



Third 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
MALLOWAY, 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

Monday, December 16, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report for 1990-91 of the Department of Urban Affairs.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have several tablings, firstly, the Quarterly Financial Report for the year ended October 31, 1991, of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

I would also like to table the Public Accounts, Volumes 1 and 2, Financial Statements for the Consolidated Fund, plus Supplementary Information, fiscal year 1990-91.

I would also like to table a report to the Legislature, pursuant to Section 56(3) of The Financial Administration Act relating to Supplementary Loan and Guarantee Authority.

I am also making a report to the Legislature under Section 20 of The Public Officers Act, being Chapter P230 of the Continued Consolidation of the Statutes of Manitoba. This deals with surety bond issues that I am required to table.

Finally, I would like to table a report of the Provincial Auditor to the Legislative Assembly for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1991.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to announce that the 1990-91 Public Accounts, the 1991 Report of the Provincial Auditor and the Special Audit of the Provincial Auditor on the Taxation Division of the Department of Finance will be referred for consideration to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts for the committee meeting previously announced for December 17.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement for the House, and I have copies for all honourable members today.

Mr. Speaker, today I am asking Manitobans to pause and remember the victims of drunk drivers. Earlier this morning, I launched the "ribbons for life" campaign, encouraging everyone, including members of this House, to display red ribbons on their vehicles and homes over the holiday season. I urge everyone to exercise an extra degree of caution.

Our Manitoba policing agencies will be enforcing the laws on impaired driving with particular care in the weeks to come. We need to remind ourselves why these laws are in place. It is not because we want to discourage people from enjoying themselves, but the simple truth is that drunk drivers kill innocent people.

Let us remember those families whose holiday celebrations will be overshadowed by memories of loved ones struck down by drunk drivers. Our laws are tough, the toughest in Canada, but they are necessary. We are determined to get off our streets and highways those drivers who endanger others by disregarding the law, safety and common sense.

Let us join others who have said no to drinking and driving, and attach one of these ribbons to the door handle of our cars, our radio antennas, our front doors, anywhere that it can be easily seen. Let us all do our utmost to make sure that impaired drivers do not get behind the wheel, particularly during this holiday season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* * *

* (1335)

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, I would like to commend the minister for recognizing the fact that there are victims of this senseless and tragic act and that we on this side of the House will do everything possible to try to prevent and try to assist the government in improving this situation and improving the regulations and the laws that are in effect to ensure that campaigns of this kind are not necessary now or in the future, particularly during the holiday season, during a period of time when individuals turn their attention to their loved ones and turn their attention to thoughts other than having

to deal with the horrendous memory and the horrendous tragedy that it is associated with, this red ribbon campaign, and the fact that individuals have, particularly during the Christmas season, had to face the consequence of the loss of a loved one or a family member or a relative.

I can assure you that we on this side of the House will do everything that we can to assist the minister in ensuring that the laws are enforced, ensuring regulations are enforced. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House will do everything possible to try to improve this situation in the province of Manitoba, not only the laws and regulations, but everything dealing around the whole concept of individuals who abuse the privilege of driving. We will be offering, not only in this session but following the recess, positive suggestions in this regard to ensure that, as I said earlier in my comments, we do not have to have campaigns of this kind ever again in the province of Manitoba.

With those brief comments, we commend the minister on taking this step, and we will be offering very positive solutions to a very difficult problem and a very difficult situation in our society. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* * *

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of our party, I also want to join with the comments of the minister, join with his important words at this season in which many are out and about. Some unfortunately are still abusing the privilege of driving and trying to combine it with the drinking of alcoholic beverages. That indeed is a tragedy which is wrought on citizens around this province every year all too frequently.

I feel compelled to request yet again from the minister—and I know he and I have joined comments on this on many occasions before. The Christmas season is one in which we particularly think about drinking and driving, but indeed, it is a year-round problem. It is a year-round problem which I believe can be addressed best through the information to people who may choose to drink and drive that they will be caught, because that is the thing which we learned from the studies that are done. It is that those who are still drinking and driving are doing it in large part, not because they do not know the consequences will be horrendous if they are caught, but because they think they will not get caught. That indeed is a fallacy.

We need to get that message out. This is part of getting that message out, and I appreciate that. I simply want to pick up on the comment from the minister that the police will be enforcing the laws on impaired driving with particular care in the weeks to come. I look forward to the day when we have the sort of ALERT programs year round in this province, which I believe will be necessary and will in time come. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon, from the Linden Meadows School, eighteen Grade 9 students. They are under the direction of Cindy Tinsley. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

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

*(1340)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Provincial Auditor's Report Manitoba Data Services

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Minister of Finance.

We have just had an opportunity to review some of the sections in the Auditor's report, Mr. Speaker, and some of these issues that are raised give us very direct concern about answers the Minister of Finance has provided to the House and people of Manitoba in past years.

We have raised the issue of Manitoba Data Services in terms of its confidentiality of information, and the Minister of Finance has repeatedly said to people in this Chamber and the people of the province of Manitoba that the confidentiality is not an issue that we should be concerned about. Yet the Auditor's report, which we just received, makes very direct statements about the confidentiality of information, and improvements are required to achieve adequate monitoring of controls in the Manitoba Data Services to ensure accurate and complete processing of information and appropriate safeguarding over confidential information and data.

I ask the Minister of Finance why he told this Chamber last year that confidentiality was not a

problem and why now the Auditor is telling us it is a problem for Manitobans?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I got to give credit to the Leader of the NDP. I mean, he had the document for a whole three or four minutes, and he took out of it, in that space of time, exactly what we wanted; yet what he did take out, he took completely out of context.

The Provincial Auditor was asked to look at the divestiture process of Manitoba Data Services. Indeed, I do not have time to quote chapter and verse what he says. Indeed, everything was done open up, everything was done in a proper fashion, and indeed, if I wanted to read it out of context, I would say it was a model divestiture by the Provincial Auditor's work.

Mr. Speaker, we acknowledge there was a sensitive area of maintaining secrecy of information. We indicated that there had to be monitoring procedure in place, and indeed, as pointed out within the Auditor's report, page 17, Comments of Officials, the info office of the Department of Finance indicates that an audit is being scheduled for the second quarter of 1992, as we said would happen, as we said would go to safeguard all of the sensitive information that was held in the past by Manitoba Data Services, is held, but under the control then, as it is now, under the government of the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Doer: Of course, the minister can talk all he wants about it, but it said, improvements are required to achieve adequate dealings of the confidentiality of information of Manitoba Data Services. Those are not just obscure facts, Mr. Speaker. These are the health care records of Manitobans. These are other very—licensing records, the Agricultural Credit Corporation records, so we would suggest these are very important issues.

Fiscal Stabilization Fund

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): A further question to the minister of divestiture, the Minister of Finance of the Province of Manitoba, we have raised repeatedly that the Auditor has stated that the \$77 million in the Fiscal Stabilization Fund should not be placed in that fund, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Finance has repeatedly defended that decision. Again, the Auditor has stated that it creates confusion on behalf of Manitobans reading

that report. We would note that every budget report has that money in the Fiscal Stabilization. I would ask the Minister of Finance why he continues to place that fund in the Fiscal Stabilization Fund when, in fact, it is not an asset for purposes of the people of Manitoba?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will at another time, I suppose, address my comments or finish my comments with respect to the security aspect of Manitoba Data Services divestiture.

The member asked a question dealing with the lodging of the value of shares through the divestiture of Manfor and the lodging of the value of those shares within the stabilization account. The Provincial Auditor and the government are at odds as to where the value of those shares should be lodged. Indeed, as we have said on several occasions, where does one take extraordinary income or the value, and where do they do it? Do they apply it against one year, one year in which it comes, or is it better to take the value, put it into account and share the receipts over a period of time?

We have gone one step further. We said not a dollar of that will be spent until it has materialized. That is stated. That is stated very clearly. I have said that 20 times if I have said it once, and I will say it again. To me it is an academic discussion. Indeed, of the \$77 million, not \$1 will be spent until it materializes.

* (1345)

Mr. Doer: Well, I guess that begs the question, Mr. Speaker, some Fiscal Stabilization Fund. You have \$77 million in a fund that is worth not \$1, as the Minister of Finance has just told us in this Chamber.

Notwithstanding the fact that we have not the jobs in either one of these divestitures of Repap, we have not the jobs of the divestiture of Data Services, notwithstanding the job boasts from the government opposite, I would ask the Minister of Finance, would he end the confusion and take that fund, that asset that is not an asset, out of the Fiscal Stabilization Fund so all Manitobans will really know what is an asset in the fund and what is just a public relations gesture of the Minister of Finance in the budget?

Mr. Manness: Two points Mr. Speaker. At least, when we set up a fund, we put money into it. We put in \$200 million or \$300 million, not like the Energy and Heritage Fund of the members opposite, where

the glowing legislation came forward, and after four years, there was not \$1 that went into it.

Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor never asked us to take the asset away. He asked us to set up a liability, an allowance against that was equivalent to the asset. We have said, as an offset against that, we will not in any way call upon a dollar of the value of those shares. Indeed, we are not playing a shell game. We are fully disclosing where the value is. We are fully disclosing that indeed a dollar will not be spent until that value is realized. That is an open way of accounting, and we defy any member to tell us opposite.

Impaired Drivers Reporting Delay

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Motor Vehicle Branch.

We have confirmed that, in some cases, from the time a drunken driver is convicted until the conviction shows up at the Motor Vehicle Branch or on police records, a period of six weeks can pass, Mr. Speaker. How can the minister, in the light of the Justice minister's announcement and constant press conferences on drunk drivers, allow drunk drivers to be on the road potentially for a period of six weeks?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I follow the honourable member's question, and perhaps in his supplementary, he will make that clear. My understanding of Bill 3 is that, upon apprehension, an alleged drunk driver's licence is taken, a seven-day permit given, and then, after seven days, the licence is no good. The permit is then no good for a period of 90 days.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Speaker, perhaps if the minister can check with his staff, they can confirm the fact—in my supplementary, the minister can find out for us why, from a period of conviction on trial until the Motor Vehicle Branch puts it on its records, six weeks can pass and the individual can be out there driving before the police or anyone else will know that person is convicted.

Mr. McCrae: I will check into that, but the honourable member should acknowledge, the accused knows he is suspended and ought not to be driving. If he or she is apprehended driving suspended, the car will be impounded, and now, as a result of legislation in the last session, that

impoundment will be doubled to 60 days impoundment on subsequent offences. The point is, the accused knows.

As I say, I will check on it. If there is any delay in recording this kind of information, we will see what we can do about it.

Mr. Chomlak: I can assure the minister there is a six-week delay.

I would like to ask my supplementary. Why does the minister not know? Why does the minister of the Motor Vehicle Branch not know that people can be on the road for six weeks when they are drunk drivers, and the police and no one else can find out about it?

Mr. McCrae: I was not aware, Mr. Speaker, that they changed the procedure in court. The driver's licence is suspended, if there is one, is relinquished at that time, if it has not been taken previously, which it is under Bill 3. If more than 90 days have passed before a person gets to court, the judge takes a person's licence.

* (1350)

Economic Growth Government Initiatives

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the First Minister has staked his entire political reputation upon his ability to manage the economy. Those are his words. All Manitobans have seen so far is a strange two-step dance around Manitobans. There seems to be some disagreement as to who is doing the leading. Is it the Premier or is it the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness)? For example, we have a Minister of Finance saying that he has to, in fact, control social programs, and we have a denial from the Premier that that is the thrust to the economic initiative of this government.

Mr. Speaker, will the First Minister sit down with his Finance minister and establish an economic agenda so that they will stop this two-step dance around each other without any knowledge of who is doing the leading?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am entirely unaware of what the Leader of the Liberal Party is getting at. Perhaps by her second question, I will have a better indication of what she is after.

First Ministers' Conference Government Agenda

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, not only do they disagree about the thrust, one given by the Minister of Finance and denied by the Premier of the province, but we had the spectre of the Premier calling for a First Ministers' conference and, on television on Friday night, the Finance minister, in fact, suggesting that this could be a very negative process.

Can the First Minister tell this House today, since his Finance minister did not have any to share with the other Finance ministers, what new, innovative ideas he will be taking to Thursday's meeting?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am firstly very pleased that the federal government, in response to the letter that I sent on December 9 to the Prime Minister, has agreed to the holding of a First Ministers' conference on the economy. I am also informed that, as a result of urgings by our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and indeed all Ministers of Finance across the country, the federal Minister of Finance, Mr. Mazankowski, in the midst of his discussions with the Finance ministers, left to meet with the Prime Minister and had discussions with him that resulted in ultimately the federal government making that decision.

It seems to me that everybody was on board. Everybody was working in the same direction, and everybody was asking for the First Ministers' conference on the economy. As a result of the combined efforts of various First Ministers in the country, who urged the federal government and the Finance ministers, that decision was made.

I might say that in my letter on December 9 to the Prime Minister, I laid out what I thought were several suggestions for agenda topics. I said firstly that we ought to discuss a national industrial and economic strategy aimed at diversifying all regions, including adjustment measures for all regions, not just Quebec.

I said that fiscal and economic co-ordination, including monetary policy, deficits and fiscal arrangements such as equalization and EPF ought to be an agenda topic for this First Ministers' meeting.

I said that joint budget guidelines or targets might be another matter that we ought to discuss. I said agriculture, including the GATT round, which is

coming very close, as we understand it, to a very critical point, ought to be discussed. I had said that other trade issues, including interprovincial trade barrier reduction agreements and indeed the involvement of the provinces—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, we certainly have no objection to the minister outlining what economic plans, if any, this government has, but we are limited in Question Period time. I would suggest perhaps the First Minister could table the letter, as is according to our rules, and perhaps might consider having a ministerial statement on the position of the government, at which time, we could have a more detailed analysis here in Question Period.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I would like to remind the honourable minister that answers to questions should be as brief as possible.

* (1355)

Education and Training Initiative

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with a final supplementary question. What we are looking for are new, innovative ideas. We have not heard any yet. Will the First Minister tell us if he will be supporting the position taken by the Premier of New Brunswick that there must be a national education and training initiative, or will he be supporting his federal Tory cousins who are suggesting this should be a decentralized initiative and totally offloaded to the provinces?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I did say on Friday evening, in my Journal interview, that I agreed with the Premier of New Brunswick that indeed that was an area in which we ought to be working together in a co-ordinated fashion. I said that our human resource capital was a very important part of our national and international competitiveness, and one that we ought to work on in a co-ordinated fashion.

I have also talked openly about the need for the federal government to take the greater responsibility in the area of education and that I disagree with provinces such as Quebec that we ought to just simply decentralize all of these various powers and authorities to Ottawa, that this was one area in which

Ottawa ought to have a greater role in the policy with respect to education and national training initiatives.

Depo-Provera Licence Approval

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, there is grave concern in our community that approval of Depo-Provera as an injectable contraceptive is back on the federal agenda and that approval of this contraceptive is imminent. In fact, in just a few short moments, the Canadian Coalition of Depo-Provera will be holding a press conference here in Winnipeg because of this information and because of the clear links between this drug and high instance of osteoporosis and breast cancer.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), what information does he have regarding federal government intentions to give in to Upjohn's aggressive campaign and to have Depo-Provera approved as an injectable long-lasting contraceptive.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the issue of Depo-Provera is one that concerns us a great deal, and we have attempted to seek information from the federal government as to whether some of the rumours which my honourable friend refers to are in fact accurate, as to whether there are recent requests, once again, to have the drug licensed, particularly for contraceptive purposes.

Mr. Speaker, we have been unable to confirm the accuracy or inaccuracy of that rumour. We do share concerns with those who are opposed to the licensing of Depo-Provera for purposes that are being currently under investigation in other nations. We simply have made the case with the federal government that we do not believe there should be any licensing for any purposes for which Depo-Provera may be used until there is sufficient and very excellent research documentation to assure its safety to women who may use the pharmaceutical.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: That information is certainly appreciated.

I am wondering if the Minister of Health, given the uncertainty about whether or not Depo-Provera will be approved, would today write or call his federal counterpart and request once again that Depo-Provera not be approved at this time as an injectable contraceptive.

Mr. Orchard: I think it is fair to say that we have already done that, because we heard the same rumours some time ago that there was yet another attempt at licensing. In our discussions and departmental discussions with the federal government, as I said in my first answer, we are unable to confirm the accuracy or the inaccuracy of that rumour.

Mr. Speaker, we have made the position and taken the position consistently with the federal government and the licensing agency that no such licence should be granted until adequate assurance of safety of the product is met. That position has been communicated to the federal government in the very recent past.

* (1400)

Breast Cancer Government Initiatives

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): I am wondering what steps are being undertaken by this minister and this government to reduce the very high incidence of death among women attributable to breast cancer. By the minister's own statistics, for the most recent year, there were 157 deaths and 655 diagnosed cases of breast cancer. What steps are being taken while this government awaits for the national study on the breast screening mammogram?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, a number of initiatives, not the least of which is a working group of experts from the province of Manitoba to provide guidance and counsel to the ministry in terms of a breast cancer screening mammography program.

It will be probably in January that I will release to my honourable friend the recommendations of that working group. We have the same level of concern that has been expressed in recent articles about the incidence of and the seriousness of breast cancer as a killing disease entity of women.

We are committed in the province to do whatever we can within the resources available and within the appropriate technologies available to assure the best possible protection against the incidence of breast cancer in women. That can take a number of events, a number of issues that I no doubt will share with you at a future date.

Workers Compensation Long-term Benefits

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I have a brief quote: A number of long-term claims have been identified, and it is unknown whether the claimants have been given an adequate opportunity to become independent of the compensation system, in other words, to force these injured workers off benefits to which they are entitled. The quote comes from Board Talk.

