types of mental illness, mental disorder, we have a very good idea of what works. More often than not what works is not an institutional setting, is not a medical model, is not a psychiatric, patronizing system. It is a community-based, decentralized, peer-supported system based on the

philosophy, the principles that individuals can, to a greater or lesser extent, know what is best for themselves and can participate in their own healthy living. We know that works. We have seen it happen. We have seen it happen in this province. We have seen it happen all throughout our society.

What we are not doing is we are not implementing the procedures and the policies, we are not putting resources, both material and human, into systems that will allow that to take place. That is what is tragic about this. We do know what we can do and we are choosing. We are making choices, as this government is very wont to say particularly this session, difficult choices. Well, the government in bringing forward these amendments is making choices and we are here to say, today, that while we appreciate some of them and are not prepared at this time to say we will not support in its entirety these amendments, we do have some serious concerns about them.

We do not see, for example—and again this goes back to the philosophy of individuals having a say in their own lives, in their own treatment, in their own helping themselves—a concept of the living will, as it relates to treatment procedures.

A living will, as we all know, is a fairly new idea where people who are in control of their faculties, who are not in terminus, in extremis, make a living will stating, if I do get to the point where I am—and then itemize the kinds of situations that they might be in—please do not prolong my treatment or please do this for me. In many jurisdictions, those living wills are now being put into effect and are being seen as legal documents, legal concepts.

What we are not seeing in these amendments is that kind of idea being translated into the mental health field, into dealing with people with mental problems, where we are saying there are many cases where people—you do not just wake up one morning with a serious mental illness. Most cases the mental illnesses, mental disabilities come in stages. They are a long time in coming, and there is opportunity in many cases for people to say, I know that I am suffering from an illness, from a disorder that will have as its end result my incapacity. I want now to be able to say that when that comes, when I am mentally no longer able to be in control of myself, that this is what I would like to have as the disposition of myself.

I want to be able to take control of my life even after I am not able to make those decisions. I want to make my decision for myself now and have it implemented later. That is not seen here. We are still dealing with the medical model that states that the doctors, the psychiatrists, know what is best for me, and I have very limited say in what happens.

Again, we are dealing in a situation where we are defining—to go back a bit—we are also defining situations as mental illness which really, in many cases, should not be defined as mental illness. Again this comes back to the issue of self-control, that people should have as much right to determine what happens to them and with them as possible, and that everybody, virtually everyone, has at least some ability to do that.

One of the types of situations that has been very well-documented is the psychiatric diagnoses of depression, which is classified as a mental illness and, in many cases, is treated by institutionalization. The statistics, and I do not have the exact statistics, but generally speaking throughout North America the incidence of people being diagnosed as having depression, whether acute, chronic, short term or long term, is about 10-to-1 women over men. Ten more women are diagnosed as having depression, as being under a depressive cycle, than men are being diagnosed. There is no physiological nor even psychological data to back up that kind of 10-to-1 diagnosis.

What has been suggested by many people is that it is not a medical diagnosis; it is not a legitimate diagnosis; it is a social diagnosis. It is a statement that if a woman goes into a doctor's office and says, I am feeling depressed, I cannot concentrate, I cry a lot, I do this, I do that; the doctor automatically says, you are depressed, there, there, take a Valium.

* (1450)

The incidence of Valium addiction in North America is quite astonishing as well. Valium could be seen as the late 20th Century's answer to Bedlam. We do not institutionalize people to the degree that we used to and the institutions are more humane, but we do other things. We drug people; we dope them up. We do all of this in the guise of, there, there, the medical profession knows what is best for people. We overprescribe to an enormous extent, and we overprescribe so that we do not have to as a society deal with the issues that are at hand.

This is just one example of our system's inequitable dealings with people who are diagnosed as having mental illnesses. We do not provide—and I think it is because we still are dealing with a system in a society that is heavily patriarchal, heavily patronizing, heavily medical-model oriented, that there is someone who knows what is best for you. If you are a woman, you have a far greater chance of being inaccurately diagnosed, unfairly diagnosed and improperly treated.

We still have examples, for example, of electric shock therapy which was very widely used in the '50s and up into the early '60s, went out of favour, rightly so, I believe, and is now making a bit of a comeback. There are fads in the mental illness and mental health field just as there are in any other kind of profession and any other walk of life.

As long as we have this centralized institutional system in place, as long as we put the men—and I use that word advisedly—in white coats at the top of the totem pole, as long as we do not, as a society, as other professionals and as legislators, question their abilities, question their motives, question their educational background, question the philosophies that they learn in medical school, we are participating in a system that dehumanizes and degrades people often for their gender and often for their socioeconomic status.

You cannot divorce our current mental health, mental illness system from our social ills as a society as a whole. If you have, on the other hand, a community-based mental health model that you actively pursue, which these amendments we feel do not actively address they only tinker, they begin to address the issues of the appeal process of consent regarding records, of voluntary admissions, of confidentiality, of treatment decisions. They begin to address those issues, but they again address those issues in the context of the medical institutional hierarchical model.

We cannot effectively deal with the problems that are before us as a society. We cannot effectively deal with the incredible statistics on violence, aggression, abuse of others and of self that are currently taking place in our society until we stop thinking in these ways and start thinking in terms of us as a community, of all of us as community.

A decentralized, mental health delivery system would allow, almost by definition, a larger degree of autonomy for the individuals who are in that system,

for the workers in that system, for the families and friends of those who have to access the services available through that system.

It also is, in the long run and probably even the middle and short run, less expensive in a financial manner than our current centralized system is. Going back to 1968, Claude Castonguay from Quebec, issued a major report on the health care system in Canada and strongly urged a decentralized system of health care in our country.

We have not come nearly far enough in implementing that kind of model. We know how to do it. We have community health care systems. We have the will, the ability in the community, in the patients, in the service providers, in the advocacy groups such as the Canadian Mental Health Association to deal with many of the problems of implementation.

What we are lacking is the political will to begin that process. These amendments to The Mental Health Act do very little to forward that change in philosophy which is necessary for us to begin to adequately address the issues that we need to address if we are going to be at all able to say that we are a caring society.

We need to take advantage of the expertise that is out there in order to be able to make the necessary large-scale, basic changes that are required. No one is suggesting for a moment that a change of this order is not going to be difficult, is not going to be fraught with hardships for some people, is not going to be without confrontation and much debate.

The mental health profession itself is not of one mind on this at all. Many of the psychiatrists in our society prefer the system as it is. It allows them an enormous amount of power, authority and autonomy over other individuals and other groups in society. The moment you attempt to go from to an oligarchy to a democracy, the people who were involved in the oligarchy are going to object. They are going to be able to object on, what they believe, and are probably very good at, very adequate, good, logical, legitimate, grounds.

What we on this side are saying is that there is enough evidence, scientific, social, moral, ethical, enough of that evidence on record to say that we must begin to make a concerted effort to change our way of thinking about the provision of services for, by and to those with mental disorders and that these amendments do not begin nearly to go far enough.

We are concerned about the consultative process that was undertaken. We have some serious reservations about the degree to which the consultation that did take place is shown in these amendments. We have a fairly good sense, from other kinds of processes that have been undertaken by this government, that we are accurate in our concerns about what is the consultative process, about how widely people were consulted. We really have a great deal of concern.

I would just like to end by saying we are not in total opposition to some of these amendments. We are, however, very concerned about the underlying philosophical ideals that still pervade these amendments and would like to see far more community-based, decentralized, empowering kinds of amendments to The Mental Health Act undertaken.

Bill 6—The Mines and Minerals and Consequential Amendments Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Mr. Neufeld (Rossmere), Bill 6, standing in the name of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), The Mines and Minerals and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les mines et les minéraux et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives.

Shall it remain standing? Stand. Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 8—The Vital Statistics Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), standing in the name of the honourable member for Brandon East.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Madam Deputy Speaker, as I was saying last time, there is a large significant history to the recording of deaths in this province and the collection of vital statistics pertaining to people dying within the boundaries of the province of Manitoba. I have done some research taking me right back to the year 1880, and it is interesting how there has been a change in the pattern of recording deaths and changes in the level or responsibility by different categories, by different professional people, by different officials within the province.

I was indicating earlier, the last day when I spoke on this, that there seemed to be something of a

pattern whereby you go from essentially clergy responsibility to then more responsibility being passed on to municipal officials, and then finally getting more involvement of the medical fraternity, the medical doctors involved, Chief Medical Examiner, in some cases. Then, also, you see a pattern where the provincial government itself becomes more directly involved in collecting the data on people who have passed away for whatever reason.

* (1500)

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

In 1880, it is quite clear that the reference is made front and centre to clergy being responsible. "The minister of every church and congregation shall keep a duplicate register of various events that occur in the church—baptisms, marriages and burials." It is quite clear that the law would require and did require at that time—this is a long time ago, Mr. Speaker, not that long after we became a province—requiring the clergy of whatever denomination to undertake recording.

Reference is made that the priest or minister authorized to perform burials, besides the register that he keeps in his or her parish or congregation, there shall be a duplicate made. That said priest or minister shall, as soon as they performed various services, whether it be a baptismal service, a marriage service, or a burial service, provide that information to the government under this particular act—it was Chapter 16, An Act Respecting the Registration of Marriages, Baptisms and Burials in Vital Statistics—under that particular act.

At any rate, so the great onus seemed to be put on the clergy at that time. There was reference made as well as to how the entries were to be made, "that the entries are to be on duplicate registers, and they shall be made in an alphabetical index of the names of the persons who were buried, with references to the folio in which each name is to be found."

So it is very interesting, Mr. Speaker, that while the government required these statistics to be collected on burials or on deaths that occurred, nevertheless a great deal of the onus was put on the clergy.

In 1882, a couple of years later an amendment was provided. Certain sections of the previous act were repealed, but there was a provision for a reorganization of the Department of Agriculture and

Statistics. It is interesting that it is referred to as Agriculture and Statistics. It indicated, at that time in this particular amendment, that the Minister of Agriculture and Statistics is to have charge of all matters relating to the collection of statistics.

Of course, Agriculture, at that time, was also involved with immigration. For whatever reason, the government of the day, Legislature of the day, decided it was appropriate that that department should have control of statistical tabulation.

Then we go on to 1891, and we see that we have a move to involve municipal officers, where I guess it was felt that it would be useful and appropriate for municipal clerks to be involved in tabulating data on deaths, as well as births and marriages. It is interesting that the government was prepared to supply various municipal clerks with the various forms necessary for the discharge of these duties imposed upon them by the legislation.

It goes on in the legislation to refer to costs and expenses of such forms, and the expenses attended upon the distribution thereof shall be paid out of consolidated revenue of the Province of Manitoba. It even goes on for a provision in case of resignation or dismissal of such municipal clerk or termination of his appointment, that these forms and what other material had to be passed on to a successor in accordance with this act.

At any rate, the municipal clerks of the day having dutifully kept records of these particular vital statistics were required to report them to the government in semi-annual returns. They had to be provided six months ending the 30th of June and then the 31st day of December of each year.

It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the government of the day gave some incentive to the clerks for doing this because Section 8 says, each municipality shall pay to the clerk thereof 25 cents for each birth, marriage or death registered by him under the provisions therein upon receiving from the inspector a certificate of the number of registrations so made.

Reference is also made to unorganized districts. Where there is no organization of a municipal government the Minister of Agriculture and Statistics at that day could appoint one or more persons under the act to carry on the job of registering these vital statistics, including the deaths.

We do not forget about the clergy because there is continual reference made at this time to

clergymen or ministers keeping registers of deaths, as well as marriages and baptismal events and reference being made that these books shall be filed with the department.