Can the minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board explain the reasons why there has been a marked increase in the numbers of long-term injured workers who have received termination of benefits letters, when it is clear that they are unfit to return to active duties?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for and charged with the administration of The Workers Compensation Act): I can tell the House that, as part of their review of long-term cases, the board undertakes on a regular basis to review whether people are able to return to the work force. I am aware of a number of cases, as the member for Transcona is, where that is questionable, in which case, we ask those people to use the appeal process to determine whether or not that in fact is the case.

Mr. Reid: Can the minister explain why the benefits are being terminated for these individuals on long-term disability, why they should have to appeal the process instead of having them go through the process of having advice from the medical practitioners in the province to ascertain whether or not they are able to return to active employment?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that, in those cases where benefits are terminated, they are done on the basis of some assessment that the person is able to go back to work. I say this to the member for Transcona, the concern that he raised is certainly a valid one and certainly one that I share with him. I give him the assurance, as minister, that I raised this with the board. I want to ensure that process is one that is done fairly and, if there are cases where it is not done fairly, that certainly they are brought to my attention and we will raise them with the board.

Medical Advice

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to the same minister: Can the

minister explain why some doctors on the payroll of the WCB are overruling the advice given to injured workers by the many renowned medical specialists we are fortunate to have in this province?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for and charged with the administration of The Workers Compensation Act): Mr. Speaker, I share the concerns of the member for Transcona. One of the matters in terms of internal use of doctors at the board that I have raised with administration is to ensure that doctors there are in fact producing medical information that is current with specialists in the profession. If that is not the case, if there are from time to time doctors who are making statements that are resulting in appeals that are being won by the claimants, then those practitioners' statuses with the board will have to be looked at.

Court of Queen's Bench Appeal Screening Court

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

The minister has consistently—and as early on in his tenure as Minister of Justice, the first time he has spoken publicly—been committed to putting a very high priority on access to justice. To that end, he has put forward, and we have supported on occasion, amendments to the small claims practices act in this province, a very important system of adjudication for claims under \$5,000.

Mr. Speaker, now, however, we have learned that starting April 10, 1992, it is the intention of the Court of Queen's Bench to operate a screening court for appeals from Small Claims, weeding out those that they determine are not worthy of having a second look.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate to the House why this quite drastic curtailment of appeal rights for small claims litigants is necessary and how it accords with his stated intention to increase access to the courts?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, we have made improvements to the handling of small claims cases in the province of Manitoba. The screening that has worked very well in regard to the backlog reduction program in criminal courts has been also looked at by representatives of the Court of Queen's Bench. These matters that are to go forward, go forward

after discussion amongst the judiciary and the department.

We in Manitoba are the only province to have the judiciary involved in the administration of the justice system in the way that we do here in Manitoba through our courts administration board. That kind of a decision would flow from that kind of judicial input. The judiciary has quite a role, as the honourable member would know, in the administration of justice in Manitoba. If the honourable member thinks that somehow somebody's rights are going to be infringed, I would like to know how. If he has any examples that he would like to bring to my attention, I would be pleased to deal with them.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the minister is: Does the minister support this new, untested restriction of appeal rights which heretofore in this province has not been a part of our system? Does he support that restriction which was not put forward as a potential consequence of the last amendment act we put forward and which will result in litigants with claims under \$5,000 never having their claim heard by a legally trained judge?

Mr. McCrae: We have been operating small claims without using legally trained judges for some time. The honourable member, if he is against handling cases in our Small Claims Court or in any of our court systems, if he is against a fairness and an efficiency that goes with certain changes, then he should say so. If the honourable member is against reform of our judicial institutions, then let him say so.

I say that there are problems in the justice system that require correction. There are some people in the legal community who would want to stand in the way of improvements in our justice system. I have seen it before, and I hope I am not seeing it again from the honourable member for St. James.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, if indeed a small claims hearing is going to now be a matter—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Question, please.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, the minister has talked about justice for the masses. Let us see him do it. Will he at least commit today to moving toward legally trained judges in this province, seeing as we are one of the only provinces left in the country in which you cannot get before a legally trained judge? Why are litigants for under \$5,000 not worthy of that kind of treatment?

Mr. McCrae: If the honourable member has a complaint that someone has brought to his attention, I would be very happy to look at it, Mr. Speaker. I have not received any complaints about the system that we have. If the honourable member wants to bring to my attention any specific complaints from individual Manitobans, that is what I am here for. We try to deal with those things very expeditiously as well.

I am disturbed by the attitude that I see in the honourable member of standing in the way of change because, you see, the way improvements happen is through change.

Point of Order

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I am disturbed by the superfluous comments of the Minister of Justice attacking my motives in asking that question, when after three attempts, he still has not—

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

* (1410)

Domtar Site Cleanup

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, this government's involvement in the Domtar hazardous waste contamination in Radisson reeks of political interference and negligence. I am going to table and read from a memo from the regional supervisor for dangerous goods when he said that he would have a difficult time justifying the situation in a public forum. I find it incomprehensible that the government can allow the public to be inconvenienced and threatened, all the while letting Domtar stall with the cleanup.

My question is for the Minister of Environment. What was the basis in allowing the delays in the clean-up proposal or the cleanup of this site when we know that there have been donations from Domtar to both political parties, and we know of the Premier's errors?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I find it quite surprising that the member is now only catching up on what the Free Press was talking about a number of weeks ago. It is obvious that we have had some considerable concern about the process that Domtar has been involved in, but I think there is one thing that the

community needs to be made perfectly aware of, that the technology has evolved so that we can today do a much better cleanup than was proposed under the previous administration. The agreement that they struck was to cap it and walk away.

Ms. Corliss: Mr. Speaker, any time anyone wants some information from his department—was it merely another public relations exercise to issue the work orders, there were six work orders, to be done by December 15, or has there been any action with regard especially to the removal of the containers on the site and the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, it has long been our concern as to the willingness of the corporation to live up to direct orders. They have accepted the orders as they were written, and it is our expectation that they will be completed. If they are not, we will take appropriate action to make sure that they are.

Ms. Corliss: Mr. Speaker, it is past the deadline. What is it going to take for this minister to begin to enforce the environmental legislations that are in place? They have talked about getting tough—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, the Domtar site was left in limbo for 10 years, primarily under the administration and in the constituency of the previous ministry of Environment. They neglected to get on with the cleanup. The reason that there has been some activity on the last three sites was started by the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), so we can get on with a proper and complete cleanup.

School of Psychiatric Nursing Reopening

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, in the April budget, the Minister of Health closed the Selkirk School of Psychiatric Nursing. The closure took millions of dollars out of the Selkirk economy and put the education of mental health care workers in this province in complete disarray. The nine months that have passed since the closure of the school have given the minister the opportunity to reflect upon his bad decision.

I would ask the minister now to rescind the closure of the school.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I believe this issue was dealt with in quite

a lot of detail during the last session. I note with interest though that my honourable friend did not take the time during Health Estimates to come in and pose questions about the school at Selkirk closing. I know he did not do that because he would have a tough time getting the issue by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Evans) whose constituency in the city of Brandon is benefitting greatly from the consolidation and improvement of the School of Psychiatric Nursing in Brandon.

Selkirk Mental Health Centre Forensic Unit

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, will the minister confirm the information that I received that the forensic unit being negotiated for the Selkirk Mental Health Centre is not going to be built?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Dewar: Can this minister provide the House and the people of Selkirk the reason why it is not going to be there?

Mr. Orchard: No, Mr. Speaker.

Snow Lake, Manitoba Labour Adjustment Committee

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Energy and Mines. The community of Snow Lake is reeling under the closure of a couple of mines, one in July and another one for February, the loss of some 110 jobs out of employment of some 330 at HBM&S.

My question to the minister is: Has the minister, through the Labour Adjustment Committee, finally agreed to support the relocation monies that should be available to the people who left Snow Lake for jobs in Flin Flon and Leaf Rapids?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, of course, I am not responsible for the Labour Adjustment Committee, but I understand that anyone who has been relocated or is about to be relocated will benefit from the Labour Adjustment Committee and the monies it has available for the benefit of those employees.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the Province of Manitoba has not contributed its share.

Mineral Exploration

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): My question to the minister is: Will the minister respond to requests from the LGD of Lynn Lake and the town of Snow Lake and commit, through Manitoba Mineral Resources, to double the exploration budget of MMR so that we can be assured that the communities of Snow Lake and Leaf Rapids are going to continue to exist beyond 1993-94?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Manitoba Mineral Resources have been directed and have indeed been carrying out, by themselves and also leaving other monies from private industry, to explore in the Snow Lake area.

I should remind, and I am sure that the member for Flin Flon well knows that, in 20 years starting from about 1970, millions of dollars have been spent and no new mines were found. The finding of mines is a difficult procedure, but we are making every effort and spending all monies we can spare to locate new deposits in that area. The seven mines that were found in the Snow Lake area were found some years ago, and in spite of having spent many millions of dollars in that area, we have not found a new deposit in the last 20 years.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the money is available through the Manitoba Mineral Resources. Can the minister explain to the city councillors in Snow Lake why their community is going to be allowed to shrivel and die while this minister sits on assets of MMR of some \$20 million?

Mr. Neufeld: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Mineral Resources have been spending money in that area. The Manitoba Mineral Resources have been leaving money from the industry to spend money in that area. The professionals who are in the area know where to look and know where they might find, but the ability to find is one that is—we cannot direct the prospectors to a specific area. We can tell them to try to locate some deposits in an area, but to find it is like looking for a needle in a haystack.

GATT Negotiations Marketing Boards

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, at the recent concerned farmers' protest in Ottawa, a protest that this government had to be dragged kicking and screaming to attend, there was a GATT briefing. In that GATT briefing, it was very clear to those farmers

in attendance that the marketing boards were very much on the table of the GATT negotiations and that only Japan, Korea and Canada were the least interested in defending them.

Can the Minister of Agriculture tell this House what recent discussions he has had with the appropriate federal ministers as to what will Canada's position be if it is a take-it-or-leave-it situation with respect to the marketing boards?

* (1420)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I can tell the member that I have spoken with the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Grains and Oilseeds, both who have been in Europe to discuss this issue. Our position that we put forward well over a year ago was that, first and foremost, we want the removal of export subsidies and, secondly, that strengthening the clarification of Article XI is still our official position. There is no other position on the table at this time.

Mrs. Carstairs: The sense of this meeting was clearly that they were going to be sacrificed.

Has the minister had no discussions at all as to what will be the final and ultimate position of our government when they are given a take-it-or-leave-it contract?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Speaker, the member is creating a very hypothetical situation. There is no take-it-or-leave-it position on the table at this time. We are at the table negotiating at this very moment and continue to be there with our position intact from a year ago.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Nonpolitical Statements

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, I seek the leave of the House in order to make a nonpolitical statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Broadway have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the well-known Winnipeg lawyer David Matas upon being elected president of the Canadian Council for Refugees. The Canadian Council for Refugees is an umbrella body made up of more than 100 groups across the country.

Since 1977, this council has done an excellent job in promoting human rights and fair treatment for refugees and immigrants alike.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the loge to my left, where we have with us this afternoon Mr. Herold Driedger, the former member for Niakwa.

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

Committee Changes

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be amended as follows: Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be amended as follows: the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) for the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), and the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) for the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

I move, seconded by the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey) for the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld), and the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) for the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, before you call the motion to move in to discuss the throne speech, I wonder if you would canvass the House—I understand there have been previous discussions—that we unanimously consent to agree to debate Bill 35, second reading. I understand the bill has been distributed.

I wonder if you might call for agreement from the House to do that. Furthermore, if that is granted by the House, and subsequent to that, if Bill 35 is passed on second reading—this is all

hypothetical—I would announce then that the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs would tonight meet at 8 p.m. in Room 255, by leave of the House, Mr. Speaker. It would sit until the members of the committee determined when it should rise and, if necessary, that committee also would begin sitting tomorrow morning, at 10 a.m., in that same room to consider Bill 35.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate what the Finance minister is indicating is highly unusual in the House, but these are highly unusual circumstances. We recognize the urgency of passing the bill through. I would hope that there would not be any precedent seen in this. It is exceptional circumstances. We are agreed to provide leave in all stages of the bill, subject to the qualification there be proper hearings. I am pleased the minister has a contingency for possible hearings tomorrow morning as well, if necessary. Subject to that condition, we are more than willing to provide unanimous consent from our caucus at any stage of this bill.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Just to add to the comments from the Leader of the official opposition, I am also led to believe that we will not enter in to clause by clause of Bill 35 this evening, that will in fact be reserved till tomorrow's meeting.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to set aside the regularly scheduled business of the day which is the Throne Speech Debate for the seventh day of debate? Is there leave of the House to set this aside?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: There is leave.

Is there leave of the House, now, to deal with Bill 35 for second reading? Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: There is leave.

Mr. Speaker: There is leave.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SECOND READINGS

Bill 35—The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act (2)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, that Bill 35, The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2

modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg, be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much, and I thank the members opposite for their indulgence in dealing with a relatively critical matter for the City of Winnipeg. As members of the House know, the Court of Appeal struck down the tax roll for business tax for 1991 for the City of Winnipeg. That action caused about a \$44-million shortfall in the City of Winnipeg revenues learned of during the last three weeks of the fiscal year for the city.

The loss of \$44 million having now already been spent would cause a significant hardship upon the taxpayers of the city of Winnipeg; firstly, because of the fact the city cannot legally run a deficit. It would have to levy in 1992 for the losses of 1991. That levy, Mr. Speaker, would require a significant change in how the city collected its business tax, going to a flat rate immediately.

They would have to go to the maximum flat rate, 15 percent, in order to at least achieve as much as possible, the goal of raising the 1991 business tax levy and the 1992 business tax levy. Even doing that, they would have a \$26.5-million shortfall over and above the maximum amount to be levied under the business tax which would then cause \$26.5 million to be levied upon the property taxpayer of the city of Winnipeg.

So, Mr. Speaker, the importance of this bill to regularize the 1991 business tax roll for the City of Winnipeg is extremely important from the taxpayers' perspective.

Mr. Speaker, if I can take a moment—and again I appreciate the indulgence of members opposite having received the bill only a few moments ago—the principle of the bill, the reason that the bill is being introduced is indicated on page 1, under the title "Purpose," and that purpose of this act is to authorize retroactively the business tax assessment levy and collection of business tax by the City of Winnipeg for the 1991 taxation year and further to provide with a method of business assessment levy and collection of business tax until the 1993 taxation year or until a bylaw is passed under subsection 182 of The City of Winnipeg Act.

* (1430)

Mr. Speaker, basically what is happening with this bill is that we seek to validate the 1991 business

assessment tax roll for the City of Winnipeg and the collection of taxes thereon; No. 2, to fix in place the methodology unchallenged related to the 1992 business tax roll, and that on January 1, 1993, the City of Winnipeg would require the current legislation related to business tax on a flat rate basis be implemented. Failing that, the City of Winnipeg has indicated they are going to have a task force of business people and city officials to try and seek better arrangements. What those better arrangements are, we do not know at this time. They are, in fact, seeking a better way of achieving the city's revenue goals but at the same time dealing more fairly with businesses in general. I wish them luck in that regard, because it is a very, very difficult thing to do and no one, of course, likes to pay taxes. Nonetheless, I wish them well, and I would hope that they would continue on in that vein and do seek an appropriate arrangement.

By implementing this bill, it will give them an opportunity at least to have some time to discuss that. Were we only to validate the 1991 roll to save the \$44 million from last year, they would not have time between now and March when they have to implement their budget to be able to address those very important issues with the community that is most affected, the business community. As a result we have introduced this bill.

I also apologize for the length of the bill. The sum and substance of the actual bill itself appears on pages 1 and 2 and again at the end on pages 30 through 32. What is in the middle, Mr. Speaker, is referred to as Schedule D. Schedule D relates to all of those historical passages of legislation that have to do with business tax that have been accumulated to be placed within the bill. Because of requirements deemed wise by our Legislative Counsel, they should be included within the act. The sum and substance of the effects of the bill are related on pages 1 and 2 and following one clause on page 3 and then the latter three pages of the bill as well. That gives us basically the outline of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, by introducing this bill the City of Winnipeg should take notice that by no means does the Legislature of Manitoba or the government condone the substantial increases in taxation that were levied upon the business community this year. Increases of 200 percent and 300 percent are not acceptable in anybody's book. The City of Winnipeg should not construe our actions in considering this bill as *carte blanche* to continue on with the kind of

situation that has gone on in the past. That, in the minds of taxpayers that I have heard from, is not on.

I am talking about the business taxpayer, the property taxpayer, the homeowner, the renter, virtually everyone in this province is fed up to here with taxes. They do not want any more taxes. Our government has recognized that and for the last four budgets have not increased taxes, in fact, in one case decreased them. Notwithstanding, we all have to look at the cost containment side. We cannot continue to levy more and more taxes. The public cannot and will not tolerate it.

I pass caution to the City of Winnipeg with the introduction of this bill. They should not consider this as any kind of endorsement of the actions that they have taken over the past year. The business community is outraged at the 200 percent and 300 percent increases in taxes that many of them have endured. I cannot honestly blame them, but at the same time I think we have to recognize that to leave the City of Winnipeg in a \$44-million shortfall position and to have that levied in 1992 is more unfair, Mr. Speaker, more unfair for all taxpayers, the business community, the homeowner, the renter and everyone else, because the impact of that all in one year would be devastating.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend the bill to the House and seek the support of all members to have this matter read a second time.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolesey): I would like to thank the minister, first of all, for the briefing that he gave us on this at the end of last week, and I realize the difficulties that he has had in putting together a bill like this in a very short period of time.

The purpose of this bill, Mr. Speaker, is to clarify the intent of provincial legislation, 1988, which was to enable the city, during a transition period of unspecified time, to use a variable taxation rate for the city business tax.

The opposition agreed to the introduction of this bill now for two reasons. First of all, the court judgment, in our view, meant—and here we agree with the minister—that the \$44-million 1991 tax levy would have had to been returned to businesses in the city of Winnipeg. I believe, as the minister does, that this would have created a chaotic situation, and it would indeed have led to economic hardship and difficulties for those who depend on city payroll and for those who depend on city services.

Secondly, the 1988 legislation had offered the city the opportunity to soften the impact on small businesses by enabling the city, for an unspecified period of time, the transition period, to soften the flat rate tax that the new Conservative government wanted and enable them to introduce over the transition period a variable rate. We approve and we would have supported that approach of the city, Mr. Speaker.

We know that the City of Winnipeg and other municipalities face an increasing offloading of costs by the province. It also must deal with the increasing welfare rolls that have been created by the economic policies of Tory governments here and in Ottawa. We all know that cities and municipalities across Canada have far fewer ranges of taxes to call upon than do other levels of government.

The City of Winnipeg perhaps is fortunate in that it does have the opportunity to raise from both large and small businesses, and like other municipalities, Winnipeg, of course, relies for its growth, indeed its survival, on small business. I do not think anyone in this House is in any doubt about the difficulties and the suffering of small businesses today, particularly in the retail trade. The evidence is there in the empty stores and in the unemployment and the bankruptcy statistics, particularly in the city of Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, these small businesses are failing in part because of the general Canadian recession, but they have also been badly affected by the GST. Jane Jacobs, an urban specialist, predicted this. She predicted its impact when she argued that, and I quote, no neater little tax contrivance could be imagined than the GST for favouring large relatively self-sufficient enterprises, such as multinational corporations and their many subsidiaries and many internal transactions.

The GST, she warned, would "needlessly twist the knife in the very vitals of the city economies."

Mr. Speaker, I think that is what we are seeing today in Winnipeg and in many other municipalities across the country, that the GST has had a tremendously adverse effect upon small businesses. Small businesses, I would remind the House, are the major growth sector of the economy, and that 60 percent of our new jobs in fact are created in that sector. The City of Winnipeg, I think, chose a wise path in trying to use the variable tax rate to ease the tax burden on these businesses, primarily with the purpose of retaining the jobs in this

sector and signalling to the small businesses of Winnipeg its encouragement of the job creation potential that they offered to all of us. It was a sensible and appropriate strategy, Mr. Speaker, and one would have expected the government to have supported this.

As the province reduces its support for the city, the city must find alternate sources for revenue, for welfare and for the expensive infrastructure of suburban expansion, the legacy of the former city councillors who now sit across the House. The minister has said that he has heard of outrageous increases of 200 percent. I think again he must only look to the policies of those former city councillors who now sit with him in the cabinet.

* (1440)

The city chose to reverse the policies of those former councillors who had permitted the business tax portion of the city budget to decline from its 1972 level of 10.6 percent of total revenue to approximately 5.9 percent of the 1990 revenues, this indeed during the period, at least some part of it, of economic growth for the city.

If the business sector had continued to contribute 10.6 percent of the city budget as it did in 1972, Winnipeg would have received \$24.6 million last year, a great deal more in revenue which might have gone some way to meeting the growing, unavoidable costs that are associated with economic decline and recession and to deal with the declining portion of provincial transfers.

So we support the principle of variable taxation rate in the transition period. We feel it is certainly a much fairer way of raising taxes in difficult times.

The minister has indicated, today and on other occasions, that he is prepared to look at other proposals from the city for a business tax system that would be acceptable to all types of businesses. The city has created a task force to deal with this which will present its findings to the minister.

I expect they will look at a number of alternatives to the flat tax system. Edmonton, for example, has had a reasonably acceptable system of five categories of taxation for some time now. Ontario uses a variable tax rate based on square footage. Beyond a certain square footage, the tax rate changes.

So there are a number of alternatives which I think we could look at. I hope the minister will indeed remain open to new ideas and proposals which

come from the city task force and from the small businesses of the Winnipeg community.

I particularly hope the minister will use the time that we now have to carefully examine the economic impact on Winnipeg's small businesses of the imposition of a flat tax rate, something which as far as I can tell the government has so far failed to do.

Mr. Speaker, with those hopes and expectations, we would like to see the bill now proceed to the committee stage. I look forward to hearing the views and presentations of the citizens of Winnipeg on this bill.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to recognizing the honourable member for St. James, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us this afternoon, Mr. Harry Harapiak, the former member for The Pas, and Mr. Leonard Harapiak, the former member for Swan River, who are accompanying their elderly aunt who is visiting from the Ukraine.

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

Committee Changes

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) for the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

* * *

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill 35 presently before the House in the unusual fashion that has been spoken of earlier by the government House leader (Mr. Manness), as well as by the Minister for Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst).

We, too, recognize that these are extreme circumstances. This is an unusual circumstance, it results from the unpredictability of the court action, and the ultimate result which, of course, put the City of Winnipeg in a very, very difficult position.

We also recognized that the City of Winnipeg's interpretation of the amendment act, the amendments which were brought in in 1989, appears to have been supported, perhaps not in the

legislation, but by indication from the provincial department in its interpretation; that is, the City of Winnipeg took the view that they had essentially a free hand with respect to whether or not to move to a uniform rate and how they would do that. They then moved from that position to in fact take really the best of both worlds.

They reassessed—the first time in 17 years—they got greatly increased rates and they then took those new assessments and applied it to the old variable rates. Now, my reading of the legislation which was passed in this House in 1989, and of course I was not the critic at the time, but I have read it in some detail leading up to this debate. My reading of it is that it is very clear that we are moving to a uniform rate with the City of Winnipeg.

That is the clear indication of that legislation. It provides for a transitional period during which the city will have the opportunity to alleviate increases, undue increases, for any period of time. There is no limit on how long the transitional provisions can be in place, but what is clear from that legislation is that we are going to end up with a uniform rate, and that is in fact what we have in the rest of the province, and that it seems to me was the decision made in that legislation.

Now, the City of Winnipeg did not see it that way. They took advice to that effect, and they ended up in the Court of Queen's Bench where Mr. Justice Hershfield decided in their favour and agreed that they did have a free hand and, in fact, to coin a term, could have their cake and eat it too.

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

They got to the Court of Appeal, and the Court of Appeal said, no. The Court of Appeal said the act is clear, they are moving towards a uniform rate. If they start they must finish the job. You cannot just take one part and one of the other, meld the two, and come up with what you want, the legislation says we are going to a uniform rate. If you assess and come up with new assessments, you have got to go the second mile and bring in a uniform rate. Mr. Acting Speaker, if indeed they did want to go to a uniform rate, they could and should have done that. They could and should have used the transitional provisions to alleviate any, as I say, undue increase in taxes in the short term, perhaps even the long term.

Mr. Acting Speaker, they have now come to us, they have come to the minister and they have said, no, we want some more time to consider whether or not we are moving to a uniform rate. It strikes me that the cow is out of the barn, but indeed that is what they want to do, and they are in a bit of a jam because they have \$44 million which is not legally collectible, even though they have already collected it, and they may have to pay it back. So they are in a bit of a bind.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I must say I am a little uneasy ratifying tax rolls for the City of Winnipeg. I have assessed those feelings because I want to respect their jurisdiction and I want to curtail my desire, perhaps, to be doing what they are doing at City Hall, making those decisions. We are provincial politicians and we must recognize that they have a job to do. Their job is levying business and property taxes and we do not want to unduly interfere regardless of what we feel about how they are actually doing their jobs.

I make no defence for the City of Winnipeg's decisions on this, nor do I make a defence or purport to for how they spend their money—the \$44 million they are going to collect. Whether or not I agree with how they do it or do not agree with it is not the issue. When I came to that conclusion, it was relatively a simple move to realize that they had a certain belief about this legislation. They were assured by some officials in the department that, yes, this was the intention and the Court of Appeal thought otherwise. Essentially, what we are doing here is we are going back and we are doing it the way that the city and the province thought they were doing it at the outset, and so that is a move that we can support at this time.

I am concerned and I look forward to comments tonight from some of the presenters and, perhaps, tomorrow morning about whether or not we need to do this for 1992. I note we are not only ratifying this year, we are ratifying next year's, and I understand the reason behind that is the city has embarked upon a committee. They are going to be looking to the business community for some further advice on whether to stick with the variable rate or move to a uniform rate or some combination therein. As I say, it has always struck me that that decision had been made, but the city believes they want to take some further time to consider it. In any event, I am sure there will be comments from presenters tonight on that issue.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the city has assured me and the minister has assured me that the successful litigants in this case will not be out of pocket. I think that is important. I do not say that we should forfeit our jurisdiction to not remedy this situation, I do not say that. We have a job to do and we are going to do that and let the City of Winnipeg do its work, but had we not got an agreement that the litigants, in this case the successful litigants, would not be out of pocket, the message that would have been sent would have been detrimental, in my view, to good order and justice in this province and that is, do not bother taking on City Hall, because even if you win, the province will just fix it up and you will lose. Not only will you not get the damage awards or your taxes back, but you will not even recuperate your legal costs.

* (1450)

That is the wrong message because in a democracy we want people to challenge us as legislators. We want people to challenge City Hall and determine whether or not we are within the law or not. That is the way it works. We want these litigants, even though we are taking away their win, in substance, not to be out of pocket. That is only fair.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am pleased to indicate that I have discussed this with the minister, I have discussed it with the mayor and received assurances on both fronts that the taxed solicitor-and-client costs of the litigants in this case will be paid by the city. Believe me, I realize that some of the counsel are expensive, but after tax I can tell you it is not going to be anything near the amount that they stand to lose as a result of the decision. -(interjection)- Well, the minister asked if the NDP supports that, I am not sure. It may have something to do with the counsel they use, and given that, I doubt it. In any event, the commitment has been given and I think it is a wise one and it is only fair.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I do want to raise the flag on some other issues in the proposed legislation, albeit we have only had a very few minutes to look at this final version. I want to thank the minister for his openness in this process and for giving us a briefing on Friday afternoon on the draft bill—and that is my colleague the member for Wolseley (Mrs. Friesen) and me. So I have had a chance to look at and understand the gist of this proposed legislation. I see that there have been some amendments

flowing from the discussions we had Friday afternoon, and I welcome those.

I do note that the regulation provisions still are very broad, and there will be some questions on that front. In particular, I flag for the minister (d) which indicates that within the purposes, there still is the opportunity for the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to make any regulations he considers necessary or advisable. I think that is pretty broad, especially given that, unusually, this is retroactive legislation. Now, retroactive legislation, the presumption is legislation goes from the day it is passed forward; retroactive legislation is a very unusual and quite drastic measure. It is not often that legislators bring in a law and say, by the way it is applied in the past as well as applying in the future.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker, that is an extreme power that we are granting, really, to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council in this case, to rectify the situation. We are going back to January 1, 1991, and essentially saying to all of the people who have lived under a set of rules, we are fixing it up not only for next year but we are retroactively fixing it for this year, and we are also reserving the right to make any further changes back to January 1, 1991. I recognize there are some limitations on that regulation-making power, but I simply draw to the minister's attention that I will have some questions flowing from that in the course of this.

Mr. Speaker, again let me reiterate that I believe, regardless of what one thinks about the Court of Appeal decision, they are the highest court in the land. I certainly, having read it, agree that their interpretation was the reasonable one. I, having looked at the legislation not knowing some of the prior discussions, have to say that it was pretty clear to me from that legislation that we are moving to a uniform rate.

I do look forward to the city reporting early on next year, hopefully, on what they want, because I think it is time they told us what they wanted and were clear and then stood to it. If they want a uniform rate, they will need no further amendments, because they will have to move to it in 1993. That is all we are doing. We are only changing for this year and for next year.

If they do not want a uniform rate and they want to go back to the variable rate, I think we are all prepared to listen to their arguments, because we

recognize the business community is split on this. The Canadian Federation of Independent Business wants to maintain a variable rate. Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce wants a uniform rate. It tends to have to do with what kind of businesses you represent. The bigger the businesses, generally, the less you want a variable rate; the more you want a flat rate.

Mr. Speaker, again, I do note that in the initial legislation, we put in a transitional provision which gave all kinds of leeway to put in a variable rate, in fact, for anything under 15 percent. We did that. The city is essentially asking to reconsider whether or not we should be moving to a uniform rate in the first place.

Mr. Speaker, for the time being, I and my party are certainly willing to allow them to do that assessment and have those committee hearings, but I do not join completely with the comments of my friend from Wolseley, who indicates that she believes that what the city has done and their procedures have been—and I am trying to remember her exact words—a sensible and rational approach.

I am not convinced of that, but I do recognize that they have the jurisdictional mandate to embark upon this process, and at least for the short term we should give them the leeway to do that.

I also note, of course, that the comments from the Member for Wolseley are consistent with the view that City Council is just functioning fine and dandy and everything is working just great. I do not agree; I do not think most Winnipeggers agree. In fact, we do look forward to some changes at City Hall, but certainly in this case, with respect to their taxation rights, we recognize their right to embark upon this process and give us, one would hope, early on in the new year, a final decision.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 35, The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hlckes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms.

Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) for Monday, December 16, 8 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

* * *

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): On a point of House Business, Mr. Speaker, just to make sure that everything has been done in accordance with the requirements: that the committee on Municipal Affairs will meet tonight at eight o'clock, by leave, and again tomorrow if necessary.

Mr. Speaker: That is what has been indicated by the government House leader (Mr. Manness), and the committee members will pick their hours tonight.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: The adjourned debate, seventh day of debate, on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in answer to his speech at the opening of this session, and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) in an amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose), who has 25 minutes remaining.

Mr. Bob Rose (Turtle Mountain): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to resume my remarks on the Throne Speech Debate and the proposed amendment by the Leader of the first opposition (Mr. Doer).

If I may just digress first for a moment in honour of our guests in the gallery, it is quite a comment on one family's contribution to service not only the community but to the province as well. I did not have the privilege of working with the Harapiak brothers in this House, but I have had the opportunity, in the last year and three months, to work with the current member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) and can say that about the only real thing I can really find wrong with her so far is that she is a bit misguided in her politics.

I hope that sometime in the future the province will take time to recognize the contribution made by this family. Perhaps that might take place at the next

provincial election when I am sure the—we will have a new member for Swan River. I had to get that little shot in there.

We were talking about the sledgehammer and chain saw approach of the opposition to our economy, the sledgehammers of high taxes and the chainsaws of unserviceable public debt. I think we had got to the point where we were commenting on a presentation by the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), whom we said, among other things, that he was pointing out to us as legislators, and in a larger sense, I guess, our citizens, the need to put aside occasionally ideology and thoroughly examine our advantages and disadvantages and our goals and our relationships. Interestingly, our political system, and I am sure we all support our democratic system, is confrontational. As individuals, most of us I think are not as hard-line as we might appear, but the inevitable contest of the next election dictates a confrontational style that if it does not prevent, it at least discourages a true exchange of ideas.

You will have concluded from the earlier part of my presentation that I am deeply and genuinely concerned with the mounting debt load in our society. I think back to the earlier part of this century when I am told—I am not that old, so I do not remember—but the original theory of the Social Credit in Alberta was that projects for the good of society like bridges, schools, hospitals, that kind of thing, should be financed by governments without interest charges.

* (1500)

A word of caution here to anyone who should accidentally read this in Hansard sometime in the future. This is not thoroughly researched, but the notion was at least that since money is created anyway, why not have at least long-term government assets financed without service charges, service charges which will double or triple the cost of that asset. It was dismissed at the time as lunacy—funny-money people they were called—and I suspect will be regarded now as an admission by the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) that he has no understanding of the monetary system.

I freely admit to that, but I also believe as the saying goes that I am standing at the end of a very long line, and maybe it is time a few more of us understood our monetary system. Certainly, in the

vast private sector so necessary for our economy, capital has a cost and must provide a return, but is that necessarily so for public sector hard assets? The biggest competitor for capital has become ourselves through government borrowing.

What would it do for our economy if that large pool of capital, and it is there, had to search for a return rather than wait for the next issue of savings bonds? Totally off the wall, perhaps, but when we have a generally affluent society steadily loading our descendants with obscene financial burdens, and when we have what should be a respected national leader like the leader of PSAC describing a desire to work in an obscene manner, then as I said earlier, it is time to examine our institutions together.

On to a topic I know something about, Mr. Speaker. There has been a great deal of debate in the last 15 months since the election about our farm economy. During the campaign, there was a great deal said about the need for safety nets. Anyone who thinks the present situation is something that occurred suddenly and only in the last couple of years has not been connected with agriculture. There has been massive federal government support through various programs for some time as well as, more laterally, provincial support.

The problem with these so-called ad hoc programs was that they were a response after the fact with no predictability whatsoever and no program to smooth out the highs and the lows of farm income. Only those people with short memories and those agricultural people with the shortest of memories will have forgotten the drought relief program, for example, an administrative nightmare with some areas with no drought demanding part of the largesse and fields that yielded well receiving payments and fields across the road with no crop and no payments.

The GRIP and NISA programs were not something devised in a hurry, but programs that were developed from ideas put forth years ago. These ideas came from four basic principles. Number one, farmers generally preferred to make a living from the marketplace. I say generally because like any segment of society there are a few who think otherwise. The second principle was a recognition by farmers, generally, that price times yield protection should be specific, like any insurance program, to individuals not to areas or crops. The third principle was generally the recognition of the need for a program to smooth out the highs and

lows. The fourth, recognition that individual farmers cannot compete with the treasuries of big countries.