The legislation at that time also ensures that people who occupy a house or a tenement in which a death takes place have the responsibility of providing that information to the municipality.

This is in case—they are trying to cover all bases, I suppose, at that time, Mr. Speaker, because there may be cases where the municipal clerk said he did not know of a death taking place. Now the act is requiring occupants of houses or tenements by law to advise the municipal clerk of the particulars surrounding the death.

Also, there is reference to doctors now being required to report. It says, every duly qualified medical practitioner who was last in attendance during the last illness of any person shall within one month after having notice or knowledge of the death of such person, transmit to the clerk of the municipality in which the death took place, a certificate under his signature of the cause of death according to the form and Schedule E in this act.

It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the legislation goes on because we take this very seriously. It is very, very vital—if I might use the term—to get this information on deaths as well as births and marriages. It is a very vital type of information. It is not surprising, therefore, when you reflect that the legislation at this time goes out of its way to make this reference, that a person shall not be buried within the limits of a municipality, or in any cemetery, or burial ground owned by any municipality, or general use for the interment of persons dying in such municipality, or owned by any congregation or church holding the services within the limits of such municipality until the particulars of the death of such person has been registered with the clerk of the municipality in which it occurs, and any clergyman, or caretaker, or superintendent of any cemetery, or burial ground referred to in this section allow your body to be interred without first receiving your certificate in the form of the schedule under this particular act will have been duly fined \$50.

The government of the day realized that it was very important, very fundamental to collect these statistics to keep these records and, therefore, required that the body could not be interred. The

person could not be buried until the proper form was completed and handed to the municipal clerk.

* (1510)

Earlier I referred to the fact that the municipal clerk was required to pass this on to the government every six months. Now we are getting a little less patient waiting for these returns because there is a requirement that the clerk must now provide the information on a monthly basis.

In fact it goes on to refer to the superintendents or caretakers of cemeteries or burial grounds keeping a record of all interments, and then on or before the seventh of each month, transmitting to the clerk of the municipality the information as required under the act. This was now being done on a monthly basis.

There is further amendment to this legislation. In 1902, Mr. Speaker—

An Honourable Member: How far back have you gone?

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, I started in 1880. We are up to 1902 now. Mr. Speaker, 1902, I guess the government of the day must have felt that they would get better co-operation from the municipal clerks and others, such as occupants of homes and tenements, if material was supplied, if forms and the like were being provided.

At any rate, the most significant thing, apart from reference to providing forms for completion, et cetera, that I can see in the legislation of 1902 is that there is now reference to doctors being required to report the cause of the death. It was not good enough just to indicate that this person was now deceased, but the qualified medical practitioners who were in attendance during the last illness of the person must, within one month of having notice or knowledge of the death of such person, transmit to the clerk of the municipality in which the death took place a certificate under his signature of the cause of death and so on.

Now, there is an intent to get more information on the cause of the death, and they attach to the legislation a sample, Schedule C, which is a format for the statistical documents. I guess there is now some kind of an attempt to get a little bit of order into the collection of these statistics on deaths.

The interesting thing to note is that they did not attempt to classify causes of death, unlike the procedures now, where under this particular

legislation that we are discussing reference is made to specific types of death that the doctors and officials can refer to. Here it is left open ended. Then I guess there was not the attempt made to try to classify the causes of death at that time, but rather to require the information, but not attempt to tabulate it, because if you get doctors perhaps describing the same death in a different way, the illness causing the death in a different way, it might be difficult to collect standardized statistics.

By 1913, there was another act brought forward in the Legislature and passed respecting the registration of births, marriages and deaths. The obvious intent of this vital statistics legislation was to get the provincial government more involved in the action. Mr. Speaker, no longer was it satisfactory to rely on the public, municipal clerks, clergymen and medical practitioners, but now the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council was given authority to appoint an inspector of vital statistics whose duty it was to inspect the registration offices, examine the schedules prepared under the act, and see that entries and registrations were made in a proper manner and in legible handwriting.

Under this act the minister was now required, for the first time, to annually publish and distribute, for the use of the Legislature, report of births, marriages and deaths registered under the act. Generally, this is a big step forward. The government is becoming more involved in the process. A reference is made to the inspector of vital statistics appointed by the minister, shall when requested give a certificate and details of births, marriages or deaths, of which there is a record in his office on payment of the prescribed fee. So now you could come directly to the provincial department of vital statistics, or the department in which vital statistics was lodged, and get a certificate.

When we are going this way, the other move at this time was to obtain more data. There was an effort now being made to obtain more data on the deceased's colour, race, whether the person was white, black or other, whether they were single, married, et cetera. Not just the normal information of date of birth and including year, month and day, name of father, name of mother, et cetera, and where they had previously been born, but to get more information, such as occupation. They wanted to know now what was the occupation of the individual.

At any rate, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that there is a pattern here of change of responsibility of issuing these death certificates and collecting these death statistics and more and more involvement of the government, and here we are back in 1913, where the government becomes very much involved.

An Honourable Member: Leonard, this is 1990. Come and join us. Come and join the rest of us.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Okay, we will get a little closer, Mr. Speaker. In 1933, there was another amendment to vital statistics legislation and here you get more involvement of the medical profession, the medical certificate in a prescribed form shall be made and signed by the physician. So now we have a requirement for the medical profession to become more actively involved on a more regular basis.

Indeed, in this particular legislation there is an outline of the form. This is the Schedule C, Section 39 of the Province, the Official Registration of Death. You can see there is this move to get more data on people who passed away. I would suggest it is probably because, as even today, with the amendment before us the attempt is to try to get more reliable information, so those who do research by looking at the statistics, whether it be medical research or social research or demographic research, will have more reliable data.

Even as late as 1970, we were getting refinements to our legislation recording deaths. In 1970, under Chapter 5 V60, we have an act respecting the registration of births, marriages and deaths and other vital events. Here we are refining. This is not a big amendment as I can see, there is some requirement to—there is a reference to cases where death occurs without the attendance of a doctor. Where a death occurs without a doctor or where a legally qualified medical practitioner is not available, that the funeral director must notify the coroner having jurisdiction or the local medical health officer or a legally qualified medical practitioner designated by the coroner or by the medical health officer in order to obtain the facts and complete the medical certificate.

So, Mr. Speaker, there has been an interesting history of the provincial government involvement in collecting and obtaining statistics on deaths. While one may say that this is a very dry and technical subject, which it is in many ways, nevertheless there is some very fundamental information that is being collected by means of these medical certificates. I

would like to refer to the fact—I am sorry, I did not realize that my time was running out.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by saying that the statistics that we have today on population change in Manitoba is only possible because we have these death certificates. -(interjection)- well, with leave, I would carry on.

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

* (1520)

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add a few comments to the debate on the amendment to The Vital Statistics Act, an act that to some people may just seem very trivial and unimportant, but if we look at vital statistics, there are very important records that are being kept through this department that we will all come to use at one point in our life.

I am sure that each and every one of us has at some time had to go to this Vital Statistics branch to get records, whether it be birth certificates or death certificates and things where we can trace our family records. I would also like to recognize the minister for bringing forward this bill at a time—and this aspect of harmonization will increase the accuracy and efficiency of the records being kept and the issues of death certificates in Manitoba. It will help the staff of Vital Statistics to do their work more accurately and be of better service to all Manitobans.

The minister recognized the staff of this department, and I too would like to recognize the work that the staff has done, a very professional group, a group of people who provide a very important service that in many cases goes unrecognized. Many people believe that this department provides just things like death certificates and, as I said, marriage certificates, but they provide much more, Mr. Speaker. They provide a service that is not recognized, collecting and compiling of information used by Stats Canada, information used for medical research and many, many organizations.

Many organizations use statistical information and, by looking at the causes of death, they are able to relate to trends that are very important and that affect our society. Through these statistics, we are able to get a better understanding of where our society is going and what is happening.

Mr. Speaker, the minister responsible recognized the people and the important job that they are doing, and so he should have recognized them. However, I do not think that this government paid respect to this department, and I am disappointed in the way the Vital Statistics branch has been treated, particularly under the decentralization scheme. This government did not treat the staff of the bureau very well. They decided to move the department without any consultation with their employees. They decided to move the branch to Dauphin, and I want to make it very clear that I have nothing against Dauphin, and I think an excellent service could have been provided from that community.

Those people who were being moved to that community could have learned to enjoy the quality of life in that community very well. But the problem is, the people did not have the opportunity to have any input as to why they were being moved or what was going to happen. On the one hand, as I say, Mr. Speaker, the minister was praising the staff of this department for the work they were doing, but, on the other hand, not giving any real consideration to them and what impacts the move would have on them.

Now again the people of this department have been left hanging at loose ends because they do not know where that department is going. We are led to believe that the department of Vital Statistics will not be moved to Dauphin. I am sure that with the technology that we are seeing today in the department, the department could have operated and provided the new information out of Dauphin as well, and perhaps it could have even been provided out of the Swan River area if the government had chosen to do that. I encourage them to make up their minds about what they are doing with this department, where these certificates are going to be provided from, where this vital information is going to be, and get on with treating the people a little better than they have been, because it is very difficult to have your life in limbo.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments to this legislation are good amendments, and I commend the government on what they are doing. The legislation looks at giving the chief examiner the right to add additional deaths on to the records to be examined, changing from nine to 22.

Added on to those are the deaths of children. Coming from the rural area, I think that we should know how children are dying, particularly in the case

of farm accidents. Many young children die accidentally because they are in the way of equipment, and I think that it is very important that these accidents are recorded properly and that we can then prepare people, let people know how these children are dying, and improve conditions out there.

Many children also—the other area is poisoning. Again, I am concerned that in the farming community there are many chemicals that are used and many poisonous substances, and I think that it is very important that records be kept on how these children died and what chemicals were involved and that better treatment maybe will be developed for future children who are involved in this.

There are other chemicals that are used not only in the farming community but everyday household cleaning supplies; those kinds of things can result in deaths of young children. I think that it is important that that be recorded as well, and that this along the way will help us perhaps reduce the number of children who die through accidents.

There are also deaths that must be recorded that are self-inflicted deaths through use of chemicals, and that is a very serious situation. Unfortunately, it happens far too often in our society, and it must be recorded so that other people who are abusing chemicals know the consequences, and perhaps someday we can turn that around.

The other area is contagious diseases, and there are many, many diseases that have to be recorded. In this modern age we are faced with the disease of AIDS, a very unknown disease, a very scary disease, but one that we must know about. If the records are kept properly and available there for research and for medicine, perhaps one day, by keeping these records properly, we will be able to have a cure that will save many, many of our young people.

The other area of accident is highway traffic accidents. Many people are killed in highway traffic accidents, and we have to have those recorded more accurately than they are.

Another area that will be added to the list is pregnancies. We know that there are many cases where there are deaths through pregnancies, particularly in remote areas that the actual cause of death is not recorded and sometimes goes unnoticed. It is the right thing to be recording these

with more detail than they have been recorded in the past.

The next area that is being changed is the issuing of burial permits from 14 days to 24 hours. Although I think that is a very good move, I have some concerns about it. I wonder whether this might not be putting too much pressure in some of the remote areas, and whether they will be able in all cases to get those certificates on such short notice, and whether there is going to be any leeway in those remote areas to meet those requirements.

Mr. Speaker, there are also deaths in the workplace, and we last week recognized workers who are killed in the workplace and we hope that through proper recording of these incidents and details of how the accidents happen, perhaps there are ways that we can get more information onto the record and prevent other accidents from happening.

*(1530)

There is another area that is very important in these records of deaths and diseases in particular. Many young people who are adopted at a very young age go into a home and never have any information on their own family background. When they become of age, adults 18, 20 years old, they become very interested in their own families and want to track them down. In particular, many people want to track down their records of diseases in their family as they get into their child-bearing years. They have no family records, are interested in what could have happened, what diseases might be in their families, and these records will be a real asset to those young people in future years.

The other area is the medical examiner having the ability to issue a medical certificate of death in cases where a body has not been recovered. In my opinion, this is a very positive move because when a person has died but the body is not recovered, families have to go through a very difficult time and in the past have had to go through court systems to prove that the person is dead. It has put a lot of stress on families.

In particular, there was an incident in our family where my cousin's husband died, drowned, and it took many, many years, they went through the courts before they could settle insurance claims and it put an awful lot of hardship on the family. I find this to be a very positive move, and I congratulate the government on the work that they are doing there.

Records have changed an awful lot over the years, Mr. Speaker. From the time when they were being kept, the responsibility of keeping these records was not always the responsibility of government. In fact, as I understand it, the Vital Statistics branch was not started until approximately 100 years ago, 1882. At that time the province saw fit to establish a Vital Statistics branch and it is my understanding that at that time it was located in the Department of Agriculture and Immigration, but, for whatever reason, the Legislature of the day decided that it would start a Vital Statistics branch.

Prior to that time, Mr. Speaker, records were kept by many people. I understand that prior to the department being formed they were kept at municipal offices, but prior to that many of these records were kept in churches, kept by ministers, priests, in fact in many cases the records were just written down in the family Bible. We checked through some records, we were trying to do some tracing of our own family tree, and we have not been able to find the records of my grandmother. We have been able to find the death certificates; the birth certificates and marriage certificates are not available, and I believe some of these records may have burnt, some of them may have been lost because at the time when they were being recorded they were collected by the priest at the church and he kept these records with him and could have been moving from one area to another and may have taken those records along.

So we have a far more efficient system right now, Mr. Speaker, and it makes it much easier for those people who are trying to search through their family records to do genealogy work and the statistics that are being kept by the Vital Statistics branch at this time are far, far more accurate than any that have been kept before.

Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, this department keeps many records, not only death certificates, but marriage certificates and can be very helpful when people are doing their family records.

Mr. Speaker, there are many, many areas that are served by the Vital Statistics branch. They keep many records. As I said, death certificates are what we were dealing with here, but there are other areas that use these records.

The Vital Statistics staff conducts seminars with the School of Medicine, School of Mortuary Practice, Health Sciences Centre and Indian and Northern

Affairs Canada for students and professional users of vital statistics. As we look at these records that have been kept, we can see the different—there are many interesting facts that can be drawn from these records, such as the age level.

In certain areas, we can see a difference in the ages that people die. In some remote areas, we see that many women die much younger than men and, particularly in northern Manitoba, the age expectation is much lower. We also see that there are many more stillbirths in northern Manitoba than there are in other areas. All of these records, as they are improved, will be of benefit to the medical service and to all of us.

Vital Statistics tells us that there are certain causes of death. In a population of 100,000, heart disease causes from 410 to 429 deaths; cancer causes 140 to 208 deaths; accidents cause 800 to 949; pneumonia, we have over 480 deaths caused by pneumonia in one year; suicides, 950 deaths. Now that is a very interesting statistic and something that must be researched.

Why are so many people committing suicide? What are the problems? As we look at these records and people are able to do more research from these records, we will perhaps come up with solutions and help for the people who are dying from taking their own lives. They must be facing very difficult circumstances, and research must be done to deal with this.

Another interesting statistic is the infant mortality rate. We look at these records through different regions of the province, and we see a great variance in the number of children who die at an infant stage. From 1987 to 1989, there is an increase in some areas. Medical people, researchers must look at this, and the statistics kept by these departments will be of benefit to all of us, perhaps not to us, but to our children and our grandchildren.

I would again like to just touch on the importance of these records and recognize those people who kept these records before. As I said, Mr. Speaker, at one time the records were kept perhaps just in family records at home. Records were kept in family Bibles and in churches. In many cases, these records are not available at this time. It is very important that we get these into a proper order and then, perhaps, have these statistics available for people, so they can do the research and help us in every way possible.

* (1540)

Mr. Speaker, can you tell me how much time I have left? 20 minutes?

An Honourable Member: Relevance?

Ms. Wowchuk: I have been speaking to very relevant facts.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the object of the Vital Statistics branch is to provide for the registration and certification of records of vital events and the public services related to Vital Statistics, The Marriage Act, The Change of Name Act. Other important activities conducted according to these statutes include: revising records from changing names, correcting and adopting procedures, providing statistic data related to vital events, issuing marriage licences, appointing marriage commissioners and licence issuers, recognizing religious denominations and registered clergies.

In 1989 the Vital Statistics registered 17,803 births, 7,800 marriages, 8,881 deaths and 114 stillbirths. Mr. Speaker, it is those statistics of the number of deaths and the number of stillbirths that will be looked at under this legislation. Perhaps through the records that are kept on these deaths, we will be able to, as I said, get the details that are required to do further medical research and prevent deaths.

Mr. Speaker, before I leave this topic, I would like to again recognize those people who work in this department, also the work that they do, the value of it, how co-operative they are and the importance that they also be treated with dignity in their departments.

An Honourable Member: And not bumped out to Dauphin.

Ms. Wowchuk: As my friend next to me says, that they not be bumped out to Dauphin. I think that we have to look very carefully at that, although, as I said before, I support the idea of decentralization. I think it is a very good idea. It has to be done with some compassion. We have to look at what we are doing to these people and what kind of service that they provide us with, Mr. Speaker. Their work is very important.

Mr. Speaker, over the years, as I have said, there has been a shift in the responsibility of collecting death certificates. Originally, looking back at the legislation, back at 1800, it was municipalities who did the work.

It says in Chapter 16 of The Vital Statistics Act of that year that the minister of each church and congregation is to keep a duplicate register of baptisms, marriages and burials. It is stated quite clearly why they want to go back that far.

Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my support to this legislation, and I congratulate the minister in moving forward to have these statistics and the amendments available.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, statistics are a very important recordkeeping that is done on behalf of society and among people in a society for the purpose of recordkeeping. If we do not have any record kept about vital statistics, there would be no source of valid information for use by members of society, and especially by government in formulating decisions and making correct public policies.

It has been said that if a person wants some mental exercise, he might as well engage in digging the facts which is better than jumping into conclusions without knowledge of the facts.

An Honourable Member: Conrad, facts only confuse one's mind.

Mr. Santos: That is correct. If a person likes the incident and it is favourable to him, then he calls it facts. When it is not favourable to him, he calls it misinformation.

It has been said, even among statisticians, that statistical figures will not lie but liars will figure. I think what they meant is that you can arrange your information in such a manner that it will be interpreted in a fashion that will be favourable to your cause, because you can always arrange statistical data, even in drawing up graphs and diagrams. If you use tall bar graphs, then it looks like your data are very impressive, but you use flat and fat bar diagrams, it looks like you have very little information. It depends on how you present your data and the form that the statistic takes when you make your presentation about the information.

At any rate, information is always better done than mere gossip and rumours and things that have no valid basis, factual basis in the real world. It is often that we meet people who can give you all the details about something, even without knowing the facts, but that is merely rumour or gossip. When the facts are out, it makes no difference whether you ignore the facts or not, the facts will not cease to exist simply because you ignore them.

Factual information is the valid, reliable kind of information that people need in making any kind of decision. Mind you, facts are not always clear. People often disagree with what the facts are. Even the ideal condition where you tempt everybody to accept what the facts are, even in that ideal situation, people will still disagree as to what those facts mean. Information is not the same as facts. You can -(interjection)- well, let me prove that statement.

You can have all the details and bits of data that you have in your hand, and if you do not have any pattern of relationship between or among those bits of data, it will be just confusion that you have got. Until you get a pattern by relating bits of information with other bits of information that it becomes meaningful, only then does information become factual.

An Honourable Member: What you are saying is actual truth becomes a lie.

Mr. Santos: Pardon?

An Honourable Member: Actual truth is really a lie, in essence, is what you are saying.

Mr. Santos: There are two kinds of truth.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Santos: Let me explain, let me explain. -(interjection)- No, what they call factual truth, empirical truth, this is one type. This means that your symbol, your word, the label you use is consistent with the factual observation or perception that you get in the real world. What if your looking glass is a coloured glass? What if your perspective is a biased perspective? Then what you see is not the real thing because of this biased perspective that you use. So you may think that you have the facts, but because you are looking at reality with a certain slant, what you see is just images of those facts.

* (1550)

As long as you submit yourself to the criterion of scientific observation, that you satisfy the criteria of reliability and validity, then you become empirically truthful when your statement is consistent with the observation. That is factual information. That is the one kind of truth that people want.

What is the other kind of truth? Let me tell you what the other kind of truth is. The other kind of truth is what is known as logical truth. Logical truth is simply the consistency of your conclusion from your

premises. Even without saying anything about the real world, if your reasoning is such that you follow all the rules of logic, then you are being truthful, because you are logically correct and logically consistent. But if your reasoning is contrary to all the rules of logic, you may use all the facts, but it may not be consistent and therefore it is not logically true.

An Honourable Member: That is the way you people operate.

Mr. Santos: I am not imputing anything about anybody. I am just trying to define—You know where you stand, you know how you make use of information, you know how you reason. You may be very logical in everything that you do. You may be very logical in your way and style of life. It does not mean that you are doing the right thing, because life is not logic. For example, many members of this Legislature, when they were in opposition, they would say certain things. They may utter other statements. But when they become the government, they may make the other type of statements that contradict their statement when they were in the opposition. Now, is that logical?

You will say, of course it is not. Of course, you cannot expect it to be logical. When you are in the opposition you play certain roles and you act according to those roles and you make statements according to those roles. In social life you are being consistent with the role that you play. When you become the government and you become appointed to the cabinet, you will have to play other roles and you have to make other statements and you have to be consistent with those roles and with those statements. That is why it is essential that you be a morally honest and truthful person regardless of the role you play, so that you will be a very good statesman rather than a politician.

An Honourable Member: If you are sitting on that side and you say something and then you get elected and you are government then you change what you think, is that being honest?

Mr. Santos: Is a woman being dishonest by changing her mind?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Santos: Or a man? Can a man not change his mind? A man can also change his mind just like—equality with a woman. You always call sexist every time you make reference to a woman. It is not so. What if I make reference to a man? Am I being,

am I being, what is the word? What is the term you use when you always favour men?

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Santos: But one thing is certain. Speculations, possibilities, probabilities, no matter how numerous they are, a thousand probabilities is not equivalent to a single, factual empirically true statement.

If you become certain about something without knowing the factual circumstances and situation of the thing that you are certain about, I think that is precisely the definition of what they call a one-sided, one-track mind, a person we usually call in our society—he is always right, you know, a person who is always right and every other opinion is wrong. That person, I do not consider him a responsible person because he never accepts his responsibility. That person must accept the situation that he can be wrong and apologize for it.

If a person will never accept responsibility for what he does, I do not consider him a responsible person. People should be humble enough to realize that to err is human, to forgive divine. We always make mistakes one time or another, especially when under pressure, we can make mistakes. Then we should be generous enough to allow that leeway to ourselves, even to our friends, even to our enemies.

One important thing about keeping statistics is the kind of information that they give us, and this kind of information and knowledge that the statistics give to us will determine the quality of the decisions that we make for the rest of society. For example, this is statistics about migration, you know, people moving in and people moving out and immigration, people coming from other countries, coming into our country and those leaving the country, going to other countries. If you take the net movement figure there and then you add that to the birth and then you subtract the death, of course, you have a total population figure in the society.