Hence was developed the three lines of defence to the threat to our agricultural economy. The first line, the marketplace. Incentives are still very much in place for individual farmers to produce for profit. The second line is the GRIP, an insurance program, farm specific, that guarantees a level of return regardless of price or yield known well before spring planting; and NISA, an investment program that allows producers to contribute to their own personal account, with matching government contributions, building up their own fund to draw upon when needed or upon retirement. The third line of defence was a commitment by the federal government to provide further assistance should it be required. It was this third line of defence that the farm rallies were all about, not inadequacies in the GRIP or NISA programs. We should mention, and I suppose this is in recognition of the furiously independent farmer, participation in both these programs is entirely voluntary, unlike programs such as unemployment insurance.

Mr. Speaker, I take no credit for the development of this entirely new and I think effective approach to our very important farm economy. My contribution was simply constant lobbying and encouragement during the difficult negotiations between several governments and farm groups. I am proud to say that a year ago we had no insurance program regardless of price or yield and now we do. We did not have an investment program to smooth out the highs and the lows and now we do. We had no promise of a third line of defence and now we do. I am proud to be part of a government of action that has moved to substantially address, on a long-term basis, these substantial problems in agriculture.

It is not difficult to find critics of these programs. Indeed we hear them regularly in this Chamber. Obviously, like my new garage at home that I was referring to earlier that I built without total success, these programs are not without fault. I would like to hear some constructive ideas from the official opposition for a change instead of trotting out that old pleasant sounding cost of production. That is the same pleasant sounding one as tax the corporations, solve all our problems.

Whose production costs, I ask, will we guarantee? The beginning farmer who may have a \$50 per acre interest charge before he ever picks up a grease gun or the established farmer who owns his land and has

no interest charge. Will the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) let me have a big combine to harvest my crop in 10 days or will I get a smaller one that will take 20 or 30 days to do the same job? Will I get to use liquid fertilizer which is more convenient but more expensive or will my cost of production only allow for the less expensive forms of fertilizer which may not be available in my own area? Will his environmental critic let me use fertilizer at all or will we solve all our global problems with mass starvation? Will the honourable member for Dauphin—how will he approach my weed control? Will we use the costs of the general cheaper pre-emerge chemicals or will we use the more expensive post-emerge? Can I have a new truck to haul my grain to market on a regular basis because I happen to live a little further away from my markets than some of my neighbours?

Mr. Speaker, the list goes on. If cost of production is based on the smaller, and not necessarily through any fault of their own, less efficient producer, then the more efficient will grow fat and sassy on government subsidies gobbling up the less efficient. If it is based on something less than the cost of production of that small less efficient group, are we to presume that the NDP consider them unworthy of saving?

The honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) admitted he does not fully understand the intricacies of farm programs. I admire and encourage that kind of candor from politicians. Perhaps it is what encouraged me to take a flyer into the monetary system a few moments ago. I do hope though that he does not rely too heavily on his Agriculture critic to gain an understanding. I would urge all honourable members and our citizens as well to regard with suspicion the honourable member for Dauphin's (Mr. Plohman) instant answers for producers teetering on bankruptcy.

As I said earlier, the farm crisis is not new. I know from personal experience and from experience through our farm supply outlet and from the surge of business for the debt review boards during the mid-'80s that many a good and honest producer is not there any more, not necessarily going through bankruptcy but the equally gut-wrenching shutting down of the family farm. The actions of our provincial government at the time are hard to comment upon because there were none. Sledgehammers and chain saws can be effective too even when they are quiet.

Mr. Speaker, some honourable members in their comments on the throne speech make remarks about what is not in the throne speech. I would also point out that there is something else that is not in the throne speech and that is the sledgehammer of high taxes and the chain saws of increased and unserviceable debt, the ones that make a lot of noise, that make the headlines, but instead we have in the throne speech the building tools, the tools that take of the builder and the tools that take time and the co-operation, the inspiration and the involvement of every citizen of our province.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the constituents of Turtle Mountain I wish to all honourable members and their constituents the compliments of the season. Many of you will be making travel plans, and I hope these plans include parts of Manitoba you or your families have not seen, particularly Turtle Mountain. We do have a province to be proud of, to be part of and to enjoy. If you can come to Turtle Mountain, you can enjoy our parks and our countryside in both winter and summer, our lakes, our scenic valleys, our golf courses, our celebrations. If you get close enough to Bunclody, I will even show you my new garage.

Thank you very much.

* (1510)

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): I would like to take this opportunity to put my comments about the throne speech on the record. To begin with, Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome you back as Speaker. We have seen some changes in the Question Period process and you have provided us with some new restrictions. I am sure that there will be many challenges, but I am sure you will call us to order when we get beyond your rules.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to welcome the pages to their new job, and I hope they enjoy their new experience here in the Legislature. I hope that when the decorum gets out of hand they will not be too discouraged.

I would also like to thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my other colleagues here today for allowing me the opportunity to speak on this particular day, because today is a very special day for me and for friends and relatives of the Harapiak family.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words in Ukrainian, a copy of which I will provide for Hansard. I will also say that my Ukrainian is not perfect, but I

hope that those who understand the language will bear with my errors.

(Ukrainian spoken)

(Translation)

My ancestors came to this country in 1902. My grandfather, John Harapiak, came first. He left the Ukraine because there was very little land. Land was controlled by wealth. Two other brothers, Wasyl and Harry, came and others would have come but war broke out, making it impossible.

Throughout the years my parents wrote and kept contact with one relative in particular. Two years ago my brothers, Harry and Leonard, and my father travelled to the Ukraine to meet that family member, Tata Marka Harapiak. Today she joins us in the galley with my husband and my brothers. Welcome to Canada, Tata Marka.

A few weeks ago, the people of the Ukraine voted overwhelmingly for independence. We were very pleased with the vote for independence and congratulate the government for moving so quickly to recognize the Ukraine. Although I am very pleased with this vote, things are progressing very quickly and there is much uncertainty. We hope that everyone can cope with this rapid change. We know there will be difficulties because the Ukraine is very wealthy in resources and others do not want to let it go. We all hope this can happen without bloodshed.

(English)

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the Ukraine and other countries that are seeking independence at this time are going to go through difficult times, but since Canada has been amongst the first to recognize this independence, I hope that we will have the fortitude and the strength to stand behind our commitment to this country. We recognize that they have voted for independence and it is what we want for this country, but we know that they are going to face many difficulties.

We know that they are going to have an impact on us as a country as well, Mr. Speaker. Just this last weekend we heard that the Canadian grain sale may be impacted on, and if that grain sale is put into difficulty, we, the farmers of Canada and Manitoba will suffer. We are told that there could be shortages of fuel, and in fact when my aunt was coming we were not sure that there was going to be enough fuel for the planes to leave. There is word of hunger in those countries. There are many difficulties that we must stand behind them on. The difficulty of what

will happen to nuclear arms in those countries is also a concern to all of us.

(Ukrainian spoken)

(Translation)

To my Aunt Tata, I hope she can take back the memory of this Legislature and tell others that she has seen democracy in action. We hope their democratic system will work as ours.

(English)

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me those few words.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to now comment on the throne speech as it relates to my constituency and my critic area. The Speech from the Throne was very disappointing both to me as an MLA, a critic for Rural Development and a farmer, as I feel that there was nothing new, no new initiatives to help the rural community, just a lot of rehash of old ideas. I am disappointed that the government has decided to leave everything, every effort of stimulating the economy, in the hands of the private sector.

This government has a fixation with the deficit, and is making no effort to stimulate the economy. If you really believe in the ruraleconomy, I believe that the government must show some leadership, and at this point we have not had it.

Government must be prepared to invest. Government must be prepared to create jobs and give the people the opportunity to work. There is a role for a private sector, we do not deny that at all, but government also has to have responsibility and show leadership.

When I first commented on the Speech from the Throne I said that I was very disappointed, but there are a few positive things that this government has done and I would like to comment on those. First of all, the Rural Development Bonds, which I was very skeptical about, I want to congratulate the community of Morden for the first success story. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) must be very pleased about that success story, and the jobs that will be in his community.

I am pleased that the government has followed the Saskatchewan example and negotiated an RRSP credit into the bonds. Hopefully, this will encourage more people to invest. I still feel that there should be some guarantee of interest on these bonds to encourage more investment. I have talked to many people in the communities, for as you know

or may not know, we have done a round of meetings across the province, meeting with people, talking about different issues. I have to say that although people have some interest in the bonds, they are very skeptical about them as well. The real reason they are skeptical, Mr. Speaker, is there is no money or very little money in the rural communities right now.

If the government would take the initiative to stimulate that economy, get some jobs into the rural community, then there would be more money to invest, and that is really what we need—more money, more jobs, and then people will invest, and of course, there is a spinoff effect from that. However, even with rural development bonds, the government has a responsibility to show support and leadership. I am very disappointed that the government has chosen to just about cut out the Department of Co-operative Development. Here is an area where we could have people who could do planning, offer services to the people who are going to perhaps invest in these rural bonds. On the one hand, they want people to invest in bonds and into their own community, but they have taken away the tools through the co-op development department. I feel that is a mistake on this government's part.

* (1520)

Mr. Speaker, another area that I would like to commend the government on is the review of crop insurance, particularly now, at a time when there is so much more happening through crop insurance, and that is the GRIP program. All of the details are relevant to GRIP and people have raised many, many concerns with the data in the crop insurance that is being used, and I feel that it must be reviewed. One area that is a concern is that farmers who have had losses several years, a couple of years in a row through no fault of their own, are being penalized in crop insurance and their rate goes down and that must be addressed.

The one area that I have concern with crop insurance, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that crop insurance agents are now being asked to take a cut in pay. I do not understand why this government is allowing the corporation to go ahead in this direction when they are doing a review. Would it not have made more sense to have reviewed the job of the crop adjusters and the agents at the same time as they were reviewing the whole package of crop insurance? Why is one being split out from the other? That leads us to be suspicious of the motives

behind this cut in salary and per diems for the crop adjusters.

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

Madam Deputy Speaker, I recently had the honour of attending the sod-turning ceremony for the future Swan River Personal Care Home, and I want to commend the government for going forward with this project. I served on the Swan River Hospital Board about eight years ago, and at that time, we were just starting to deal with the personal care home and plans were well underway; however, there were many difficulties within the community. People in the communities could not decide where they wanted the beds. -(interjection)- If the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) would listen to what I am saying, I am trying to pay him a compliment. He chooses to make fun of the former member for Swan River, and I would rather he did not do that while I am speaking.

I served on the Swan River Hospital Board, as I said, and it was because the rural people had a dispute over where the beds should be that the beds could not go forward. In fact, there are some very hard feelings at the present time about where the beds are, the beds at Benito and the ones in Swan River, but we as a community have put those behind us, and we are very happy to see that there is going to be the additional beds in Swan River because they are very much needed.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Swan River constituency is based on forestry and agriculture. Those are our two main industries. The constituency and the people in the constituency are suffering very badly, first of all, because of the agricultural economy—that has been mentioned many times here, the low prices of grain.

There is one issue I feel I must put on the record and that is the GRIP program. We have attended a series of meetings across the province and in the Swan River area, and there is a concern with GRIP. This government must listen to the people and address those concerns. People are not happy with the formula. They have told government time and time again that the GRIP program must be either scrapped or revamped so farmers can get the cost of production.

Now I hear members across the way saying, what is the cost of production; on whose cost of production. The Department of Agriculture has

many times worked out the cost of production for all commodities. There is the cost of production. People in the dairy industry have cost of production, and nobody asks them whether their cost of production is going to be based on how much they pay for a cow. Why does it have to be based for a grain producer on how much they pay for a combine? There are figures that the government can come up with if they are committed to the cost of production.

At the meeting in Swan River when we were reviewing GRIP the farmers' representative Owen McAuley was there. He was asked whether he would take the farmers' words and messages into consideration or whether he was just there for show. He said if the farmers wanted cost of production, if that was the message he was really getting then he would take that message to government.

I hope the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) will meet with Owen McAuley and talk about these things, because that is the message people are giving him right across the province. They want cost of production. They are also prepared to look at capping, at the amount of money that goes to each farm instead of having it open-ended. Farmers are seeing that this is another way of doing things. I hope the minister will talk to Owen McAuley and take seriously what farmers are saying.

One area I was disappointed in, in the throne speech, was the fact that there was nothing to address foreclosures of farm land, to slow down the foreclosures of farm land. The Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) talked about New Democrats not wanting the public to own anything, that our agenda is for government to own everything. I wonder what the Minister of Housing would feel about bank ownership.

We have hundreds and hundreds of acres of farm land now being owned by banks. Is that better? I think we have to look at who is owning the land and what we can do to have the land stay in the farmers' hands. What is it we can do to help farmers keep their home quarters, because if we really do believe in the rural community, if there is any commitment from this government to the rural community they will take some action to keep farmers on the land, to keep farmers working.

Every time one of those farmers leaves the land, Madam Deputy Speaker, it impacts on our towns, in our businesses, our schools, and our health care

systems, everything in the rural community. This government is not taking action to keep farmers on the land. They are not taking any action to stimulate our rural communities, to create jobs, to help us keep our young people on the land, and to keep our young people in small communities.

Many of our young people are off to Alberta to work right now. In fact, our son is one of those people. I would very much like to see jobs in Manitoba, not only for my son, but for many of the young people who would rather be here in Manitoba than in other provinces. Once they leave this province, Madam Deputy Speaker, and put their roots down somewhere else, it is very, very difficult to get them to come back.

As I said, the forestry industry is very important to the Swan River constituency, and I am just absolutely disappointed in this government's position on the Repap deal. Imagine, coming out and dining and serving a fancy lunch to the people of Swan River and those in the forestry industry and say, hey, you are going to have it made, 250 jobs in Swan River. Your economy is just going to be growing like crazy. That was two and a half years ago, and what do we have now? We have close to a hundred people now laid off in the forestry industry. We do not know whether they are going back to work in the new year. We have no jobs. We have no permanent chipper. We have no service centre. What we have is Repap with a broken deal and this government not prepared to do anything with Repap.

* (1530)

If this government was committed to the people of Swan River and to the people of The Pas, they would proceed with the environmental hearings. Automatically, they are going to say, oh, there are members of your caucus that do not want the environmental hearing. Proceed with the environmental hearing. Let us know what the results are. Let the people of the Swan River area and The Pas get on with their lives.

We, on this side of the House, are not preventing the environmental hearing from happening. It is in your hands. You have the power. What is happening, Madam Deputy Speaker, is Repap is being allowed to hide behind this deal. We know that the people who are doing some of the consulting have been told not to proceed too quickly, because they do not want the environmental hearings to go

ahead. This government will not push for the hearings, because they have no commitment to the forestry industry or to the people of Swan River or The Pas.

The other people who are very concerned, Madam Deputy Speaker, are the small quota holders. I have written to the minister with regard to this, because small quota holders must cut their wood every two years in order to hold their quota. Some of the quota holders could not cut their quota last year. Now the forestry industry is going to be shut down again. Are they going to be able to cut their quota? What is the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) doing to protect these people who could lose their quotas? Is this government at least a little bit concerned about this group of people?

Madam Deputy Speaker, they tell farmers—this Conservative government, both federally and provincially—that they should take a secondary job to keep their farms going. As much as I disagree with that, I think farmers should be able to make a living at one job just like everybody else does. They tell us we should take a secondary job, and then they take our secondary jobs away. Those jobs in the forestry are the secondary jobs of farmers.

An Honourable Member: They need them.

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, they need those jobs to pay their bills, to pay their taxes.

Madam Deputy Speaker, another major issue in the Swan River area is the co-management of resources. I have written to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) with regard to a meeting that was held in Swan River by the Canadian Institute of Foresters who expected about 35 people at the meeting, but because one of their agenda items was co-management, over 300 people came to that meeting.

People want to know what this government's agenda is on co-management. When will co-management happen? Who will be involved? What resources are going to be involved in co-management?

This letter went to the Minister of Natural Resources well over two weeks ago and, to date, we have not had a response from him. We have seen good examples of co-management. We have seen success stories, and I think the government has to be open and honest to discuss this issue. Are they planning to proceed? I would encourage the

minister and his staff to come to the Swan River area and talk about this issue, tell us what is going on because, Madam Deputy Speaker, when there is lack of information or misinformation in the community, it only leads to hard feelings, and this is something that the government has a responsibility of addressing.

Madam Deputy Speaker, transportation is a very important issue here in Manitoba. Manitoba has been known as the hub of transportation for Canada. I wonder why this government never chose to say anything about transportation. Is it because they would rather not speak about it, they are skeptical about what is going to happen with transportation? Why is this government participating in a series of 29, I believe, meetings on the method of payment across the province when the real crisis in rural Manitoba is the farm economy? Why are they putting all this time and energy into talking about the method of payment? Is it because this government has a plan or is prepared to change the method of payment? Is the government going forward with that?

We also have no mention in the throne speech of the Port of Churchill, Madam Deputy Speaker. At the municipal convention in Brandon just recently, two resolutions were passed unanimously by the convention, and one of them was introduced by the City of Brandon, the City of Brandon standing up for the people of Churchill. Well, I wish this government would stand up for the people of Churchill. I see the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) thinks this is a joke. The Port of Churchill can play a—

Point of Order

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would hope the member would not want to leave that on the record that I think it is a joke. She said, I wish the government would stand up for Churchill and I, in fact, did.

An Honourable Member: Yeah, I bet you did.

Mr. Downey: Yes, Madam Deputy Speaker, I take it very seriously, and I would hope she would correct the record in leaving misinterpretation on the record.

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

* * *

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Deputy Speaker, the Port of Churchill can play an important role in the economy of Manitoba and of western Canada, but somebody in government must show some leadership and that is not happening at the present time.

I would at this time like to commend the people of Churchill for the tremendous work they have done. They have travelled to Russia. They have travelled across the country promoting their port and trying to encourage people to use the port. I had the opportunity to visit Churchill this summer and was very impressed at the capabilities of this port to handle grain, but we need some commitment from this government.

Another issue that is important for rural Manitobans is rural daycare. The Women's Institute has made many recommendations to this government on how we could implement daycare into rural Manitoba, to rural Canada. They are very concerned, as are all farm families, about the safety of our children during times of seasonal employment, during harvest and during seeding when both partners are required to participate in the farm operations. Because of low income most farm families cannot afford to hire help, and both partners must be involved in the operation.

Alberta has taken the initiative, Madam Deputy Speaker, and invested \$75,000 into nine new projects to look at different ways of dealing with daycare in the rural area. I would hope this government would look at the initiative taken by Alberta and look at investing some money into our rural communities for the safety of our children.

There are many aboriginal people in my constituency. These aboriginal people are waiting for the government to take action on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report. There are many recommendations which other members have raised that can be implemented very quickly and without too much cost to government. I would hope government would take those initiatives and start to take some serious action in implementing some of those recommendations.

One of the points the government made in the throne speech was that they were not going to increase personal income tax. Granted, they have not increased personal income tax. They have taxed us through the back door through the GFT in more

ways than one. -(interjection)- They have taxed us through the Gary Filmon tax, through the back door.

I would like to give you a couple of examples of what this tax is doing to us and what it is costing us. This last year we had the offloading of roads onto municipalities. I checked within the department and they tell us that a kilometre of PR road to maintain is about \$2,000. That is the cost the department uses.

When you figure out then if the cost is \$2,000 per kilometre and the R.M. of Swan River had to pick up 40 kilometres that is \$80,000. The population of the R.M. is 3,227 by last statistics. That could be perhaps a little lower now with people leaving the land and having to move away. There may be less people there. That comes out to \$24.79 per person. For an average family household of four, that is \$99.16 per household. We have not increased our personal income tax, Madam Deputy Speaker, but we have been taxed through the back door by this government.

An Honourable Member: Offloading.

* (1540)

Ms. Wowchuk: Offloading.

LGD of Mountain, the cost will be \$26.46 per person in the LGD, well over \$100 for a family of four.

Let us not believe that this government is—they may not be increasing personal income tax, but I think perhaps that is something this government should look at. Maybe we should be looking at a fairer tax system, a fairer personal income tax system, where those who have the ability to pay can pay a fairer share, those who make money can pay a fairer share and cover the cost rather than taxing through the back door, as this government is choosing to do.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to touch on the right to farm legislation. I am anxiously awaiting to see what this legislation is going to mean. Is it going to mean that farmers are going to have to protect the land more? What is it going to mean?

I believe the land has been given to us and there is only so much land for us to use. We have the responsibility of protecting that land for future generations. We cannot abuse the land. If this government is prepared to look at protecting the land and having it there for future generations, that would be good legislation. I have to say that I am

very anxiously awaiting the wording of this legislation.

Is this right to farm going to protect farmers so they can continue to farm? Is it going to protect the home quarter so bankers do not become owners of all the land? What is this legislation going to do? As I say, we have to also protect the land for Manitobans, and we have to be sure that The Family Farm Protection Act is not weakened so foreigners can own more of our land.

An Honourable Member: Where does your family come from?

Ms. Wowchuk: The member across the way asked me where my family came from, Madam Deputy Speaker. I think I made it quite clear to him earlier in the session that my family came from the Ukraine. They came to Canada so they could have land to farm on. Our ancestors want to continue to farm.

Madam Deputy Speaker, education is important to all of us. If our children are to grow, if our children are to participate in changes in society and in new jobs, they must have the opportunity to get a good education. They should have that same opportunity in the rural areas as they do in the urban areas.

This government, again, told us that they were not going to increase taxes, but what they have done is offloaded costs of education. Within the town of Swan River, the average education tax has increased by about \$30 per household; within the village of Winnipegosis, the taxes have increased some \$24 per home and that is an average. -(interjection)- A combination of both.

The member across the way talks about removal of taxes off farmers. Well, I would like to tell him that in our series of meetings across the province there is a real concern about what this government has done with farm taxes.

We were told, the recommendation was, that the tax would go onto farm homes. It has now gone onto all farm buildings. Farmers are feeling that they are doubly taxed because the local levy can go on the land as well as on the buildings.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there are many other issues that I would like to raise; however, I realize my time is getting very short. I would like to take this opportunity to say that as we come into this time of celebration, as we prepare for the holiday season, let us each take the time to reflect on our good fortunes and to give consideration to the many in

this province who are less fortunate than us, as I say, in this province and throughout Canada.

It is my hope that we, in this Chamber, can all work together to raise the quality of life both in the urban centres and in the rural centres, so that those less fortunate than us may have the ability to better themselves. It is my hope that as we gather during the next holiday season, they will have had the opportunity to work, the opportunity for a better life.

To each of you, I would like to wish a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday. To those of you of Ukrainian background and to my aunt who is in the gallery, I would like to say *Veselykh Svyat i Mnohaya Leta* (Happy Holidays and a Long Life).

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to rise to respond to the Speech from the Throne. I applied two tests to this speech, the first one, perhaps not a particularly accurate one, but the weight test. This Speech from the Throne is the lightest of any Speech from the Throne in my tenure in this House.

Given that there are a certain amount and number of pages that have to be dedicated to general comments in every Speech from the Throne, the fact is, on the weight test alone, the substance in this speech is woefully inadequate for the times, indeed reflects a feeling from the government's ranks apparently that everything is on the rise, we are living in essentially nirvana.

There is nothing in this speech which addresses the problems this province is facing in reality. It is an unreal Speech from the Throne, and in many respects, speaks more about this government by what it does not say than what it does say.

The second test I applied was actually to listen to it in the first instance and read it, and read it I did. As I say, the standard comments that are in every Speech from the Throne were there, and that was a number of pages. What I was disconcerted to find was that when it came to the alleged substance in the speech, indeed, it was the same drivel.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there is nothing in this Speech from the Throne that recognizes what Manitobans are really going through today in this province. There is nothing which would give them hope for the future for themselves and for their children, for prosperity in the coming year which we all hope for. It is indeed a pathetic effort at leadership in this province.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to speak then as much on what is in and not in the Speech from the Throne as about what I envisage and what my party envisages as an agenda for the future. That is indeed, of course, what is left. There is really not much to comment on. You kind of have to fall back, and in order to say something constructive come up with your own agenda. We, of course, in this party and in the other party wish that we were leading the province. We wish that, but we also recognize that the government is the government, and they do have that responsibility, but increasingly by default they are not governing this province. They are not showing leadership.

The people of this province are desperately, and I say that in all candour and honesty, desperately, and I believe that is the case in every member's constituency in this House, looking for some hope for this province and for this country and some reason to look to their children and say and think that their children might have a reason to stay in this province. We are all looking for that, all of us.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

* (1550)

The members from rural Manitoba in particular, of course, are looking for some hope that people will stay in the rural communities, that is true. Province wide, we are looking for reasons for people to stay in this province. We are looking for some hope for the future for our children, not just on the farm communities which, of course, we all understand, but for this province generally, Mr. Speaker. It is about time somebody on that side of the House got up and understood that it takes leadership which is not there federally. We all agree in that. This party has divorced itself from its federal cousins already or attempted to on many fronts, but it does take leadership at some level. That is not there and it is about time somebody came up with that type of agenda.

It is not even whether or not we agree with the ideas that are put forward. That would be nice. It would be nice to have some ideas to debate. There are no ideas. They are just not there, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, specifically let me deal with some of the comments which this government is staking, in the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) words, his political reputation on—the economy. He talks about the Tory agenda for economic growth and development in this province, and let me go through a couple of

the things he says. He starts by saying, "My government has identified Manitoba's competitive ability as a key to economic recovery and growth." True. "To this end, a new Economic Development Board of Cabinet has been created . . ." He goes on—more, wait. I mean, you may have thought that was the only initiative, and for many on that side that may have been enough. That is quite a zinger.

The other is, "The Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism will also be restructured . . ." I am astounded. Now, there is one we can really sink our teeth into, Mr. Speaker. Then he goes on, "In addition, my ministers will bring forward legislation to restructure the Manitoba Research Council into the Manitoba Economic Innovation and Technology Council."

That certainly gives comfort to the massive numbers who are at Winnipeg Harvest at the food bank. Boy, that is a big one. They are going to see a result from that by the end of the year, I can tell. Then he goes on to state: This is part of the overall approach.

Well, as a culminating group, that is some agenda. They are going to do some restructuring, set up some new committees. That is the economic approach of this Premier (Mr. Filmon) that he is staking his political future on.

Mr. Speaker, without exception, the initiatives which are listed here, and I do not want to downplay that some of them are extremely important and valuable. I note the Grow Bonds is an idea that is reiterated. I note that there is a Rural Economic Development Initiative program. I note that there is an agreement on municipal water structure, Community Choices initiative. There is not one of those that we did not know of before. These are all rehashing the same agenda, the same initiatives that we have had in the past. There is nothing new. What I read from this is that there really was not much to say, so they had to go back and rehash this.

I had occasion to speak to at least one of the members on the opposite side. He was not a cabinet minister. I will not name him because it may be embarrassing. I essentially asked if he had written this speech on the way in that day from—dictated it in his car, and he agreed. I think there are some members on the other side who themselves are recognizing that this is a pathetic excuse for a Speech from the Throne in these economic times. I

do have some hope for the individuals, but I think it is time they spoke up in their own caucus ranks.

Mr. Speaker, I note that in Urban Affairs there is an indication that—well, actually there is not an indication in the Speech from the Throne, but there has been an indication from the minister that we are going to get a new Core Area Initiative at some point or some form thereof. I had the pleasure of attending some discussions recently with the Urban Futures Group, a meeting with Mr. Simms and others. They have illustrated to me and documented for me the pathetic—again, I use that word—lack of consultation with the community on what is going to happen to our core. In the Phase III, there is no consultation at all. There is no plan that when money comes forward there will be consultation with the community. Essentially, this is going to be a fund which is going to be politically directed, and that is inconsistent with what we have done in the past with our tripartite agreements dealing with the core in this city.

It is a step backward in terms of the process we have developed which, I believe, is a model for other communities in this country, around the world. It is a step backward if we are going to take this behind doors to be politically motivated. I fear that consistent with this government's actions in the past that is where we are going. I point most notably, of course, to the Child and Family Services agencies, which recently had the withdrawal of community participation, turning it into a centralized bureaucracy more directly in the hands of the political masters of the day. I note that the Minister of Justice took the federal victims tariff, refused to put it under the Victims Assistance Committee and yet kept it in his own office for his own uses. He wants to have control of those funds—unlimited, unfettered control.

That is the pattern this government has shown. It is a fear of community participation. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because they fear having alternative views come forward, competing concerns come to the fore. This is a government that has used its majority, and would have used the minority if they had been allowed, but has used the majority since coming into power to consistently eradicate people's input into their decisions. They have gone out of their way, when given the opportunity, to centralize power in the hands again of the political masters. So it really is not a surprise that this new core initiative is likely to have a process which does

not reflect community consultation, either at the outset before it comes into place or when it is being worked out and the money is actually being spent. It is disappointing.

One thing I did forget to mention, and I found this particularly humorous, was the heading on that portion of the speech. I think it does bear repeating. I have not heard other speakers point it out. The heading is: Creative and new approaches to economic growth. Mr. Speaker, that is some kind of a sick joke. There is not a creative idea in here, let alone new. I would settle for new. Creative, I think we could debate about. New would be nice. There is neither.

Mr. Speaker, on the environmental front—and I have the pleasure of being the critic in my party of the Department of Environment—there is an indication, albeit briefly, that there is going to be some movement on the various fronts that the government has already moved on. There is nothing new again, but there is an indication they are going to be moving towards the waste reduction program, the agenda of getting to 50 percent before the end of the century.

We all know how serious they are about that, given the show of wastage last week in this House. I agree it was a small point. It was but one annual report, but it is an indication of where this government's priorities are, where their thinking is. Had they caught it, I am sure they would have done it differently, as the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Ms. Mitchelson) pointed out, but they did not catch it. Do you know why? Because they are not really watching. They are not really concerned about minimizing waste. They are concerned about getting a nice press conference and getting nice coverage on the agenda. When push comes to shove, they do not take care of their own administration. They are not trying to cut waste in their own administration, they are talking about it. Anybody can talk about it.

With respect to the environmental initiatives I have put forward and will put forward in this session, I look forward to some co-operation from members opposite. I know they have partisan concerns, obviously, but there are times when parties have come around to supporting good ideas. I look forward to some co-operation from members opposite. I know they have partisan concerns, obviously, but there are times when parties have come around to supporting good ideas, and I look

forward to some support on my initiatives. I think they are common sense. As I have said earlier, when I introduced those bills, they have received a fair amount of support in the community. I think they are a minimal attempt to strengthen The Environment Act in the case of the mandatory environmental assessments and community participation for Level 3 projects.

* (1600)

With respect to the legislation protecting whistle blowers, I note that the New Democratic Party has belatedly come forward with that same idea couched in the Environmental Bill of Rights. I assume that with the Liberal Party having had that proposal on the books for many, many months that they can only support our agenda and our bill, and I look forward to their support.

With respect to the government, again it does make sense, I suggest, that in cases like this where it is natural for someone to fear for their employment relationship if they speak up against the interest, perhaps, of their employer that they be given protection. We have it in place for Workplace Safety and Health. It only makes sense that we extend that to those blowing the whistle on environmental damage.

Mr. Speaker, it does not cost a cent. That is an idea that can protect workers around this province, encourage them to come forward with knowledge that they have about environmental degradation, and it does not cost us anything. It simply means that the law we have already decided on and we have already put in place is going to be better enforced. What more could we want? It is an effort to help the province enforce the legislation we already have in place. There can be no argument against that type of protection with any merit from the government benches, and I look forward to them coming to that recognition in a nonpartisan way for the betterment of environmental protection in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we have also put forward The Beverage Container Act. We have now been through many, many years of a—and I remember when the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) was the Minister of Environment, and I remember him coming forward with those nice little cardboard bins to pick up the tin cans, and we all wanted the recycling strategy of the Manitoba Soft Drink Recyclers to work.

Well, time has gone on, a few years have gone by, and I think even the member for Portage la Prairie, were he still in the position of Minister of Environment, would be coming to the conclusion pretty quickly that we are just not reaching the level of return that we should. We look at other provinces with deposit systems, they are getting 80 percent, 90 percent. We are still down around 50. It is just not working.

The member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) indicates that even Alberta is working. Alberta, I hear, is working quite well in its recycling. As much as we would like people of their own initiative to come forward, think about the environment and recycle these things, the truth is when you attach a dime to it, it tends to work better. You know, maybe we would like it to be the other way around, but that is reality and boy, if anybody should understand that, the profit motive, it would be the Conservatives. Is it not time that we tied a bit of a profit motive to recycling, and what is wrong with that if it works? I look forward to the government supporting that initiative because it is high time we took it.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the aboriginal concerns, I am no longer the critic for Native Affairs, but I have a continuing interest, and I did note the restatement of the task force indication that the government supported the inherent right to aboriginal self-government. We, of course, do the same. We are glad, very glad, that the government has taken that stand. I congratulate them for taking that stand on the task force report. It is nice to see it reiterated in the Speech from the Throne, but in terms of achieving any of the stated agenda of this government on aboriginal reform, on really getting down to brass tacks and actually improving the lives of Natives in this province through increasing their control over their own lives, it is not there, Mr. Speaker. There is nothing there. The Aboriginal Justice report took three years and \$3 million and this minister stood up month after month, session after session singing the praises of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry and giving them the leeway and the appropriate financial support. We, of course, supported them and were glad that they were taking that kind of initiative and that time and sensitivity.

My friend the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) reminds me of the Urban Native Strategy—what Urban Native Strategy, Mr. Speaker? The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, of course, was established under the former administration

and this minister, of course, before he had the report, before he knew what it said, and before had to do anything, he was a big fan. He thought, these guys are doing a great job. Let them do it. That was before he had seen a word. It was easy to say that. It is easy to throw a few bucks and buy some time before push comes to shove and you actually have to do something.

He got the report and he kept it for a month and it was the most enlightening illustration of what this minister is all about, the day he released the report. He did not have anything to say. He came forward and handed out the report and he should have stopped there because everything he said after that was nothing but short of comical. He did not have one thing to say about that report. He could not even say that he was going to be establishing the aboriginal justice commission recommended therein, which would not have required a commitment to any of the recommendations, simply to a procedure of assessment and implementation. He did not even take that step, Mr. Speaker.

This report, it is increasingly clear, is inching its way in the minister's office, closer and closer to either the garbage but preferably for him probably the paper shredder. This minister has no intention, no real intention—it has become abundantly apparent—of moving on this report.

Sure, many of the recommendations are dramatic and would we have it otherwise? I suggest not, Mr. Speaker. We wanted it to be dramatic. We wanted it to challenge us. This minister said so himself. We wanted it to push our thinking further than it had ever gone before on aboriginal issues—challenge us, like the Berger report did so many years ago; change the way we thought and the country was watching us. It was an opportunity for Manitoba to lead and for this minister to show that he had some real desire to do something on Native issues. I am afraid that it was the right message, the right commissioners, the right time, but the wrong minister.