When you have the kind of information that is solidly based and factual and reliable and consistent information, then you can make the right and proper policy. If people are leaving our province—and there are so many of them going to other provinces—then we should be able to make some kind of counterpolicy that would be able to attract them back to this province.

* (1600)

An Honourable Member: People are leaving Manitoba, but they do not say how many are leaving Ontario which is much greater in numbers. You see, you are talking about logic and statistics. Now would you not tell us the whole story, Conrad? Do not just tell selective stories. Tell the whole story. You do not just take paragraphs and verses out of it. Read the whole story.

Mr. Santos: When you talk about facts, again you have to distinguish between facts that are relevant and facts that are not. If facts are not relevant at all, they do not count.

The births should be recorded in society, and in the old days this had been done haphazardly. Usually, it was done by the clergy, if they had the time to record the birth. In our case, in the case of Manitoba, our vital statistics shows, for example, the rate of live births, how many people were born, the absolute number. For example, in 1987 in Manitoba there were 17,438 live births. In 1988, it is almost the same—17,582; in 1989, it is almost the same—17,803. So you could see from the pattern itself that the pattern of live births in Manitoba is stable. It is not a widely fluctuating kind of a rate; it is a stable rate. So you could see that explains why the population in this province all across the years has almost always been that stable in numbers. It does not increase too fast, nor does it decrease too fast, unless, of course, there is some economic explanation.

An Honourable Member: Conrad, do you have any statistics from the '70s when the winters were cold? Do you have any statistics for the '70s? You are quoting from the '80s when there were warm winters, but what about the '70s when they were colder?

Mr. Santos: Well, maybe when it is cold, husbands and wives will produce more babies, I do not know. -(interjection)- Oh, I think there will be a difference between the time when there was only radio and no television. During the olden times, what would the husband be doing after dark? They had nowhere else to go. It is winter and they cannot go out. What would happen?

An Honourable Member: I do not know. Tell us.

Mr. Santos: I do not know, but now that there is television the husband is so busy changing channels, wait, wait, this is a football game, wait, wait. Then you know what the effect is, a population drop.

An Honourable Member: No, the population goes up.

Mr. Santos: No, it is down.

Another statistic that -(interjection)- oh, the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) is so fixated, a one-track mind. I said men and women can change their minds. I said women first because that is the first one that came to my mind, and then I say men can also change their minds. So what is wrong with that?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): Order, please. I would remind honourable members that the member for Broadway has the floor.

Mr. Santos: Now, another category of information that is recorded in our Vital Statistics section is the information about marriage. You know, of all the institutions in society this is the most curious kind of institution—marriage. Why?

People who are out of it want to get in. People who are out of marriage want to get in, but once they are in, they want to get out. Why? I do not know why.

I made an arrangement with my wife and this is a secret of a long-lasting marriage I will tell you. You make an arrangement with your wife. In the morning she does what she wants, in the afternoon you do what she wants. -(interjection)- Well, try it. Try it and see if it will work.

An Honourable Member: Do you own a television?

Mr. Santos: Yes, I do. I own a television but I come home at two in the morning, she is already asleep. In married life there is no use arguing with your wife, it is pointless. If you try to argue with your wife, you are trying to put out an electric light bulb thinking that you can do it, you are blowing on it and it is useless, and you think that your wife has no influence on you.

Well, one time I overheard two politicians and they were arguing vehemently and angrily, you know, passions are up and they were all arguing there in the public forum. One of them said, and what about the powerful interest that controls you? The other one said, well, you better leave my wife out of this. So you could see that a wife can be a very influential person. Proof, proof.

We have always said that President Reagan was one of the best presidents in the United States. A very well-respected president, but look at the biography now of Mrs. Reagan—read the

biography. Who is the real power behind the man? It is the First Lady. She is more influential perhaps than her husband who is formerly the president of the United States.

An Honourable Member: What about Margaret Thatcher?

Mr. Santos: Oh, the Iron Lady, Margaret Thatcher. She is herself the one who is in position of power and authority, and you have seen how powerful she can be. -(interjection)- Powerful, I said.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): Order. I hesitate to interrupt the honourable member, but I must remind the House and the honourable member that the matter before the House is the second reading of the bill which deals primarily, if not exclusively, with the issue of death certificates. The honourable member will please contain his remarks to the principle of the bill.

Point of Order

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on the government side of the House, we were finding the comments of the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) quite interesting. It is a reflection of his party, and we would hope that he would continue.

* (1610)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): The honourable member does not have a point of order.

Mr. Santos: Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, The Marriage Act, The Vital Statistics Act and The Change of Name Act, they are all related. Under The Marriage Act, religious denominations were recognized, clergy can be registered, and they can issue marriage licences.

What we are talking about here is something which is more relevant to our life, which is the state of marriage.

An Honourable Member: Conrad, you say the wife is the power in the home. What about . . . that has four or five . . .

Mr. Santos: I have heard—listen, listen. I have heard a husband complain bitterly. He said, I was married by a Justice of the Peace when I was young, and then 15 years later he said, I never had justice nor peace in my home.

So I would advise a bachelor who wants to get married, think it over. Think twice, think thrice, four times, because his decision to get married may be the last decision that he will ever make in his life.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

The point is we should be able to keep the peace and stability in our home. The point is there should be compromises between husband and wife. The point is that the welfare of the children is much more important than your ego or your pride.

An Honourable Member: Right, but you said there is

Mr. Santos: It depends on the people who get into it. The trouble is that so many people get into marriage without knowing anything about marriage. Now, does that mean that you must have trial marriages? What do you say? I do not know all the answers. All I can say is what I observe in life. I observe that in North America people get married. Then after a while they get divorced, and then the second marriage, another marriage. It lasts for a while and then they get divorced again.

It seems that in North America, I think there should be some kind of a fundamental reform of this institution. This is my own thinking. -(interjection)- Fundamental reform. This is what I will propose. With due respect to the sanctity of marriage, with due respect to the religious connotation of getting into married life; I would say that if marriage is a contract, then it should be a contract with a term. Let me just give an example. Let us say it is good for five years—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the honourable member for Broadway, but I must remind the House and the honourable member that the matter before the House is the second reading of Bill 8 which deals primarily, if not exclusively, with the issue of death certificates. The honourable member will please bring his remarks into line with the principle of the bill.

Mr. Santos: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now let us go to the more morbid subject, the statistics about death. Do you know that according to statistics, the highest -(interjection)- okay, let me finish that one. I am just trying to fit the institutional arrangement with the actual things that are happening in society.

It is pathetic, really, that marriage is no longer respected as an institution. In the country where I came from, when you married, you married for life. The trouble is, that since you cannot get out of the

marriage estate legally, what you do is you take a paramour. You are still married but you live with another person. I do not know how society would look upon such a system like that. To be very inflexible is difficult, but to be very flexible is also difficult. It is a dilemma, but I will just finish my comments on this.

Now our statistical records will tell us some information about the pattern of death in our society. For example, just on the causes of death in Manitoba, I have noted here heart disease, the highest incidence. Next is cancer, third is cerebral vascular diseases. The fourth one is accidents, then there is pneumonia and I am surprised suicide is on the list.

This means that when we look at this pattern, when we are now trying to allocate the resources of government in matters of health care, we should correlate it with the incidence and frequencies of death. If it is the case that heart disease is the highest incidence in terms of frequency of occurrence of death, then we should proportionately, in allocating our health budget, put a little bit more money into that area of medical research. Vital statistics is important in our society. You should proportionately allocate the resources according to need and according to gravity of need.

Heart disease is No. 1. Therefore, there should be more research in the universities, in private institutions about the causes of this and how it can be prevented. You know that smoking, for example, leads to heart attack. A more enlightened public policy would not merely regulate, it will probably try to stamp out smoking.

There is nothing good that can come out of that habit at all, but I respect, as I said before, the lifestyle of any individual and how he chooses to lead his life. So I respect the rights of smokers as well, but the exercise of one's right is valid only up to the extent that he does not affect the rights of other people. If you smoke when you are in a single room by yourself, fine; if you smoke when you are out in the air, fine; but if you smoke in the dining room when there are other people eating with you, are you not being inconsiderate?

The Vital Statistics Act requires that we should learn how to relate the budgetary process with the statistical information that we have, but if we do not even look at the statistics, how can we properly allocate our budget? We look at them, we analyze

them, and if we do not have them, we produce them. We produce statistical information because every good decision in public life is based on two kinds of premises, the value premise, the goal that you are trying to achieve, and the factual premise, the information on which you base your decision.

* (1620)

If you have satisfied the value premises and the factual premises and you have the proper direction in your decision making, then you will turn out to be a good policymaker, a good statesman. Rather than a politician merely, you will be a statesman who is pursuing the greatest benefit for the greatest number of people in our society.

Now, let us look at the infant mortality problem here. These are our children.

An Honourable Member: Yes, that is a serious problem.

Mr. Santos: Okay. Let us see how it is related by region of residence. If you look at this statistical table that I have in my hand -(interjection)- these are vital statistics, okay. In 1987, the lowest statistic is in the central region but the highest is Thompson. You see, the highest number mortality.

So it depends also by the place where you were born whether you will survive it or not. The probabilities of a child surviving and being viable depends on where the child is born.

So what has that got to do with the allocation again of our Health budget? As far as a scare in prenatal care and other things are concerned, it means that you must have a little bit more priority to budgeting for the North than for budgeting in the central region.

An Honourable Member: More vital.

Mr. Santos: More vital. Well, then you have to look at the statistics of migration and then you follow—this is again available to you. If they move into the area, they carry with them the problem and if you can look at your statistics, and you can gear all your decision making to your factual premises of your decision, you cannot be wrong.

The factual premises of decision must always be the right premises. Do not make decisions when you do not have information. Information is important before you make the choice. If you do not have the information, you cannot make a decision on the basis of speculation because that will be a hazardous kind of decision.

An Honourable Member: Do you support . . . ?

Mr. Santos: I support the bill.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Santos: If it is important enough for our society, it makes no difference whether it is promulgated by the government or promulgated by the opposition.

Now, if it is also that important, the government should also be broad-minded enough to accept that certain bills may also come from the opposition that will be good for the province, and they should support it.

For any bit of information to be meaningful, it should be understood in terms of patterns or relationships. That calls for some statistical analysis. We have so many tools in our hands. You do not have to be a mathematician nowadays to understand the meaning of that information. The computer can do it for you. The computer will give you the statistical significance. It gives you the margin of error without you knowing anything about those methods.

If we use valid facts in our decision making, then we will be making correct decisions, and it will be good for the province and for our people. Thank you.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes), that the debate on the Vital Statistics bill be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 12—The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), Bill 12, the Court of Queen's Bench, Small Claims Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le recouvrement des petites créances à la Cours du Banc de la Reine, standing in the name for the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand. Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave. Agreed.

Bill 20—The Animal Husbandry Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), Bill

20, the Animal Husbandry Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'élevage, standing in the name for the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk).

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, The Animal Husbandry Act is an act that will do some housekeeping amendments to the act. I think that is a good move. Just as in many other acts, like The Vital Statistics Act, from time to time it is necessary to make changes. Just as The Crown Lands Amendment Act, which I had the opportunity to introduce, as the situation changes in the province, it is necessary to make amendments. That is what is being done by this amendment.

I rise to support the amendments that are being made. -(interjection)- Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend across the way mentions the cormorant. Yes, if there was a way to deal with those under this act, that might be the thing to do. Today we are dealing with Animal Husbandry and that deals with farm animals. I would like to speak to that.

There are three different parts, as I understand, that are being amended. Basically these are amendments that have been identified, that were not looked at when the bill was being introduced. One area that has been mentioned to me through the R.M. of Minitonas, and that was a concern that the R.M.s would be responsible to pay the costs of animals. If there were animals or poultry being destroyed by other animals, the municipality would have to be responsible for this. That appeared not to be fair because there is an opportunity for people to take private insurance to cover off their animals. It should not be the responsibility of municipalities.