On the constitutional front, while I am speaking about it, I do note that it is a critical time in this country's constitutional history. I am very interested. I was not obviously directly involved as a member of the task force, but through the efforts of our representative, the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) and our deputy leader, we were kept apprised of the developments. We certainly appreciated that. I feel, and I think members feel in our party, that we

had a good opportunity to participate in the discussions through him.

It is, I think, tempting to just let that task force report slide and let other events overcome us in the ensuing months. I happen to think that that is a very fine report. I obviously am not an author of that report, but I happen to think it is a very fine report. I happen to agree with the principles enunciated therein, by and large.

I think that it can serve a vital role in this process, but it is up to our Premier (Mr. Filmon) to stick to his guns and to advocate that report. He will be condemned in this House, he can be assured, if he does not take that report as his guide. I fear, Mr. Speaker, that like the last time around, you are going to slip and slide on this. It is not a time to do that.

I had the pleasure of going down to Quebec some months ago and speaking to political people there. I had the pleasure, with the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) and the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), of attending in Victoria. We had a good time. One of the great attributes of that trip was the opportunity to discuss constitutional issues with members of the Legislative Assembly in Quebec. I found that personally to be one of the benefits of that trip, the lasting benefits.

I must say that I came to the conclusion that while there are some deep differences, I am not convinced that what the press tells us the differences are, are really there. I think the differences, frankly, for me came down to some of the issues that we both feel very strongly about, economic issues, how the economic future of this country is going to be worked out. I sort of sensed that while the word "distinct" has taken on religious connotations in Quebec, in reality most people, once they can get over that, if we can ever sort of resolve that dispute, most people are really concerned about maintaining a standard of living for themselves and their children and having a sane and a charitable infrastructure which will support health care and support the poor and provide for a good education for their children. In reality, they are not sure that the present structure serves those needs. Mr. Speaker, neither are we.

* (1610)

So I think that when you really cut through a lot of the rhetoric and a lot of the passionate responses based on cultural pride, which I do not discount, but I think that if we can get over that hurdle and come

to some resolution of those differences, we will find that by and large we have the same concerns. That was encouraging to me, Mr. Speaker, because it impressed upon me that, on most fronts, we were really talking the same language. Whether on the surface it was English or French, we were talking the same language about the issues involved and the solutions we wanted.

Mr. Speaker, I note that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) will be going to a First Ministers' conference on the economy. I wish him well. I encourage the Premier to listen because maybe he can pick up some ideas from some of the people at the table. He does not seem to have any of his own. I do not say that there are going to be people at that conference whom he may want to listen to, but it would be nice if through some avenue he had some plans for the economic future of this province. I do not see any. It is sort of the trickle-down theory. It is still there.

The trickle-down theory is that if you just let business free, you just let them go, eventually it will come down to the people who need it. Jobs will be created if you just let Adam Smith's invisible hand do its trick. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is based on premises which at least 50 or 60 years ago went out the window, in particular, in the 1970s with stagflation. There was not a reputable economist left who would seriously argue for Adam Smith's invisible hand and this belief in the benevolence of capitalists in just letting their money flow through to the masses.

I mean that just does not happen. I do not doubt the sincerity with which the members opposite hold that view, but I ask them to look at reality and to look at the fact that capital does not swear allegiance to any country or any principle other than profit. It just does not and you cannot expect it to. I do not expect it to. It would be nice but I do not expect the billionaires and the millionaires of this world to go out and solve the social problems. That is too much to expect of those people. -(interjection)- The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) says, why not? Would it not be nice? Maybe he can point to one or two of them who do that. I look forward to it, because -(interjection)- Yes, Peter Pocklington and some of those other corporate welfare bums.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, government has a role to play in ensuring that there is some kind of equity in the distribution of capital in this province. -(interjection)- You bet, I believe in a mixed economy. The Liberals constructed and have

facilitated in this country the mixed economy for decades. We are the architects of the mixed economy. We understand the balance necessary in the system between capital interests and the interests of the people who actually do the work. We understand that.

We know that there is a role for government. We do not believe that governments should go in and take over things like, say, ICG, and figure that they can run it better. We do not say that. We do not say government can run things better. They do not, but they have a role to play, primarily a legislative role, but also a role in certain circumstances with respect to key economic sectors to play a leadership role.

Mr. Speaker, I see us retracting more and more from that, and I do not believe it is consistent with what Manitobans want. I think Manitobans are asking for some leadership from government, and I note that unemployment is very high in this province. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) continually downplays that. He says, no, no, we are doing pretty well comparatively.

The fact is, in September, 12,000 more people were unemployed in Manitoba than were one year ago. That is reality. Those people are all over this province. Many others have left this province. In September, as well, Manitoba had 7,000 fewer jobs than in September of 1990. The prior statistic I was quoting was that the unemployment—the former was 7,000. Those were fewer jobs, not necessarily unemployed people, but fewer jobs.

Mr. Speaker, before I finish, I want to say that I think the most interesting, most significant economic story for western Canada this year is that Crown Life is going to be going to Regina. I think that is an exciting story. I say power to Regina and Saskatchewan for attracting or finding some way to get Crown Life. That is 900 jobs and those are good jobs. They are not going to be heavy industry creating pollution. Those are clean financial sector jobs moving to Regina from Toronto and that should tell us something. That should tell us that maybe other companies are thinking that. Maybe there is an opening to start persuading those companies to come and expand or locate in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to have a conversation with some business people in Regina recently, and they were saying, oh, well, those 900 jobs. There are not many who are actually going to

come. You know, they are going to be staying in Toronto. They are actually not going to relocate.

Well, my response to that would be that is just fine, let them stay in Toronto. If Crown Life comes to Regina, they are still going to need 900 people. The less people that come from Toronto, the more people in Regina are going to be hired. -(interjection)- They are all Canadians, that is true. I do not think the people in Regina should feel badly if some people in Crown Life in Toronto say, we do not want to go. That is fine. Crown Life comes to Regina, that is the main thing.

Crown Life was not forced to go to Regina; they were persuaded to go to Regina. They decided that was a better place for them to go financially. No one forced them to go. -(interjection)-

The member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) says he will go to Regina if we pay him enough money. I would like to take up a collection to have him go to Regina right now. We will send the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) back to Edmonton; we will send the member for Portage la Prairie to Regina. I am sure we could raise enough money.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the coming session because there has to be something more. This cannot be it. There has to be something to sink our teeth into, debate in this House. Some of those creative new ideas which we have not seen yet. I look forward to this government coming forward with some real ideas other than just passing the buck to the private sector and hoping, praying that they actually let some of it fall down to the people of St. James who need the jobs and who need the work and who want to stay and who want their kids to stay in this province. Thank you.

Mr. Ben Sveinson (La Verendrye): I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back all members of the Assembly and wish them a very happy holiday season.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise today and offer my comments on the throne speech. First of all, it is nice to see you back in your usual position. Also, I would like to welcome back the Deputy Speaker and all the staff of the Legislative Assembly. A warm welcome to our new pages, and I am sure the time spent here will be an enriching experience.

I have sat through several Speeches from the Throne as a member of this Legislature. In sitting through the speeches, I have put myself or tried to

put myself in the shoes of the average taxpaying Manitoban. In listening to each party's opinions, assertions and complaints and rhetoric from the other side of the House, the Manitoba taxpayer might sit back and ask the question: Who is right?

* (1620)

Mr. Speaker, the only way to decipher who is right is to examine the track record of this province. This province in the past decade has seen two styles of government, the irresponsible NDP until 1988 and our government from 1988 on.

Let us examine the last 10 years of our province's history in terms of deficits and debt creation. In 1981, the last year of the Progressive Conservative Party before the Paulley government came to power, our provincial deficit stood at \$89.5 million; the following year, '81-82, the NDP took the deficit to a level of \$251 million and this was only the beginning.

The next eight years saw the NDP take our province into record debts: 1982-83, we witnessed a deficit of \$434.6 million; in '83-84, the province saw the deficit again in the area of \$428.9 million; the '84-85 fiscal year saw the deficit continue climbing to \$482.5 million; the 1985-86 year saw the deficit rise to its highest point yet at \$528.3 million, and yet it still rose in the following year. In '86-87, we saw the NDP government continue its irresponsible spending and push the deficit to \$559.1 million.

Mr. Speaker, this period of time saw an incredible increase in the spending patterns of government. Yet what else did we witness during the same period, drastic increases in taxes and taxation powers. Between 1981 and '88, the NDP government in Manitoba increased taxes a total of 16 times and introduced five new taxes. The period from '82 to '88 saw the personal income tax revenue increase by 107 percent, taking an extra \$1,997 from every Manitoba family through income tax increases alone.

The NDP also introduced the payroll tax and then increased it by half. This tax is probably the worst tax to introduce if a province desires to attract industry or create jobs as the tax punishes firms for hiring people and creating employment. Their actions were under the pretense of taking from corporations and business to benefit the workers of Manitoba; yet, in reality, it was killing jobs and investment in this province.

Mr. Speaker, this is the action taken by a party that professes to represent workers. We also saw the introduction of increases in the retail tax that had the effect of not only more than doubling the revenue received from the tax, but also increasing the number of products that the tax was applied to.

There was also the raising of corporate income and capital taxes. A new net income surtax and a variety of other increases in taxes and rental rates. The effect of these tax increases is to reduce the purchasing power of the average pay cheque, if not reducing the average pay cheque itself, ultimately causing the consumer to spend less.

The NDP government also provided disincentives to companies through the payroll tax and corporate taxes to create jobs and invest in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at the Conservative record since taking office in 1988. What I tried to do was to lay out what the NDP had done, and now let us look at what we have done. I think that is quite fair.

The first noticeable effect was that of a decrease in a yearly deficit from half a billion dollar range to the area that can be more easily borne by a province. This was detained through the introduction of better management in our government.

Mr. Speaker, the deficit recorded in '88-89 fiscal year was \$141.3 million and \$142.4 million in the year following. This represents a drastic change in the way the finances of the province were managed, a change that was for the better. The 1990-91 year saw the deficit increase to \$283.4 million and \$324 million in the 1991-92 year. While the deficits have increased in the last two years, they were the result of our government remaining committed to the program that Manitobans need and want, while at the same time protecting the taxpayer from increases in the tax burden during one of the country's worst recessions.

Looking at our government's record on taxes, I am proud that we have reduced taxes to families, small businesses, farmers and we have frozen personal income taxes four consecutive years—four, absolutely.

Mr. Speaker, because of our commitment to operating government in a more efficient and effective manner, we have been able to protect the vital services Manitobans need and lay the foundation for a stronger Manitoba and work with

Manitobans to pull our economy onto the road to recovery.

The NDP, now the official opposition—you can see how much of official opposition we have here today—would like the people of Manitoba to forget the accumulated debt since the early 1980s, but Manitobans have better memories than that. They will remember the MTX scandal, Manfor, Flyer Industries, Saunders Aircraft, to name a few of the favourite money pits the NDP had. In good times when we should have been saving some money and paying or reducing the debt, the NDP government of the day was spending like a bunch of drunken sailors.

Now that we have hit into the world economic downturn and we need the money, we are faced with enormous interest payments on that accumulated debt. Each year the interest payment strangles our ability to offer more programs and services, but we are trying.

The economic groundwork that has been laid down by our government has slowed the rate of increase in the debt by controlling spending and managing our resources responsibly. We will do more, as was put forward in the throne speech.

The people of Manitoba can thank the NDP government for a road that is paved with debt. It will take years of working together, government, community and business, before we can say we have a debt that is under control. I have heard many, many times and have said it myself, thank God the NDP were defeated by the Filmon government. There was just no telling how monstrous the debt would be right now.

Judging by the actions of the fiscal responsibility—and I use the term lightly—by the NDP in Ontario and the fact that the Manitoba NDP agreed with those actions, I think we are safe to say that our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and their children would not have stood a chance.

Coming from a rural riding, Mr. Speaker, I and my government are concerned about the shape of our province's farm economy. The last decade has seen the flow deterioration of the farm economy to the point that the farmers are now in an economic crisis. As a government, we have made the effort to help protect the rural way of life and have worked with the farm community to do what we can to diversify the rural economy.

Mr. Speaker, programs such as the Grow Bonds and the decentralization are part of the means to help the rural community remain viable. The farmers of Manitoba do not wish to depend on supports of government to make it from year to year. They are proud people who only want to be paid a fair price for their efforts and their products.

Our government's most important objective is to win a cease-fire in the international subsidy war that has pushed the price of agricultural products beyond the costs of producing them.

Mr. Speaker, it has appeared that lately some progress has been made in the GATT negotiations, and we can only hope that through efforts of the Canadian government that the war will be stopped.

The GRIP and NISA programs have been kicked around quite often by the opposition parties. I applaud any initiative to help our farmers. Our farmers are mere pawns in an international subsidy war beyond their control. Our farmers cannot, nor can we as a province, fight a subsidy battle against the treasuries of the EEC or the United States. I will continue to support any initiative aimed at helping our farmers to realize a fair price for their products.

* (1630)

Our government has indicated it will continue to support our farm families, and I will personally continue to support them as an MLA in this Legislature. Our provincial government recently carried their concerns directly to Geneva in support of the Canadian government and will continue working toward a positive outcome in favour of Canadian farmers.

Mr. Speaker, our government continues its efforts to expand into new tourism markets through aggressive marketing programs, alongside of industry partners and corporate sponsors. This industry has a vast potential, one that Manitobans have become to realize and focus on. By working in a partnership with the western provinces and territories to establish occupational standards for the tourism industry, our province will be better able to develop new opportunities and initiatives in tourism.

Mr. Speaker, a new Canada-Manitoba agreement on tourism will help to stimulate the development and promotion of new tourism strategies that have international appeal. When Manitobans set out to accomplish something, there is no competition. They are the best. This year we saw the best and

largest Grey Cup celebrations, missed only by the Bombers in the final to make it perfect. We were also the meeting place of the World Curling Championships hosting visitors from the world over in a festive event that is recognized as one of the best ever. This summer the World Junior Baseball Championship was held in Brandon and has been singled out as one of the best ever tournaments of the league.

Mr. Speaker, these events have one thing in common. They were organized and staffed by volunteers of the highest quality, Manitobans. At every event Manitobans turned out in force to man booths, drive vans, drive tours and, in general, make all the visitors to our province feel as if they had come into a second home. These Manitobans are our province's strength and will be one of the reasons that Manitoba will survive this recession and head down the road to a strong economic recovery.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to mention several new initiatives which have taken place in my constituency of La Verendrye. Education of our young people continues to be a priority for our government. We recognize that our young people are the future of our province. Even the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) recognizes the government's fine commitment to education in his reply to the throne speech. I am pleased that the member from across the way has the courage to stand in his place and applaud our government for positive educational initiatives.

Our government has demonstrated its continued commitment to education within my constituency by financing the opening of three new schools. These new facilities will provide for a system of education that can better meet the local needs of the area and provide for increased school and community population. A new kindergarten to Grade 4 school was built this fall in the town of Landmark at the cost of \$2 million. This new facility will accommodate approximately 250 children. This school will not only benefit Landmark residents but also the residents of the surrounding communities.

The new school Ecole Point des Chenes was built at a cost of over \$3 million in the town of Ste. Anne. This new facility will accommodate approximately 300 children from kindergarten to Grade 12. Additionally, this facility also includes a day care which will accommodate the families within the community. As well, Mr. Speaker, renovations were

done at the Ste. Anne's school complex at the cost of \$656,000 to enable the school to better serve the area and increase student enrollment.

The town of Lorette has also seen our government's commitment to education. Lorette saw the construction of Ecole Lagimodiere, a new French K to nine school. It also includes a day care centre. This year the town saw the addition of four portables to the Dawson Trail School to provide for an enlarged student body.

Mr. Speaker, last year saw tremendous growth in terms of local recreation facilities in my constituency. This July saw construction begin on a new three-sheet curling rink in Lorette. Our government provided part of the funding through the Community Places Program. This new curling rink will provide hours of recreation, recreational enjoyment for the town of Lorette and its surrounding community. As everyone is well aware, curling is one of our sports which Manitobans have always excelled in.

Mr. Speaker, the town of Landmark has seen the construction of a beautiful new arena which will provide that community with years of recreational enjoyment. This project will enable the community to build on its tourism sector. I hope it will be the start of years of increased tourism for the community through their ability to now host community sporting efforts. This project, again, was funded in part by the Community Places Program grant, but for the most part the hard work and efforts of many local volunteers, organizations, and businesses was a contributing factor. It is important to encourage the participation of all Manitobans in a variety of sporting activities year-round. The participation of the population in physical activities will lead to more healthy lifestyles and, ultimately, reduced health care costs.

A little over a year ago, White mouth was delighted to open a new hospital. About the same time, Ste. Anne was finishing up a major renovation and addition to their hospital. I would also like to commend the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) for the vastly improved ambulance services in rural and northern Manitoba. This fall, Mr. Speaker, an addition was made to the Villa Youville in Ste. Anne. Thirty extra units were added to the already 55 that they have there now.

Mr. Speaker, health care is a high priority of our government. Our government has reaffirmed its

commitment to health care in this session's throne speech. Our government is committed to improving health care in this province by introducing the concept of Total Quality Management within the health care field. Health care professionals will be encouraged to work together with consumers to bring about reform of the health care field. This will result in improved services at a lower cost. I support a more forward-looking health care system, a people-first approach. All Manitobans should become more aware and familiar with their health care options.

Mr. Speaker, our government is in partnership with all Manitobans, urban and rural. As a rural MLA, I am pleased to see my government's ongoing commitment to economic development in rural Manitoba. A strong rural economy will continue to grow through listening to the views and ideas of our rural residents and involving the people in the decisions that will affect their local communities. Valuable initiatives such as the Rural Development Grow Bonds will allow rural Manitoba the opportunity to invest in the future of their community and be active in that growth.

Our community will work side-by-side with Manitobans to assist their communities to attract business and create jobs in order to further diversify the rural economy. Mr. Speaker, these grow bond corporations will invest in local projects such as manufacturing, processing, tourism and other industry developments within the rural communities. Our government has given Manitobans the vehicle through which their communities can grow and strengthen.

All too often do we see more and more Manitobans leaving rural communities. Our government is committed to maintaining and enhancing rural community living. Our government is committed to job creation throughout Manitoba. Our government's decentralization initiative will bring services closer to those Manitobans who use them. My constituency, along with many others, has seen the benefits of government's initiative of decentralization. Four new jobs in the area of fire protection have recently been moved to the town of Ste. Anne.

* (1640)

We all, indeed, must work together to make this economy grow, but let us be cognizant of the fact that we live in a country with one of the highest

standards of living in the world. Mr. Speaker, we must remember, God has smiled on us in many ways. At a time when other countries are breaking apart, we must admit to each other that we love our country and are ready to shoulder the responsibility of getting the nation back on track.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that Canadians will come together for good of the country during the constitutional talks. They will put aside the partisan views and work towards an agreement which will unite this country instead of dividing it. I have confidence and pride in the people of Manitoba. They are willing to work together with our government to ensure that this province continues on the road of economic recovery. Our economic recovery has already started, and through this government's continuation of fiscal responsibility it will rebound from this recession in better shape than most other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for some of the members of this House—I am referring to those across the way—to realize that governments can no longer buy their way out of a recession. Our government has begun to build a stronger Manitoba, one which will see increased economic opportunities and job creation for all Manitobans. Let us join together and build a stronger Manitoba.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to welcome the opportunity to be back in session and the opportunity to put a few comments on record.

First of all, I would like to welcome everyone back, because I feel pleased to be back in session. Also, I look forward to your fair judgment that we have always experienced in this House. Also, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the clerks and the Hansard staff for all the assistance that they have provided. Well, I have asked for some instructions, and they have provided a lot of help to all of us members here. Also, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new pages that we have. In the last few days I have seen how hard they do work and the commitment they have, and so I would like to thank them for that.

Some of the areas that I would like to touch upon in the next little while are the whole aspect of drugs and alcohol abuse, and also about the AJI report; I would like to touch on that a little bit later. Right now I would like to discuss some of the individuals that

reside and work and make their homes in the constituency of Point Douglas that I am honoured to be representing. As you are aware, Point Douglas is a very high needs area, and almost anything that reflects positively or negatively in Manitoba has a direct response to Point Douglas.

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

Point Douglas is a very interesting community, because we have a diverse people of many races there. We have a lot of aboriginal people and Chinese and Filipinos. In fact, just on the weekend, I was at a new chapter of the Boy Scouts that they were celebrating, and they had just opened. It was a Boy Scout troop of young Chinese boys and girls. I think that shows the diversity of Point Douglas and also the many issues and hardships that people do face.

One of the things that we see, we hear, we read about over and over again, is the many problems with drugs and alcohol and prostitution that take place in the constituency of Point Douglas. We had a couple of demonstrations already to try and get a community corner store to stop selling abuse substances out of that store. We picketed, demonstrated it twice already, and yet that corner store always comes back and starts selling because they make a healthy profit. That is why I feel very disappointed when this government has not proclaimed Bill C-91. Even if you talk to the Winnipeg Police, they have said many times that if they would only proclaim this bill, it will give us some authority to lay some charges. I have no question to doubt what they say because they work in that field and they know what they are talking about.

We have seen where a lot of people of Native ancestry right across Manitoba are incarcerated and at such a higher percentage than other ethnic races in Manitoba. A lot of that is to do with the abuse of alcohol in a lot of the individuals, in a lot of the communities. I was appalled when I went for a tour to Pritchard House, which is the only aboriginal treatment centre in Winnipeg, and they have people coming from all parts of Manitoba. When I saw the building—you would have to see it to believe it—there were big cracks in the walls and the plaster was falling down and they had mattresses that were donated to them from the hospitals. I sat on one just to see and could feel the springs coming right through, and this is supposed to be a government-funded program that is funded through the AFM.

I speak from experience. Fifteen years ago I went through Ste. Rose du Lac treatment centre myself. I was there for 28 days and the facilities we had there were great. We had nice beds; we had nice meals; we had a shuffle board; we had a pool table; and we had lots of activities to do. Mr. Acting Speaker, the only form of recreation the people who are at Pritchard House have access to is what the staff has donated to the residents of that treatment centre. The staff, who are paid, have had to donate money out of their own pockets, out of their own wages, to purchase a TV set, a VCR and they even had to take out of their own pocket to purchase simple games such as checkers and snakes and ladders and that kind of thing.

I do not think that is a proper funding formula for aboriginal people, because we hear of other treatment centres that are well-funded. They even have access to outings. I know that the residents there do not have the funds to do that. I hope the government, in its wisdom, will look at and maybe have a little tour of Pritchard House and look at if there is a possibility of at least giving adequate funding to deliver adequate programs. We all know that the only way to overcome a lot of the hardships and problems that individuals face is through education and treatment centres.

Also with the community in Point Douglas, when they rallied together and asked for help with prostitution problems in Point Douglas, they were told that there is very little we can do, so the community took it upon itself. I do not advocate individuals taking the law into their own hands, but the residents finally had enough. They went out and they videotaped the people who were soliciting, or going to pick up the prostitutes, and it scared them off for awhile.

That is only a short-term solution. I think we should really look at a way to fund and assist the prostitutes in Manitoba to look for alternative careers and to get some form of education so that they do not have to rely on that type of activity to try and make ends meet.

There are a lot of children who are there, young children. They are even as young as nine, ten years old. We all have families, most of us in this Chamber, and I think it is about time that we address the problem, look at solving it and not to try and push it into other neighbourhoods and other communities, because that is all we would do if we start enough harassment in the area. They will move to some

other community. I think we should look at what causes individuals to resort to those types of activities. A lot of it can be overcome through education and training and hopefully, when times are better, additional funding formulas for treatment centres and for people to get educational opportunities.

* (1650)

The whole key to the population and for people to get into careers and employment opportunities is in the area of education for the future. We know that it costs a lot of dollars, but we have to look at the whole concept of career opportunities for individuals. We, right now and in the past, always look to the European market to recruit our engineers, electricians, tradespeople and technicians, but as you are all aware, in 1992, the European Economic Community will come into effect. What that means is that a lot of the individuals who have the marketable skills will have the freedom to be employed anywhere in Europe. That way you could recruit automotive mechanics from Scotland to work over in Italy without a work visa or anything like that.

That is what is happening right now, where Mercedes Benz, which is one of the big auto manufacturers over in Europe, is in Scotland, and they have recruited all of the potential graduates who will be coming out of their college system there. What impact will that have on us? It will have a very, very big impact because, as I mentioned earlier, we will not have the access to that skilled market area.

If you looked at the reports that have been produced, it says within 20 years, 40 percent of the work force will be aboriginal people. That is why we have to look at the opportunities now to start recruiting and supporting the colleges and universities to make sure that we have adequate numbers of aboriginal people trained to be employed when that need arises.

We talk about aboriginal self-government. Whenever that comes about that also will give a lot of aboriginal people the opportunity for careers and employment opportunities, if they have the skills. That is going to be the key, if they have the skills. That is why when we hear cutbacks at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre and the ACCESS program I think that is setting the clock back.

I think we have to look forward to the future, and the only way that can take place is if we have governments that are serious, that are very serious

and address the aboriginal problems and the aboriginal wishes.

I have heard members of the government state that, oh yes, we support aboriginal people, we will work with aboriginal people and we will do whatever we can to ensure that aboriginal aspirations are achieved. I say, as an aboriginal person, that you get tired of that rhetoric over and over again, because if the government was serious about addressing aboriginal needs and aboriginal issues, you would not see cutbacks in budgets that directly affect northern and Native programs.

We saw Keewatin Community College; it had no increase in funding in year '91-'92, and if you look at Keewatin Community College records in The Pas, you will see that there is a high number of aboriginal people enrolled in those programs. A lot of those individuals who graduate from those programs go back into their own home communities for employment opportunities. I mention again, that when we achieve aboriginal self-government these individuals will have many, many more opportunities for employment.

Then we saw a 10 percent reduction in the Native education programs and also we saw the elimination of the Northern Youth Corps programs and a lot of the youth that were employed in the summer months with this program were young aboriginal people who were out of school for the summer. If you have had the opportunity to live in one of these remote northern communities, and I do not know if any of you have, but if you have I am sure some of you have visited some of those communities. It is very hard even for the adults to get employment opportunities. This was a means for the youth to try and save enough money to go back to college or university or give them a little bit of spending money to tide them over.

Also, we saw a cut in the aboriginal development program. Northern Affairs was cut by \$2.5 million or 10 positions; ACCESS and New Careers were reduced by \$1.6 million; Native Media Network, the grant was totally withdrawn; Northern Association of Community Councils, the grant was reduced. We hear in this House that we have asked the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) time and time again about the issues pertaining to aboriginal people in Winnipeg, and what we have received was, wait, because you will see it addressed by the urban aboriginal strategy. We are waiting for that urban aboriginal strategy. I will look forward to

seeing it and reading it, because we have already spent about \$400,000 on it, and I think it is long overdue. The aboriginal people whom I have spoken to are waiting for this, just like the aboriginal people who waited for the AJI report.

The other things that affected aboriginal people directly was the nonfunding of the Winnipeg Education Centre. That was a training institution that trained a lot of visible minorities and a lot of aboriginal people for professional and semiprofessional areas. There were teacher training programs, social workers, and there was a commitment by Core Area Initiative to put \$500,000 into building a new facility which is badly needed. Now I do not know what will happen. I guess we will not see one, because there is no new Core Area Initiative agreement yet.

That is the kind of rhetoric that I know my colleagues Greg, Elijah and Oscar—we are getting very tired of it, as are all aboriginal people in Manitoba. We hear how much the government will do for aboriginal people, and they are serious about helping aboriginal people. It is time for action. Talk has gone long enough. When we see the Northern Patient Transportation Program, the user fee, like some of my colleagues call it, of \$50, it is hard to understand what they are saying if you have not lived in a remote community.

For instance, if you take an isolated community of Sherridon and if you are a parent and your child says to you, I have a real bad stomach ache. Oh, I have a lot of pain in my stomach. What is it? Is it appendix or is it gas? If you are employed at a minimum rate and you do not have a lot of dollars in your pocket, are you going to dish out that \$50 to send your child out to make sure that it is only gas and not an appendix attack? I do not think so. What is it going to take before something happens to someone, and then you will have all the communities crying and saying, hey, that was a bad mistake in the first place. That is the kind of stuff that I call rhetoric by the government.

I would just like to get on to the next phase where the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) was being questioned by our Leader the other day. It was very unfortunate where the Minister of Justice when he was responding to the AJI report, and I quote here from The Globe and Mail on Saturday, August 31, 1991. It is not our Leader or myself saying it. This is a quote from The Globe and Mail. If they are wrong, then maybe someone should get a retraction from

The Globe and Mail, because a lot of aboriginal people across Canada have access and read The Globe and Mail. The comment was a total, total insult to aboriginal people.

* (1700)

It said right in here: on a radio call-in show yesterday, Mr. McCrae said the final report of the inquiry is merely the opinion of two individuals, the two judges who headed the inquiry. It is right here in The Globe and Mail. I hope he looks it up and makes a phone call to The Globe and Mail if his comments are not accurate, because it has upset a lot of aboriginal people like a lot of my circle of friends, and some of our other aboriginal members here are aboriginal individuals, and we do discuss a lot of things pertaining to us.

It was not a very fair comment, as one of the members that produced that report is an aboriginal individual. It is not only a report by two individuals. It is a very well thought-out report and a lot of aboriginal people will follow the recommendations of this report to the letter, and we are waiting for it to be implemented.

I, as a person, am very surprised. When we had the Pedlar report—and this is not knocking the Pedlar report. I will make it very clear, I support the Pedlar report. I think it is an excellent report. I commend the government for immediate action on that report, but when I draw the differences of the Pedlar report and the AJI report, I wonder what happened. The government was so quick to implement, I think it was, 40 recommendations from the Pedlar report.

An Honourable Member: Forty-six.

Mr. Hickes: Forty-six recommendations, the minister says, from the Pedlar report, but how many from the AJI report? We never heard an implementation of one. There is no implementation on behalf of the government, when it was released that same day. What we heard was, we will look at it and we will discuss with agents, we will discuss with organizations, we will discuss, we will study further. Well, is that not enough studying?

The one good thing that was implemented out of this report, and I am glad to see it, was to do with the child protection. That is a very, very positive step. The other things that we, as aboriginal people, look forward to this government implementing in, hopefully, the very near future, because it has been

on a shelf somewhere for quite a while now and I think it is long, long overdue.

I would just read some of the recommendations of the report and you judge for yourselves if you think those recommendations warrant action. We, on this side of the House, especially our aboriginal members even more so, strongly recommend immediate action.

It says, recognize the reality of aboriginal self-government through legislative resolution and work with the federal and other provincial governments toward the constitutional amendment recognizing that. Where is that at? We have not heard a thing about that.

Recognize the right of aboriginal communities to establish an aboriginal justice system and work toward the implementation. Where is that at? We have not heard a thing about that.

Enact legislation that recognizes the right of aboriginal people to establish their own justice system and recognizes their jurisdictional authority to enact their own laws. We do not know where that is at; we have not heard a thing.

That is dealing directly with provincial responsibility. We do not need permission from the Prime Minister to implement some of these changes.

An Honourable Member: These are the ones that you are supporting. Am I right?

Mr. Hlckes: We support all the recommendations in here. These are some of the ones I am—

An Honourable Member: I support all the 293 recommendations.

Mr. Hlckes: I would not say all of them, but these are the ones I am dealing with today.

Make provincial grants to the City of Winnipeg for police services, conditional upon the development and implementation of employment equity programs and targets for the hiring of aboriginal persons. Where is the province honest? The city has already looked at and said they support that and they highly recommend it. Where is the province on these issues? We have not heard a thing.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Through the Manitoba Police Commission, develop standards for all aspects of policing in nonaboriginal communities in Manitoba, ensure that nonaboriginal police forces, their officers attain and maintain appropriate standards of recruitment,

training, professional development. We have not heard anything on that yet. I do not know when we will.

Amend The Summary Convictions Act to remove the authority of judges or of magistrates to impose incarceration for failure to pay a fine, except where the individual willfully refuses to do so after a show cause hearing. Now that is something that could be immediately put into place.

Abolish the fine option program and in its place establish a fine and restitution recovery program, patterned after the Maintenance Enforcement program. That is very simple to do in a community where, if a person breaks someone's door or breaks someone's window, make that person fix it. There are a lot of people who are very, very handy with their hands and can fix this and fix that. That is all that is asking.

Assist aboriginal communities in the establishment of regional aboriginal probation services. Provide more safe homes or shelters in each aboriginal community. I think that we today are hearing a lot more discussions on that topic. There is a conference going on right now at the Convention Centre and there are aboriginal leaders there. There are people from all aboriginal representation of the communities. Those are some of the things they are addressing right today. Why are they addressing that? It is because they are probably taken from the AJI report and saying, where is the action? We have heard a lot of talk, but where is the action? I am sure that is exactly what they are discussing over there.

Encourage and provide sufficient resources to expand to other aboriginal communities throughout the province, the method of dealing with abuses that has been developed and is used by the Hollow Water resource group. There is already an organization in place. You could just borrow the model. You could transfer it to other communities. There is no need to study that. If it is working, why study it further? Implement it where it is needed.

Establish local open custody facilities where the offender can work and attend school, counselling or other programs during the day. We see, around the North, where individuals are taken right from their communities—say, for example, Shamattawa. Individuals are taken right from Shamattawa, brought to Winnipeg, held in custody, shipped back into Shamattawa. Why could those individuals not—they have a jail there in Shamattawa. Why

could not some of those individuals attend counselling services in their own communities, attend school if that is what they are going to, instead of removing them from their communities every time something happens? It costs so much money when we transport individuals, bring them back again. Those are very economic solutions to a lot of the problems in the North.

Ensure aboriginal women are involved in all aspects of the provincial justice system, from local court administrators to program developers and directors. I know that the Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) will be looking at that very seriously.

An Honourable Member: We are already way ahead of you guys.

Mr. Hickes: I am glad to hear that. I wish you would make some announcement, so we know, as aboriginal people, yes, you are taking the report seriously and you do mean well when you say, yes, we will help the aboriginal people.

From all the cuts I just read earlier, that is not the indication that a lot of the aboriginal people are getting from the government. If you have some positive announcements, please make them. We will welcome them. We will assist you in any way we can to make sure that the aboriginal community knows. Even if you want to get all the credit, it does not matter. It does not matter who gets the credit, as long as the people benefit from it.

I will tell you, engage aboriginal staff in correctional institutions in numbers at least proportionate to the percentage of aboriginal people in the province. That is one area that I was very fortunate to be involved in. It would be a good 11 years ago. I was working with New Careers at that time. I was a trainer co-ordinator, and I had the opportunity to be part of the adult correction trainee program, where there were aboriginal individuals trained in Headingley remand centre, Brandon, Dauphin, Bannock Point and Egg Lake, The Pas. It was an excellent program, where we went in and the aboriginal people went in. They worked in the institutions for six weeks, and then they went back into the community or back into training or two weeks classroom. That was ongoing for two years. There were 14 trainees, and out of those 14, there were 12 who graduated.