There are cases, in my constituency in particular, where a dog got into a flock of birds and destroyed a large number of them and the bill is coming back to the municipality. With the amendment to this legislation, there will be an opportunity for those people to settle that claim through private insurance. This debt will be the responsibility of the farmer or individual who has the dog or animal that is doing the damage to carry that insurance.

There are changes in the definitions to ensure that only animals and poultry used for livestock purposes be covered, not pets or exotic birds. That was a request, as well, that was raised by municipalities, that it would only be animals that were used in the livestock industry, not dogs, cats, or as I said, exotic birds.

Mr. Speaker, I have a bit of concern, I am wondering—someone has raised to me whether or not Angora rabbits are considered an exotic animal or whether they will be covered under this act because there is someone in my constituency who raises Angora rabbits and is wondering whether they will be classified as a farm animal or whether they will be covered by this legislation.

The municipalities clearly did not want the responsibility to determine the value of the loss and then in turn have to compensate for these kinds of things.

There are also sheep producers in my area and they are concerned about the legislation. As I understand the legislation the way it is, they will still be protected by the act and they will be compensated in both ways, through private insurance and also will still be protected in the act.

* (1630)

Mr. Speaker, this bill, as I said, deals mainly with animal husbandry and I would like to speak about cattle and the cattle industry and how animals are treated. Things have changed an awful lot in the past 30 or 40 years in the agriculture industry. There was a time when on each farm you would see a few cows, a few horses and chickens and they were treated, in most cases, with an awful lot of respect and very humanely but, in many cases, things have changed an awful lot and the style of farming has changed an awful lot.

What we see today is a large—in many cases, instead of the small family farm operation where you would just see a few animals, livestock has become a very important part of the agricultural industry and we have to look at how we are treating animals and what is happening in the agricultural industry.

There are a lot of jobs derived and a lot of income into Manitoba because of the livestock that is raised on farms. Many of our constituencies have the benefit of this industry in my area where farmers, who used to be mainly grain farmers, are now changing over to raising an awful lot of cattle.

The concern in our area is over the past couple of years we have seen a real change in the livestock industry. Livestock is raised and fed and finished but then shipped off. We are not getting the secondary jobs. I think that is one place that we are failing the farmers in this province because we are not giving them the opportunity—we are not only failing the farmers, we are failing all Manitobans,

because through the agricultural industry we have opportunities for many secondary jobs. The way the industry is going right now, the animals are being shipped out of the province and the rural communities are suffering because the slaughtering and the processing of those animals is not happening in the province and that is having a negative impact on the province.

The other area that is covered in this act is the regulations, putting in place, legalization of electrical identification instead of branding. Branding is not a very humane way to be treating animals. It is a process that has been in place for many years; it was a regular farm practice and it was fine before we had better technology. But we have better technology, we have better ways to be marking animals, and it will be of benefit to all farmers when they can start to use the electronic identification.

Once we got away from branding, the other method of marking animals was the ear-tagging, and that is probably a little more humane than the branding. However, it is not as great a benefit to the farmers, because in this age of difficult times and the amount of rustling that we have going on, it is quite easy for those who choose to steal livestock to cut that ear or remove the identification, and then they have no way of tracking whose animal it might have been.

If we can move into the electronic identification it will be a great advantage for farmers because the mark will not be able to be taken off. It will also give the farmer more flexibility to keep track of his animals, where they are. I am not quite sure how the equipment works but I understand it is quite modern and computerized, and they will be able to track their animals throughout the pastures and it will be a lot easier for farmers. I think that it is also very important, as I said, Mr Speaker, to protect animals that are being rustled. -(interjection)- You will rustle me up a few? Thanks very much.

It is not quite so easy to remove that identification and also that if an animal should arrive at the stockyards or at the plants, it will not be quite so easy to dispose of them because that tag, that identification, will be picked up and then be able to be traced back to the original owner. So I think that is a good step. I look forward to it and I am sure that the farmers, as the technology becomes more available, will make use of it.

I have some questions. I am wondering from the minister who introduced this bill where this legislation fits in with domestic animals such as buffalo? Under this legislation, I wonder whether buffalo are considered a domestic animal and are covered off under this legislation?

The other area that I look at is the elk. There was a lot of controversy about elk a few years ago, and we as a government made a decision not to start elk ranching in Manitoba, although it is being carried on. Regulations have not been put in place by this government for elk ranching yet, even though there was a lot of work done and there were a lot of studies done as to how the regulations were being implemented in other places. This government has not put in the regulations to prevent elk ranching, and I am wondering where elk will fit into this whole scheme of this legislation, if they are going to be covered by this or whether they are going to be covered by the game ranching regulations, Mr. Speaker?

An Honourable Member: For or against?

Ms. Wowchuk: For or against? That is an interesting question. I think that you know my position, but I would be interested in knowing, Mr. Speaker, the position of this government, because they had indicated that they were prepared.

Under the last administration, as I had said, there were a lot of studies and I believe the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources spent quite a bit of time in Alberta looking at elk ranching, and brought back an awful lot of information. It was anticipated at that time that the guidelines would be put into place to control elk ranching, but we have not seen these regulations put in place by this government. They have been in power now for close to, is it four years? I am quite disappointed that those regulations are not in place, and that there are large numbers of elk being kept in captivity under the assumption that it is a game ranch. In my opinion you do not need 72 elk in captivity to run a game ranch.

So, I am curious about where all of this fits in with this legislation, where this government sits on elk ranching and what kind of regulations they are also prepared to put in to deal with those kinds of things. Because the elk is a wild animal, and it is being kept at the present time in captivity, and many people are very concerned as to what is—the reports that are

coming out of Alberta right now with the disease, with the tuberculosis in those animals.

I would be very interested to know what this government's position is. Have they done any work on elk ranching? Have they looked at testing the animals in Manitoba that are in captivity? Are they diseased? Is there a risk of tuberculosis spreading through the elk herds in Manitoba as there is in Alberta right now? I have not heard any comments, and it is strange that these guidelines that could have been implemented some time ago—and I would be interested in this government's position on this elk ranching, because if it is the government's will that elk ranching should continue or will continue or it should be just game ranching, they should come forward. They should let the public know what their position is about keeping this animal in captivity.

I also believe that if they are going to allow one group of people to keep animals in captivity, even though they have been paid a handsome price to let them go, and another group is being forced to go under very strict regulations and cannot keep animals in captivity, then I think that this government should answer those questions and come forward with the guidelines. Just as they amended The Animal Husbandry Act, they should come forward with guidelines to deal with the elk ranching and see that those animals are treated fairly.

* (1640)

There are many, many animals that are kept in zoos, and we have to look at how they are being treated, whether or not the regulations are applied the same way right across the province to all people and what the regulations, as I say, are for game ranching. How many animals really constitute a game ranch? A game farm, I am sorry. It is at a game farm that I am speaking about at the present time.

I wait for the day when the government will make their position known as to whether or not they are prepared to put guidelines forward, whether or not they are prepared to take a stand on the whole issue of elk ranching and keeping wild animals in captivity, whether or not—what kind of guidelines they are going to bring forward. I would be very interested in that.

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to get back to domestic animals, in particular, the livestock industry and the value of the livestock. I know that every farmer is looking at diversifying right now, and many farmers

who are only in the grain industry are finding great difficulties because there just is not the price there for grain. One of the ways that they can diversify is into livestock, be it cattle, be it horses, be it sheep, hogs, goats. There are many, many animals that they can supplement their farm income with, but it is very important that these animals are treated humanely and that we have the regulations in place to support these people.

Mr. Speaker, as I have also said, I am very disappointed that we cannot carry this a little bit farther in Manitoba because there are many, many other jobs that could be derived to support the people of Manitoba—secondary jobs from the livestock industry. When you look at the number of animals that are being shipped off to Alberta and those jobs that we could be having here in Manitoba if somebody, the government only had the will to support the processing industry, the slaughtering industry, then we could have jobs here in Manitoba. We would not have our young people having to go off to Alberta to work or off to another province or else go on unemployment insurance.

There are many jobs, secondary jobs, that could be created from the livestock industry, and it is a proven fact, but we are losing it. It is a proven fact in many cases. In the poultry industry there are secondary jobs, but in the cattle industry, in the beef industry, we have lost virtually all those jobs out of Manitoba. Instead, we are shipping out beef on the hoof, and they are being slaughtered in another province. We are letting it go out to the States and, again, losing all of that secondary income that we could have in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, there are changes that have to be made to the legislation and there are municipalities that have indicated that they want these changes, and they are the right changes for now. I am sure as we go down a couple of years we will be making further amendments, either to this bill or to other bills, and that is only the normal thing to do.

The other area that is covered in this bill relieves municipalities to provide compensation when animals are killed on roads. We have many instances where a herd of cattle might get out during the middle of the night, the farmer does not realize that these cattle get out onto the highway, and in many cases serious accidents are caused and cattle are killed. Whose responsibility is it to clean up these animals; whose responsibility is it to

compensate? Just last year in our constituency it happened that there was a herd of cattle that got out and by weird coincidence a husband and wife were travelling in two separate vehicles. The husband hit a couple of cattle and a few minutes later, right behind him, the wife hit another cow. These people damaged both their vehicles. Luckily they were not hurt, but there were three animals killed.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Who is responsible?

Ms. Wowchuk: The member for Burrows asks me who is responsible? In that case it ended up that the municipality, I believe, had the responsibility of cleaning them up, but they then went to court to settle it because the farmer did not feel it was his responsibility, he felt someone had let his cattle out during the middle of the night, he was not responsible for that; and the Autopac did not feel it was their responsibility. I am not sure, at this point, whether or not that has been settled. But if I read this legislation correctly this can be covered by insurance and will be, therefore, the responsibility of the owner to cover those kinds of things.

So there are many instances such as that where cattle could get out and cause serious problems. There are other instances where cattle get out and cause serious problems to the neighbours' crops. In those cases I know who is responsible because it happened to us; our cattle got out into the neighbours' crops. No municipality had to pay the costs, the neighbour did not have to pay the cost, our insurance paid the cost. I am quite familiar with what happens when my cattle get out, but I am not so sure about who is responsible when the cattle get out on the highway. According to this legislation, it should make it a lot easier and take the responsibility away from the municipalities, because I do not think it should be the municipality's responsibility to compensate for cattle, just as it should not be the municipality's responsibility to cover costs of livestock that are killed by someone else's dog, or chickens that are killed by someone else's dog.

It should be the responsibility of the owner. That was a weakness that was in the legislation. It was a weakness that was identified by municipalities and by towns, and it is a weakness that can be corrected through this legislation.

(Mr. Bob Rose, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

In that part, I say it is good legislation. Again, I would like to question the minister at some point as to whether or not other animals, such as Angora rabbits, are covered in this legislation. I have not seen it anywhere, and I would like some clarification on that. I would also like clarification, as I said, on buffalo, whether or not they are, at this point, considered to be domestic animals and whether or not they are covered by this legislation.

An Honourable Member: Give me a home where the buffalo roam.

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, the buffalo are a wild animal that has been domesticated.

An Honourable Member: And seldom is heard a discouraging word.

Ms. Wowchuk: Well, I am sure glad that the member knows that song; it is very, very entertaining. Again the one area that I am particularly interested in is the area of elk, whether or not somewhere in this they are at this point still considered a wild animal, or whether they are a domestic animal, and where this government is on legislation to set up some guidelines as to where they are on the handling of elk.

* (1650)

I am pleased to see, Mr. Acting Speaker, that cats and dogs are not covered by this. I think that those are animals that belong to the individual and the municipalities and that The Animal Husbandry Act should not have to deal with those.

As I said, Mr. Acting Speaker, the really important issue in all of this is how we can derive secondary jobs and support Manitoba's economy with the livestock industry. It is really important that we look at this legislation, but it is also really important that this government look at the livestock industry and the production of animals.

We have to look at the secondary industry that can come into Manitoba to support the livestock industry at this time. There are many, many farmers who have to diversify their economy, and this government has promoted—they keep telling us that they have to diversify. Livestock is one way that we can diversify. I only wish that this government had left in place all the supports for the farmers through the Department of Agriculture that would help farmers diversify and also provide them with a lot of knowledge because when they are raising livestock there were people in the Ag office who provide a lot of advice and a lot of support for

farmers. Many of those supports, Mr. Acting Speaker, are also being taken away from farmers.

The other area where livestock and animals play a very important role is in the 4-H programs. There are many, as you know, as a rural person, but there are many 4-H beef clubs and pony clubs, and it is an area where young people learn about animals, learn how to handle animals. They learn about tagging animals; they learn about the value of being sure that your animals are tagged properly. They learn, as I say, how to handle them, how to show animals, which is all part of caring for animals, but it is unfortunate that this government has chosen at this time to take away those supports from farmers, who need the supports as they diversify their economy. They have taken away the supports that young children need to learn about livestock and perhaps come back to the family farm to take over.

As I say, they would learn about electronic identification of animals, and they would also learn about branding, which I feel was a very inhumane way of treating animals.

An Honourable Member: What is that electronics? Maybe explain that. How about branding, the old branding way? How did they do that?

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Acting Speaker, my friends here asked me to explain branding. I have seen branding, but it is a very horrifying experience, and I would hope that all farmers could eliminate that practice from their ranching, because I believe that it is very, very inhumane.

As I have said, when they changed over to the practice of ear tagging, that was more humane and a lot easier on the animals than the branding but, as well, that could be a nuisance for the farmers because, in many cases, the ear tag would be lost, caught on a branch or, in the case of rustling, it might be cut off. That would not give the farmer the ability to track his animal. In the case of electronic identification, when this identification becomes available and in use, I feel that it will be much more humane, and I am pleased to see that it is in this legislation.

I am pleased that the government took into consideration the concerns of the municipalities because, as I said, it has been raised by several in my area, particularly the area where they are required to compensate. In many cases, they were being responsible for things that were completely

out of their hands. Now these things will have to be covered by private insurance, through the owner's insurance, and I think that is much better. As I look at the notes here, I understand that the cattle producers support this and other farm organizations as well support these changes.

An Honourable Member: Are there cattle producers in Swan River?

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes. My friend asked me if there are cattle producers in Swan River. Yes, there are many, many cattle producers in the Swan River Valley, and I am also sure that they will be supporting this resolution.

An Honourable Member: Do you raise cattle?

Ms. Wowchuk: My friends here also ask me whether I raise cattle. At the present time, I do not raise cattle. We were in the farming business, and we are looking at getting back into it, and when we do get back into it, I can assure you that we will carry the insurance that we did before so that we will be responsible for our own cattle when they get into the neighbours' fields.

When we get into our own cattle, we will also be looking very seriously at branding, because I come from one of the parts of the province where there is a very serious problem with rustling. There have been several cases in our area where people have just pulled into a field, into a pasture during the middle of the night and taken large numbers of cattle. When you are in the farming business, with the farming economy where it is, if you happen to lose one or two animals, that is a big loss. If you have someone come in and take about half a dozen to ten of your cows, that is very difficult to recover.

I believe that this identification process that is being outlined in this legislation will be a great benefit to the people in my area, in particular, who are suffering losses through rustling. I am sure that our area is not the only part of the province where this is a problem. I think that it is going to take a lot of work on the part of law enforcement to look at it, but this identification will also help a great deal.

Mr. Acting Speaker -(interjection)- my friend wants me to speak about the cormorants, and perhaps that would be completely out of order because the cormorant is a wild bird. My friend across the way led me to believe that it was a protected bird, but I am told now that it might not be a protected bird. So we have to do a little bit more research on the cormorant. Excuse me, I was

speaking about the cormorant, but I realize that I was not speaking on the topic. I do not believe that those animals will be covered by this legislation and they will be covered under The Wildlife Protection Act, and I will be very happy to speak to that, because it is a very important matter in my constituency.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I apologize, Mr. Speaker, for getting off the topic. My friend across here just led me astray slightly. I would just like to, at this point, reinforce some of the points that are raised in this legislation. The changes to defining the animals that are—I think the most important part of this legislation is the fact that municipalities are relieved of the responsibility of providing compensation when animals are killed on the road.

I believe this is a very good part of this legislation, because these things should be covered by insurance, and they should be the responsibility of the owner, not the responsibility of the municipality. My friend here tells me that sometimes Autopac will not cover these kinds of things, so I think that each individual must look into their own insurance to see how things are covered.

* (1700)

The other part of this legislation, as I have said, that I feel is very, very important is the allowing for regulations to be put in place to legalize electronic identification. I believe that this is a very modern technology, and it is time that we put in regulations to put that in place, to get away—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., according to the rules, I am interrupting the honourable member. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Swan River will have five minutes remaining.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., time for Private Members' Business.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 10—City of Winnipeg Boundary Review

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): In light of the fact that the government has seen fit to accept this resolution, I would seek leave from the House to withdraw it.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Crescentwood have leave to withdraw his resolution? Agreed.

Res. 11—Manitoba Intercultural Council

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr):

WHEREAS the Manitoba Intercultural Council is a broad community-based organization providing a voice to over 400 cultural groups throughout the province; and

WHEREAS the government of Manitoba already has significant input into the operation of MIC through appointments to community groups; and

WHEREAS multiculturalism and a diverse ethnic background are integral components of Manitoba's heritage and future; and

WHEREAS it is imperative to ensure that all applications for funding are subject to a nonpartisan decision-making process; and

WHEREAS during its existence, MIC's Community Resource Advisory Committee was providing a fair, equitable and effective distribution of funds among member groups; and

WHEREAS the government of Manitoba has the authority to audit the books of MIC annually; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship politicized the process of grant approval for cultural groups by appointing the Manitoba Multicultural Grants Advisory Commission.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship to dissolving the Manitoba Multicultural Grants Advisory Commission and reinstating funding responsibility to MIC.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, funding to our multicultural groups in Manitoba has not fared very well since the Conservative government has taken office. Not only have they managed to politicize the awarding of these grants, they have also managed to cut back these grants that were going out to our multicultural communities because if we take a look back at the Annual Report of '88-89 from MIC, we will find that the bottom line has grants given out to the different multicultural communities of the sum of \$1,296,200. This is what MIC had distributed in their last year of being able to distribute the funds.

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

Because the government in its greed to politicize the multicultural community made a decision to change its policy, and even though the minister responsible says that it was not my fault that it was transferred from MIC into this new created board, it was not my fault because of a task force report of a recommendation. All she was doing was following a recommendation. That was her primary excuse for changing it over.

There are many reports that are done by the government time after time and not all recommendations are, in fact, followed. We only need to look at the DeFehr Report, a report of equal value. What did the minister do on that one? She chose, as she has the right to, to ignore the recommendations but when it came to MIC and trying to prevent them from distributing the funds, they created a body. They made a decision to take the funding capabilities of that organization away from MIC and gave it to a board that has been appointed by the minister.

The government's record, as I say, has not been good on multicultural funding when it comes to defending the cutback from MIC to MGAC, to the freezing of one year. All we need to do is take a look at what this government's record in the past has been.

The member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) stood up in his place and gave a speech and talked about grants to multicultural groups. Mr. Acting Speaker, I wanted to quote someone that I never thought I would quote or make reference to, Peter Warren, in a letter that he had in several different newspapers. It is, "to remind you Neufeld came out of left field late in October when he blistered the free handouts given to the communities." It goes further, "various ethnic leaders immediately started screaming. So did the opposition parties. Premier Gary Filmon distanced himself from his minister's comments, and it is quite possible that Neufeld will pay for his outburst when the provincial cabinet is shuffled in January."

The minister was not punished, and the reason why the minister was not punished is because of a commitment to multiculturalism that this government actually has to it. I would go on in terms of a letter that was sent to the Premier himself regarding these comments, regarding the whole

issue of multicultural funding, and it is from the communities, different ethnic communities, signed by them. I believe I had tabled this letter previously, so I would encourage members to rethink their position when it comes to the whole question of funding and how much money is being funded.

I will read it for you. It reads, that as responsible leaders and elected members from the ethnic community we take exception to Mr. Harold Neufeld's recent statements regarding multiculturalism and the multicultural funding. Mr. Premier, we are puzzled and extremely concerned that you, as Premier, would consciously reinstate Mr. Neufeld's appointment as Acting Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, especially after he made his personal feelings known to you well in advance of his appointment.

Mr. Acting Speaker, these are the types of comments that we received from the different communities. When one minister, the acting Minister of Culture and Heritage, says what the real Tory agenda is when it comes to multicultural funding, what happens? The Premier distances himself away back and allows the member to continue on, the acting minister to continue on saying what he was saying. -(interjection)- The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is sensitive. He says, is it relevant? Of course it is relevant. That is what MIC and the resolution is all about, funding our multicultural communities, and that is what I am debating, and you should be sensitive. What you are doing to the multicultural community, Mr. Acting Speaker, is not acceptable.

This resolution would reinstate the funding capabilities back to MIC where they belong. MIC is made up of a broad range of different people from all of the different ethnic groups, and so that the members are aware, I would like to list off a few of those different ethnic groups.

We are talking about the Polish, Portuguese, Scottish, Sikh, Slovak, Spanish, Swedish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Serbian, Interlake, different areas of the province, North, Parkland, Central, Southeast, Westman; go back into different cultural groups, German, Greek, Hungarian, Hutterite, Icelandic, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Jewish, Korean, Laotian, Mennonite, Metis. Mr. Acting Speaker, the list goes on. Who is that replaced by? Now we have politically appointed people who are handing out these funds.

* (1710)

What I say, Mr. Acting Speaker, is that I can expect the government to stick to what they have because they are doing what they really believe in. I am very disappointed in the New Democrats, as they now at least on the surface appear to be supporting MGAC. We saw that yesterday when we were told that they were going to be voting in favour of MGAC receiving the funds. What they are saying is that it is okay for MGAC to distribute these funds. That is wrong. MGAC should not be distributing these funds. It should be given back to the community. That is where it was intentionally meant to go, and unfortunately it was not put in the legislation, it was a regulation.

The only reason why the government has been able to get away with what they have done to MIC is that in fact they did not require to bring forward legislation to change it. It was an error of the NDP administration at the time by not putting it into legislation for, had they done that, Mr. Acting Speaker, I do not believe the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) would have had the tenacity, the guts to bring forward the legislation that would have seen the establishment of a political patronage board.

The minister stands in her place and she says that this board of volunteers, excellent volunteers, they are doing it for nothing, and she says what is wrong with that? There is nothing wrong with volunteers. What I am condemning is the process and the manner in which the minister has chosen to administer the multicultural grants.

What she has done is, she has taken it away from the community. She has selected people that she would like to distribute these funds and those are the individuals that are distributing. If her appointments are all good, and I am not going to debate each appointment and say this is a good one and this is a bad one. If there is another minister who replaces her, another administration, who is to guarantee that it is not going to become more political? The NDP are somewhat political at times, and we have seen what type of patronage they have done. What the minister should have done is, she should have brought forward legislation to amend MIC and to give them the funding in that legislation. That would have been the proper thing to do, and I find it unfortunate that she chose not to do that.

There are so many volunteers who put in tremendous numbers of hours with MIC, and she talks about the volunteers of the board that she has appointed. There are twice as many, three times as many, volunteers with MIC than the board she has appointed. What is she saying to that board? She is telling that board that she does not trust them, that she does not have the confidence in that board to distribute the funds. That is her second reason. Her second reason was that they are not accountable. The task force report says they are not accountable so we have to take away the funding. They could have sent in an accountant, or they could have set up an appeal process as she has done with her own board.

The minister, maybe when she responds to this, can tell the House if she ever received any complaints and which complaints she received when MIC was distributing the funds. She will counter and say, well, tell me some complaints that MGAC has received. MGAC has received how many appeals, nine or ten appeals? An appeal in itself is another way of a complaint. Were there any appeals or complaints about MIC?

What she has done for MGAC in terms of the whole question of accountability, she could have done for MIC. Her arguments for taking the funding capabilities away from MIC do not hold water, and that is why the government has chosen to put up speaker after speaker—we were there yesterday, we were there Monday evening—and their concern is the Liberals do not support multicultural funding. Well, that is nothing but hogwash.

If any party does not support multicultural funding, it is the government. They cut it back the first year, and they have frozen it for the last couple of years. The Liberal Party's position is very clear. If you read the resolution, the resolution is very clear that the Liberal Party supports multicultural funding.

If you want to find gray areas in terms of which party does not support multicultural funding, I will direct you over to the government. I will tell you to look at the comments from the member from Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld). I will suggest to you to ask the Premier why he did not take actions. Why did the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) not stand in her place and put distance and say, no, we support these funds? Why did she not stand up and say that? Why did she not make those statements to the multicultural community?

Then yesterday, we had the New Democratic Party that stand in their place and they are going vote for MGAC to receive the funding. Mr. Acting Speaker, they are going to stand up, and they are going to say MGAC deserves the \$1 million that the government is going to get them.

What are you saying? If you take the funds away from MGAC, the government is going to have to come up with more money for MIC, or they are going to have to abolish multicultural funding.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Well, then it goes back onto the government and the government has a role. Are they going to make a commitment to multicultural funding? If they are, they are going to have to reintroduce it, and if they are not, well, then the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) maybe wins out. That is the real Tory agenda, I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker—

An Honourable Member: What is the Liberal policy? You just want to cut the funding entirely.

Mr. Lamoureux: —and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) does not know what he is talking about. The Minister of Health was in his place and prior to introducing that motion. I say it to the Minister of Health because his mind on this issue has been somewhat simplistic, and I would encourage him to read page 1664 in Hansard, where it is very clear on the intent of that motion.

The minister has no excuse to say that the Liberal Party does not oppose it. The Minister of Health should sit down in his cabinet and ask what the real Tory agenda is on Multiculturalism because the real Tory agenda is to abolish it. They have cut it in their first year. They took it away from MIC. They cut it. They cut the funding from MIC and now they are freezing it. If it was up to the real Tories in that caucus—and that includes the Minister of Health, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), as the Minister of Finance puts up his hands—funding to the multicultural community would not be there.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to you that the Conservatives have to do some soul searching on this issue, and they have to come and they have to make a decision. Either they are going to fund multicultural communities in the fashion in which they should be funded—and once they make that decision, then they have to make the decision, what type of a commitment are they going to make—

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

* (1720)

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you today, and I want all members of this House and all Manitobans to know, that the only person that I want to put distance between myself and that person is the Liberal Multicultural critic, who moved a motion in my Estimates on Multiculturalism to remove multicultural grant funding in the Province of Manitoba.

I say to the Liberal Party and to the Liberal critic: Shame! Shame, because, in fact, just some short period of time ago, before the last election was called, the Liberal Party had 20, 21 members in the House—well, 20 or 21. The people of Manitoba made a decision and returned only seven members of the Liberal Party to the Legislature this time.

Mr. Speaker, when they had 20 members in the House, they indicated quite clearly that they were ready to govern. I heard the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) say that she was the leader of a party in waiting to form government.

Well, I do have to question, and I believe that Manitobans do question, the Liberal Party's ability to do anything, especially to govern, when they bring a resolution into the Estimates process that cuts funding to the multicultural community when there is absolutely no way that funding can be reinstated.

They would like to see over \$1 million removed from the multicultural community, taken away completely, and they did not even know that they had absolutely no ability to put it back in place anywhere else. Mr. Speaker, I question, and I would like all Manitobans to question, whether in fact the Liberal Party would ever be ready to govern.

Mr. Speaker, I have indicated time and time again—and I think this budget shows our commitment to multiculturalism. In very difficult times, when there were difficult choices to make, there was no reduction in the funding through the Multicultural Grants Council. There has been no reduction in Lotteries funding and granting funding to the multicultural community under this administration.

Mr. Speaker, I also heard the Liberal critic, in his comments just some few short minutes ago, trying to determine whether the Manitoba Intercultural Council or the Multicultural Grants Council deserved the funding. Well, I will tell you, it is the community organizations that deserve the funding and that is

what we have done with the process that we have put in place through the Multicultural Grants Council to fund many worthwhile community organizations.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard many of my colleagues over the last couple of days put their thoughts on the record about funding for the multicultural community and their different experiences that they have had since they have been elected members of the Legislature.

I know that we are sincere as a government. We are sincere, and we showed our sincerity back last May when we introduced the first ever multicultural policy for the province of Manitoba, which talks about pride, equality and partnership.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about partnerships and partnerships that have developed since we have been government. I know when we first came into government the road was a little rocky. The Manitoba Intercultural Council and the government had a little bit of a rocky start. It took some time for us to get to know and understand each other a little more.

I would just like to relate to a cabinet meeting that we had with the Manitoba Intercultural Council, the executive, just a week or so ago. At the end of their two-year term, the executive indicated how things had developed in a very positive way over the last couple of years, that there had been much improvement, that they appreciated being given the opportunity to give advice to government. We updated them on some of the action that we would be taking in the near future.

Mr. Speaker, I think that working relationship has developed, and they are quite happy to be fulfilling their mandate of giving advice to government. They realize the fact that funding will not go back to the Manitoba Intercultural Council, that in fact the Multicultural Grants Council will continue to distribute that money. As I have said in the Legislature, as I have said in my Estimates in committee, and as I have indicated to the Manitoba Intercultural Council, we as government have made a decision.

We have a Multicultural Grants Council that is representative of the volunteers throughout the community that have in a very efficient and effective manner distributed the dollars that have been allocated to the community organizations for the very worthwhile project that they are undertaking. Mr. Speaker, I have no question in my mind that the

community is being well served through the vehicle that has been put in place.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go back to some of the reasons why those decisions were made. Those decisions were made as the result of a task force on multiculturalism that was set up under the New Democratic administration when they were in government. The reason they set that up and went out to the community to hear their thoughts on how the community should be funded was, in fact, because the NDP government of the day at that time had some concern with the way monies were being allocated. If they did not have any concern, they certainly would not be spending \$100,000 going out to the community and asking for representation.

So it was an NDP administration that asked for the study to be done, asked for the public to be heard. That task force heard the public and came back with a report that indicated there should be a separate grants structure set up. It was a report that was commissioned by the New Democrats, but it was presented to us as government when we became government in 1988.

Mr. Speaker, the community came forward to that task force, made representation, expressed their concerns, and the task force which had some very credible people on it from the community, I must admit, made those recommendations. We accepted those recommendations and we followed through on setting up a Multicultural Grants Council to continue on with the funding. I will say that the community is being well served. We believe that it is, and we are going to continue along that direction. In fact, the public and the multicultural community will have to be the judge of how well we have done.

* (1730)

To date, it appears that committee is functioning very well and that the community is being well served, and we are going to continue to grant money to the community through that body.

So without any further comment at this point, I would like to move, seconded by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings),

THAT the resolution be amended by substituting all of the words after the third "WHEREAS" with the following:

WHEREAS the Liberal party has demonstrated complete insensitivity in its attempt to remove funding for all multicultural groups and organizations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba congratulate the Manitoba Intercultural Council for its assistance in facilitating the smooth transition of multicultural funding responsibility to the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba congratulate the Manitoba Intercultural Council for its advice to government; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba congratulate the government for its wisdom in establishing the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council to fund Manitoba's diverse multicultural community and to assure accountability and efficiency in handling grant requests.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable minister's amendment is in order.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): I appreciate the opportunity to rise and discuss the issues that are raised in both the member for Inkster's (Mr. Lamoureux) private member's resolution and in the amendment as put forward by the Minister responsible for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson).

The minister referred in her remarks, and has referred on many occasions in the House, to the multicultural policy that this government has instituted. The policies—a policy is only a word or a series of words on paper. A policy must be judged by the substance that follows from that policy. What actions does the government take as a result of a policy being instituted?

I would suggest that the government's multicultural policy remains a sterile, nonresponsive, incomplete policy, certainly in the actions this government has taken since its election, its first election in 1988 and most particularly the actions that it has taken once it has gained its majority status.

I think that all members of the Legislature, and certainly members of the multicultural community, would share with us our concerns about some of the actual statements that have been put on the record by members opposite and things that have been done to implement, or not to implement as the case may be, the multicultural policy that the minister is

referring to. The policy is honoured more in the breach than in the recognition of it, I would suggest.

The reduction of English as a Second Language classes at Red River Community College; the unwillingness of the provincial government to, No. 1, strongly make presentation to the federal government about reinstating its share of funding for ESL, and failing that, taking on that obligation, making that the priority for its government; putting in jeopardy, until the communities affected made a large public outcry, health services for immigrant women and families; the cut to the multicultural grants which have been outlined in great detail by members on this side, all of these things, among others, have weakened the government's credibility on multiculturalism and fly in the face of the stated objectives of the multicultural policy that the minister refers to on many occasions.

I would just briefly refer to the incidents that occurred in this House in the last session when the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) put on record several very unfortunate, I feel and our party feels and I am sure the multicultural community feels, several very unfortunate statements. I feel, however, that the most unfortunate part of that whole process was that the government did not follow its multicultural policy and make amends for the member's unfortunate comments. I think that these events and these things tell the community far more about what the multicultural policy of this government is than any words on paper could do.

The actions of the government as well, which are the subject of the resolution put forward by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and the amendment of the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), further demonstrate this government's lack of commitment to the ideals and philosophy that underlay the institution and the beginnings of the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

The Manitoba Intercultural Council was set up to provide a democratic, community-based organization to advocate, advise and deal with multicultural issues that arose in the province. It also had the authority to distribute grants to multicultural communities. I understand, and agree, that there have been concerns raised, legitimate concerns raised about all of those roles that the Manitoba Intercultural Council had, legitimate concerns raised about a group's ability to do all three things: to advise, to advocate, as well as to distribute funds.

However, I think that what the government has done by instituting the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council and taking away from MIC its authority and its ability to distribute grants is to emasculate the basic philosophy that underlay the beginnings of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. What they have done is, instead of allowing the largely community-elected MIC to determine where the monies will go, they have instead given that function over to a completely political organization. My understanding is that organization does not in itself distribute the grants, but only advises and makes recommendations to the minister. It reviews the applications and makes recommendations to the minister, thereby once again putting the authority and the power in the hands not of a community-based organization. No decentralization here. We are back to the same old authoritarian rule that we have seen so often in this government, completely taking away the community input, or much of the community input to the granting of these monies.

I think that it would have been much better for the government to have said: MIC has had some growing pains. Let us talk about it, let us take the task force report, let us think about how we can go about making some changes without taking away one of the most basic elements to MIC, that of its ability in and of itself to grant money.

Not only did the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council take away this authority and this power and this ability of the community to determine its grants for itself, it also has muddied the water. I am sure it was not the intention of the government to muddy the water, but the effect of this additional level of bureaucracy has been to muddy the water even further.

The interrelationship of MIC—the secretariat of which I could go on for a long time but will not—and the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council has got to be clarified. The government must decide what the roles of each of these elements are instead of, as the amendment to the private member's resolution does again, a self-congratulatory resolution which does nothing to forward or bring ahead the quality of debate in this House. I think we need to go back and relook at what it is that MIC should be doing, but we need to look at it in the context of a decentralized, democratically-based, community-controlled organization.

We would like to go back to another thing that was stated about the political aspect of this. The Grants Advisory committee now is completely appointed by the government through Orders-in-Council. Now all of the members of the MIC also were and are appointed by Order-in-Council, but the majority of those appointments were from the community, and the Order-in-Council was simply the administrative method of putting those appointments through.

* (1740)

The Grants Advisory committee, on the other hand, is a completely government-appointed council, not just simply a flow through of the community's recommendations, the community's wishes. Those are truly political appointments. I would suggest to the government that, in this case, Caesar's wife must not only be above reproach, but she must be seen to be above reproach. The combination of removing the granting authority from MIC and the totally government politically-appointed members of the Grants Advisory Council gives a lie to the fact that this government actually is looking to work with, is looking to deal with, fairness and equity in this matter.

I do not really care in this context what the multicultural policy says on paper. The reality is far from those high-flown, idealistic terms and phrases. The reality is that this government in this area, as they have been doing throughout the area of social services, of health care, are going backwards. They are not going towards more decentralization, more community input. They are taking control again. They are putting their own ideological face to all the committees, all the groups, all the organizations that must deal with the government. They are saying, we know what is best for you. We will make the appointments. We will determine how you can deal with your own communities. They did not say, yes, there is a problem with MIC's authorities and the roles that they have been given as it has evolved. Let us talk about it together. Let us deal with it.

Finally, I would like to say, again in conjunction with the member from Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) in his remarks, that an appeal, as he has stated there are nine or ten that have come before this council in its young time, must be considered something that is a concern to the community. As well, that council has the authority to make recommendations to the minister as to what groups are going to be funded.

It beggars the imagination to think that community groups would go to that same council saying, we have a concern with the same group that is going to fund us, i.e., the government. There is no arm's-length distancing here at all. No wonder there is not a large number of complaints. They know that the government is very open to and has cut back the grants to their community as it stands now.

Are they going to feel comfortable that they can go to this committee and say, we have a concern, we would like to make an appeal? I find it quite revealing that at least nine or 10 groups have done so in this short time period, and I think again that states something about the government's commitment or lack of commitment, to the real issues of the multicultural community.

In closing, I would just like to say that we feel that the issues that have been raised by this resolution are very important and need to be dealt with. We would strongly urge the government to not pat itself on their back, but do something constructive for once in their time and seriously look at these issues that have been raised. Thank you.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I am compelled to speak. Originally when I was going to speak, I was only going to chastise again the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) for putting a resolution, a motion before committee which was going to strip a million dollars of funding from the multicultural community and then to do a flip-flop in the House and say, oh, that is not what I really meant to do.

I want to tell you, after listening to the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), I have just a few comments to make for the NDP. One of the things that has provoked me is the fact that the member for Wellington has said that this government just appoints committees of its own friends to make recommendations which are meaningless, because they do not have the community involvement attachment. Well, I say to my honourable friend the member for Wellington, wake up and smell the coffee. Ask yourself—I want to explain something to my honourable friend before she develops her leader's disease, the deputy leader's disease, of speaking without telling the truth.

I want to tell my honourable friend from Wellington that all of the task forces of the Health Advisory Network were established by the steering

committee. The Minister of Health did not appoint a single individual to those task forces.

How does my honourable friend square that with the statement that all we do is appoint our cronies? I mean, that is just absolute balderdash and an ill-informed, not knowledgeable statement by the member for Wellington. I want to tell my honourable friend from Wellington that there is currently an Urban Hospital Council to come around the issue of funding in the acute care hospital system of Manitoba, particularly the urban acute care hospital system. Again, the membership has not been chosen by government—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I would strongly urge the Minister of Health to speak to the resolution and its amendment rather than to statements that actually the member for Wellington did not make in the House today.

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

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I can only apologize to my honourable friend if, in fact, she is not the member for Wellington, because the person I heard say that is the same one who just stood up and said it was not the words of the member for Wellington, and I thought she was.

Of course, this is the whole problem with this resolution, this amendment, because we have the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) three days ago coming to committee, putting a motion on the floor of committee to strip \$1 million worth of funding and then saying—after he realizes what its implications are in terms of policy for the Liberal Party towards the multicultural and ethnic communities of Manitoba—oh, well, that really is not what I meant.

Well, you cannot do anything but to conclude—and I will read the motion that the member for Inkster put on the record to be voted on. The member for Inkster said, "I move, that line 6.(k)"—which I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, is a line called the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council. It has \$1,009,200 of funding. That is line 6.(k)—The member for Inkster says, "I move, that line 6.(k) be omitted and that line 6. be reduced to \$31,717,100,"

which is the original vote less \$1,009,200 that was to go to the Multicultural Grants Advisory committee.

Now, it was not to move it somewhere else, it was to omit it; not to transfer it somewhere else, it was to omit it. So the Liberal policy, as espoused by the member for Inkster, is to cut that funding from the multicultural community.

* (1750)

Now, the NDP say, well, we do not follow advice. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to remind my honourable friend—and I am going to read back a comment made by Ms. Cerilli, the MLA for Radisson, from Hansard just Monday night of this week, page 1674, I quote the member for Radisson:

"I guess one of the other issues that comes up is that the ethnocultural community is being plagued by politics."

That was not said by a member of government, that was said by an NDP member. She went on further to say:

"There may have been some problems in the past with MIC. There may have been some difficulties with people concerned about how grants are being allocated, . . ."

That is not a member of the Conservative Party government saying that, that is a member of the NDP.

You know what, the member may well be right, because before she was elected to this House in 1987, the former government, under Howard Pawley, commissioned one Dr. Neil McDonald to investigate the role of MIC and its granting role to the communities. Dr. McDonald, who is no appointment, as the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) would allude to, if she does not agree with what is said by committees, task forces and other advising government. This individual has a very, very excellent record of understanding the issues of the multicultural community and in his report recommended that there was a difficulty of the dual role of MIC being both an advisory body to government and one which would decide on which agencies would receive what level of grant funding.

The recommendation, as I understand it, was to separate those functions. That is what was done by this government, on a recommendation of an individual selected by the previous New Democratic Party government to provide advice to government on how the issue should be dealt with.

Now, we have the NDP in limbo land, not knowing where they come from, but we have the Liberal Party stating public policy, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that this whole issue of Multicultural Grants Advisory Council ought to be eliminated, not transferred, not changed, but eliminated. That is the Liberal Party policy.

You know, Mr. Speaker, what is embarrassing about this is, all Tuesday afternoon we begged the member for Inkster to reconsider this cutback of funding to the multicultural community, to withdraw his motion, because there was not one single Liberal Party member there in committee supporting him. He is all alone on this, but he would not recant, because he claims he is operating on some sort of principle. Well, the principle that he put into his motion before the House is to cut \$1 million of funding for the multicultural committee, not what he tries to flip-flop and say was his real intention.

His motion leaves no doubt as to what the Liberal Party policy is. He has an opportunity, the member for Inkster, when we resume debate around his motion on Thursday, to withdraw and the issue is over. He shakes his head that he will not. He wants to maintain the policy of the Liberal Party of cutting that funding. Well, you cannot have it both ways, and I want to suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, -(interjection)- you are right. The member for Inkster says actions speak louder than words, and his action is demonstrated in the words he put to a motion of omitting that funding, eliminating that funding, not anything else—the most massive attack on multicultural funding that I have ever seen in this House.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I said that actions speak—

Mr. Speaker: On a point of order?

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I said actions speak louder than words and this government has cut multicultural funding—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. What is the honourable member's point of order? He does not have a point of order. A dispute over the facts.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, the only individual that is wanting to cut funding to the multicultural

community is the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and the Liberal Party by this motion of eliminating \$1,009,200 of funding to the multicultural committee. He cannot hide behind that with any words, any phraseology. That is Liberal Party policy.

I want to tell you, I beg of you the opportunity to indicate that should the roles have been reversed, and let us say, heaven forbid, that there was a Liberal government and the member for Inkster was the minister who had the responsibility that the MLA for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) has as Minister of Culture, and a Conservative member of the opposition moved to eliminate \$1 million of funding to the multicultural community. Do you know what the member for Inkster would be saying? It is spurred on by racism. It is spurred on by an attack on newcomers to Manitoba. I can just hear the halls echoing with those kinds of accusations against Conservatives.

Yet a Liberal stands up and makes that cut in black and white and he says, oh, well, I was misunderstood. I really did not mean to cut that funding. That is the kind of hypocrisy that will get the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) absolutely nowhere—absolutely nowhere. -(interjection)- Mr. Lamoureux says, page 1664, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, speaking on the line of Multicultural Grants Advisory Council—shall the item pass, is the question put.

The member for Inkster says, this is in all likelihood one of the biggest items in which the Liberal Party opposes the Conservative Party, and then he went on to eliminate the funding. He is right. We are different from the Liberal Party. We will not stand for the reduction, elimination and the heartless cutback of this funding by the Liberal Party. We will not agree to it. We will not agree to the Liberal Party on this motion. We do disagree with the Liberal Party. We will not see it cut from this budget. We agree it should be. We disagree with the Liberal Party policy that it should be cut out.

Mr. Speaker, that is where actions speak louder than words. We are against this new policy of the Liberal Party to punish the multicultural community. We want to maintain that funding of \$1 million. We think it is appropriate. We think it is valuable. We think it has use in the community, and we seek advice from the multicultural community as to how it can achieve serving the greater needs of

newcomers to Manitoba. We will not take Liberal policy advice of cutting this funding.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, what the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) did not say—he did not continue on reading from that quote. I want to read into the record the whole quote.

It goes: "Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is, in all likelihood, one of the biggest items in which the Liberal Party opposes the Conservative Party. Ever since the Conservatives took away the funding responsibility from MIC and brought it over into this new body that they have created, we have opposed it. We believe that MIC was doing an adequate job when it came to the distribution of Lotteries funds . . ."

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is busy trying to cut his way out of a hole that he had sunk himself into after falling off the fence. I really cannot understand why he would be reading Hansard. He is busy quoting Hansard—

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

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, that is really in poor taste. Let me finish the quotation before you try and kill it to six o'clock: "The minister still had influence in the sense that she was able to appoint a number of people to the board, and we do not understand why it is the government has seen fit to take away the funding component from MIC. We do not believe that it is acceptable. In fact, we believe that the money should be restored."

The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) should be more honest when he quotes from Hansard—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Jack Relmer (Niakwa): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I believe there was an imputing of motive to the Minister of Health, and there was an accusation of being dishonest. I would think that the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) should withdraw.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, if that member felt offensive to that phraseology, I will withdraw it, but I did want to comment—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to thank the honourable member for Inkster.

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: To continue on, I could go through every line in this amendment to the resolution, Mr. Speaker, and it is all dismal. All you have to do is just read one and take a look at: and BE IT

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba congratulate the MIC for its advice to government.

Mr. Speaker, it has done absolutely nothing—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., when this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Inkster will have 12 minutes remaining.

This House is now adjourned and stands adjourned till 1:30 tomorrow (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Wednesday, May 8, 1991

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