* (1710)

It was a funny thing because the summer that I was out campaigning, I knocked on a door—this is 10 years after these people had taken this training opportunity—and it was an individual who had taken this training program. We recognized each other, and we were very surprised. We started comparing what have we done, where have we been, and we talked about the other people who were on the training program. Out of the 12 graduates, this is 10 years later, this individual knew positively that there were still nine graduates working in the field of corrections of aboriginal ancestry out of that training program, which was very, very high.

From our experiences, when individuals were training and working in the area of corrections and in the penal systems across Manitoba, a lot of the inmates who were incarcerated would go to the aboriginal guards because they felt a lot more comfortable. That is what this report is saying. It is saying that these are the kinds of things that need to be addressed.

Also, there is a little experience that I would like to share with you in a minute—when it says ensure that recognized elders and other aboriginal people attending correctional institutions for ceremonies or spiritual purposes have access to those institutions and be permitted to bring with them items of spiritual significance on the same basis as chaplains who are recognized under the Corrections Department's chaplaincy program.

I will share the experience with you that I had only a couple of months ago. I was invited to go to Stony Mountain Penitentiary. My colleague from Rupertsland also was invited, and we went. When we were on our way there, we came across the picket because there was a PSAC strike at that time. The security guards were picketing, so we joined the picket for a little while and then we went up into Stony Mountain. We already had previous clearance. When they escorted us up there, we went through a whole bunch of doors and gates locking behind you. We got to this big room, and what it was was the inmates' address to the AJI report. That is what the whole press conference was all about.

The elder was there. The elder called me aside and said, George, can I speak to you for a minute? I said sure, so I went over and I spoke to the individual. Do you know what he said? I do not understand. I am an elder. I have been coming here for quite some time. He said, you know the security people who are walking that picket line are guards

in here. They know who I am. They have seen me. He said, you know when I tried to drive through, they started shaking my car, pushing it, banging on the hood and everything else. He said, I am an elder. That is the whole point. A lot of those individuals do not understand the importance of elders whether they are in communities or whether they are in institutions.

An elder is at the same level of respect by aboriginal people and, hopefully in the future, by nonaboriginal people as it says right in here, as a chaplain, a reverend, a father. It should be at the same level of respect, no different, no more, no less. The only thing is that a lot of ministers wear a collar so they are easily recognized, I guess. These correction guards knew who the individual was.

An Honourable Member: Why were they doing it?

Mr. Hickes: Because they thought he was crossing the picket line.

An Honourable Member: Oh, they were on strike.

Mr. Hickes: Yes, they were on strike but they treated him in a different manner than the chaplain and the reverend, the clergy, that were going through. As soon as the clergy and the chaplain would drive through, they would step back and let them go through because they were men of the cloth. An elder is held at the same level of respect and should be by all individuals. That is only because people are not educated and really do not understand. That is the only thing.

The other interesting point that was made when we were there, the inmates were all lined up at this table and they asked us to stand behind them to show our support, so we did. There were six inmates who were addressing the AJI. When we showed up, there were only five. There was one empty seat. They continued on with their address to the press. All of a sudden about an hour later, this one individual came, sat down and said I would like to apologize for being one hour late. He said the reason I was late is because I was at my probation hearing. He said I have been in here for 12 years. I guess that would be a very important meeting for the individual to go to when you have been in there for 12 years and you get a chance for a probation hearing and hopefully get out.

Someone said well, how did you do? He said they would not give me my probation. He said, how come? He said I will explain it. What he said was through the spiritual and culture program that they

have at Stony Mountain, this individual has been enrolled from Day One and is following the spiritual and cultural teachings of the elder. One of the people on the probation board asked this individual: You came in here with a drinking problem. Have you done anything about it? He said: Yes, I follow the teachings of the elder, and I have been enrolled in a spiritual culture program since it started here. But he said: No, but have you done anything about it? Have you enrolled in the AA program? The guy said, well, no. You see, that is the kind of things that a lot of the nonaboriginal people do not understand.

If you follow the teachings of the elders and follow the spiritual culture values of aboriginal traditional ways, you do not have a need to abuse alcohol or abuse the drugs. It is like the AA program. It is like the Bible. That gives you a path in life for you to follow which would be a good straight narrow path. That is what it is doing. There are people here in this Chamber who belong to different churches, but yet when you follow your teaching, whether it is Anglican or Protestant or Catholic, what have you, if you follow that path, you will not have any problems with drugs or alcohol or be incarcerated. Would you? -(interjection)- Yes, that will be the same.

So that is what that is. That is a guide in life. That is what this individual was trying to tell the parole board. The AA program works for some people, and a church will work for some other people. The cultural spirituality program will work for some other people. That is the point the individual was trying to make, but they did not understand it. So that is why he was denied probation just on that one point, because they said you have not done anything about your alcohol program. As soon as you are out, you will be back at it, I guess. So that was their belief, because they did not understand. I could go more about the AJI report, but I think the point is made.

One of the big things that the minister and the government really, really should look at is having judges travelling and flying to circuit court with the counsels and the police and stuff like that, because as soon as they arrive in a community, the people figure, well, they have already talked this all over and I am going to get it. Whether it is true or not is not the point. It is the perception that the people have. I think it is very, very important that that issue is addressed.

Also in the communities—like I was in the community of Churchill. We used to get the legal

people when they came up there; they were there just for the court session and bang gone. If you needed a lawyer, you had maybe 10 minutes to speak to the individual and they went in and represented your case. Well, that is not much of a representation when they really do not even understand why you are there, the circumstances surrounding it. I do not think it is a very fair system for the individuals.

* (1720)

I am not saying this in negative fashion. I am saying this in a positive fashion, that the government has to act to show the people, yes, we are serious. It is not more rhetoric. That is what we are asking. The minister knows and the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) knows, the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) knows, you know, like the fisheries and the migratory bird laws to be amended to recognize aboriginal hunting rights. We have some people that will enforce it, other people will not enforce it and aboriginal people they do not know where they stand. Enforce something and make it right for the people.

We talk about aboriginal people, and also you have to look at the whole contribution that the North has made to Manitoba. We have mineral resources and we have the Port of Churchill, we have timbering and we have the hydro developments. Those have given a lot of dollars to government coffers and created a lot of employment opportunities. When I say that, I welcome the announcement by this government of utilizing the rocket range in the community of Churchill because through that initiative, if this government will carry the next step and ensure that the Port of Churchill and the rail line are protected because without the Port of Churchill, without the trains utilizing the Port of Churchill, how will you get your rockets for firing up to Churchill? You are sure not going to fly them in because it will be too costly.

Also the communities that are along the bayline, along that Churchill route, they also need to have their groceries, their mail, and without a road you will not be able to address those communities and make those communities—I am glad to hear that the government is serious about addressing aboriginal issues. I say show us, that is all we ask.

Also when you look at the North, another announcement that would greatly benefit the northern communities, and communities in the

south, was in the throne speech, the whole thing on tourism. Tourism is an excellent idea and we will get a lot of tourist dollars flowing if we could lower the dollar and eliminate the GST. That is what is hurting tourism.

I would like to add a few more, but I am out of time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I am pleased, as usual, to join in the debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, and to offer my thanks to the Lieutenant-Governor for his reading of the Speech from the Throne, and perhaps at the same time to offer a word of thanks to His Honour and Mrs. Johnson for the fine service that they have rendered to their fellow Manitobans, and to wish them well in the future.

I cannot really speak on a throne speech, Mr. Speaker, without again referring to yourself and the good work that I believe that you are doing in the discharge of your duties. I believe all honourable members in every corner of this Chamber would agree with me when I say that you bring dignity and a sense of fair play to your office and to your work. It is much appreciated and helps ensure the smooth conduct of the business of this place.

I join with the others in welcoming the new pages and the new interns to our operation here on Broadway Avenue and trust that for them it will be an enlightening experience, if not sometimes somewhat entertaining.

I also join with the others in calling attention, as the Speech from the Throne did, to three significant events in our province dealing with football, curling and baseball. While I certainly offer my congratulations to all of those in the city of Winnipeg who have taken part in making these things such a success, I also send my thanks and congratulations along to the good people of Brandon who again came through and did such a fine job in putting on the World Youth Baseball Championships last summer.

Incidentally, I am pleased to be part of a government that played a role in developing the facilities in Brandon so those very successful championships could be held in Brandon. Now that we have those facilities and we know we have the experience and the ability to put on major baseball events, I look forward to future baseball events in Brandon.

Speaking of Brandon, it is really quite an honour and a privilege to be able to represent that very fine community in this Legislature and also to enjoy the support that I do from my colleagues who represent areas surrounding Brandon as well as all my other colleagues on this side of the House.

Representing a constituency is a formidable task and one which requires help and co-operation from one's colleagues, because when we want to achieve something for our community in our democratic system, it means we can only achieve those things with co-operation from others who all have claims to make on the provincial treasury or on the human resources of the province. I am grateful to my colleagues for the co-operation I have received in representing my community which to me of course is an extremely important community. I also suggest it is important to many other people not only living in Brandon but people who live within a wide radius of the city of Brandon and who use Brandon as a referral centre and as a centre for various other endeavours.

That is why I am so pleased with the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) in the way he has directed attention towards my community when it comes to highway construction activities. That is why I am pleased with other ministers of our government who have worked diligently to ensure the Keystone Centre project is underway and promises in the future to be a very successful centre.

I speak as a former director of the Keystone Centre when I say this. I am delighted that the government of Manitoba and the federal government and, of course, local people in Brandon have such faith in the Brandon community that they would put in so many dollars to the renovation and to the expansion of such an important facility for the cultural and agricultural life of our community.

I am also pleased that the government I represent and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba have all come together and made plans for the future of the foundation with the construction of a \$1 million facility in the city of Brandon which will provide treatment to people who need it as well as house administrative functions of the foundation, something which, unfortunately, honourable members opposite took quite a different position on in the past. Only through the good work of members on this side, at that time in opposition, were we able

to talk sense into the then Minister of Health, the Honourable Larry Desjardins who made the right decision ultimately, and the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba maintains its operations in the city of Brandon in new facilities.

I am also pleased with the co-operation that has happened with respect to waste-water treatment in our city of Brandon, the co-operation between three levels of government, and the fact that the waste-water treatment plant renewal is on the way.

In the area of the Justice department, I remain pleased in spite of accommodation needs in the city of Brandon in our court facilities. I remain pleased that we were able to unify the Family Court service of the Court of Queen's Bench and to locate a Family Division judge in the city of Brandon to make Brandon truly a judicial centre. What will ultimately complete the puzzle or the picture will be the kinds of facilities that we need in the city of Brandon to provide all of the services that are being located there. I include in that judicial services, but we now also have a Director of Prosecutions for Regional Manitoba located in Brandon. We have a Regional Director of Court Services located in Brandon, Manitoba. Now very recently a new Associate Chief Judge of the Provincial Court, His Honour Brian Giesbrecht, has been appointed to assist Chief Judge Stefanson in the Provincial Court in the delivery of judicial services out of the city of Brandon, but Regional Court Services outside the city of Winnipeg will be assisted greatly by the appointment of Judge Giesbrecht as an associate judge.

* (1730)

I look very much forward to the extension and the expansion of the family violence court concept to the city of Brandon in, hopefully, the near future. I know that meetings have been held and a rather important meeting was held back in November in Brandon with various care-giving agencies and people involved in the justice system, along with Chief Judge Stefanson. I look forward to the kind of working together that went on to bring about the family violence court in the city of Winnipeg going on also in Brandon, which will ultimately benefit not only Brandonites, but Manitobans from far and wide beyond the city of Brandon who are served by the judicial system out of Brandon.

I am proud of the community effort that was put into letting the federal government know the feelings

of southwestern Manitobans about our Canadian Forces Base located at Shilo. I am proud of the progress we have made thus far, but I would remind all honourable members, and I thank also the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) and the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) and others who were involved in making the federal authority in this country know the importance of the Shilo base to Manitobans, and specifically southwestern Manitobans. I remind all of those people that the battle—if I can use that expression—is not necessarily over and that we must be vigilant to ensure that the facility at Shilo remains and, if possible, is expanded to provide the services that Manitobans need for times of civil necessity, but also because of the employment that base generates and the economic spinoff that it generated for my community of Brandon and the many other communities in southwestern Manitoba.

While I am talking about how proud I am of the effort, I would like to single out, certainly not to exclusively single out anybody, but I believe that the mayor of Brandon Rick Borotsik worked well with all of the rest of them with regard to the Shilo issue. Now I wish him and our economic development board and Tom Wilson, its director there in Brandon, well as they go about their work in attempting to persuade industry to locate in the city of Brandon.

I know that the government of Manitoba has faith in the future of that city. I know that the citizens in and around the city of Brandon have faith in the future of that city. I just hope more people in industry will in the future share that faith and locate their businesses there and their operations there and provide employment for our people and our children, because we think Brandon is a great place to live. We would like to see that our offspring have the right to choose to stay in Brandon, and the way for them to have that is to have meaningful employment in the future in Brandon.

I commend those community leaders involved in those endeavours. I wish them well and spur them on to continue to work as co-operatively as they have with this government here in Manitoba and to work toward common goals, goals of development for the future.

I do not mean to be partisan, but I think I should take a moment also to congratulate the constituency organizations for the Progressive Conservative Party in Brandon East and in Brandon West. Again this year they have put on an annual fundraising

breakfast. The proceeds from that fundraising breakfast will go to the Christmas Cheer Board. I think that is commendable for a political party to do a thing like that. I am pleased that it is happening in Brandon.

I thank those involved in the organization of these breakfasts. It is getting to become a tradition and a tradition that is not uncommon in the city of Brandon, which brings to mind citizens like Rocky Addison in the city of Brandon who annually now—and it has become a tradition with Rocky as well—puts on a dinner on Christmas day for people in the Brandon area who are less well off than others and who turn out in large numbers and appreciate that effort and enjoy a wonderful Christmas dinner put on by Rocky Addison and his family and those associated with them. I commend them for that. Just to say on behalf of all those people who do enjoy what they do, they are certainly acting in the best traditions of the people of Brandon and, indeed, the people of all Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech talks about a number of things, but certainly one of the key things in the Speech from the Throne is the message that the honest kind of fiscal management that has been the hallmark of this government over the last three and a half years remains. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has a firm hand and an honest hand, and he is willing to be quite straight and honest with the people of Manitoba in letting them know what the situation is.

He is not the kind of person who is going to candy coat a message that is not particularly pleasant. He does not fool around with rhetoric like we have seen in the past before he came along. When he talks about taxes, he does not talk about revenue-raising initiatives, and when he talks about deficits he does not use some other kind of flowery expression that other administrations have used in the past to try to cover up what the real truth is. I have to say, I think people want that kind of approach.

Not all the news is good, and there is no point in trying to make bad news good, because we always get found out, do we not? We always do seem to get found out, as honourable members opposite learned so dramatically in 1988. In some ways I do believe honourable members opposite are beginning to recognize that there was a lesson to be learned.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) on a few occasions has acknowledged that, yes indeed, there were one or two little errors the previous government made. Our aboriginal friends will tell you that there is no way you can get off unless you recognize that there have been some shortcomings in the past. We have all had them, so there is no need to be ashamed of such things but to get on. Instead of trying to live in the past and trying to wish that things were different and to try to wish things away, some really hard, hard decisions and initiatives have to be made and taken.

In my comments today, now that I appear to have got the preliminaries out of the way, I would like to discuss some things that are pretty important to me. One of them, of course, is the whole area of domestic violence, and news of the tragic passing of Shirley Wedel this past weekend underlines once again the absolute need for all of us to come together in a united kind of way and in a nonpartisan way—I have to say, what I have seen so far has been like that—to address issues related to this, to try to make Manitoba a safer place for all Manitobans but certainly women and children specifically.

Too many women in Manitoba have been subjected to violence. The supreme form of violence has been doled out to too many, and it is very disturbing. That is why I am glad that Dorothy Pedlar, a year ago, agreed to do an independent review of the whole issue of how the justice system deals with victims of domestic violence, and that is why we asked her to make recommendations, and that is why she did it. She certainly has given us a framework for a better system in the future, one that is going to provide a better level of protection and attacks this issue from more than just one particular dimension.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, these issues are never simple, so simplistic solutions are not easy. It is not good enough to go after one particular part of the problem and expect that the problem will be dealt with effectively.

What Ms. Pedlar has suggested is that we go at it from basically all the angles, and I think that is appropriate. So it becomes a fairly massive undertaking and so, being thus, it is appropriate that government asks communities to help and asks people involved in the giving of provision of service and in caring agencies to help.

* (1740)

That is why I am glad that people like Evelyn Ballantyne, Beth Domine, Marilyn Gault, Dr. Theresa George, Winnie Giesbrecht, Waltraud Grieger, Darlene Hall, Pam Jackson, Candace Minch and Chriss Tetlock are all willing to help by serving on a community advisory committee which will be working with the working group of government in attacking the issues and carrying out the recommendations of Ms. Pedlar, which have been identified by the government for positive implementation.

I name those people again today because—I do that to underline the absolute necessity of recognizing the principle that governments can only do so much. I do not say that because I am trying to make the point that there is no money or something like that. What I am saying is that we need people's brains, we need their experience, we need their commitment, we need their participation in order for us really to make a difference. Governments acting alone repeatedly have shown us that they cannot get the job done, so we are hopeful, and I have faith that the community approach will get more done than a government crying in the wilderness trying to do something about a problem.

I believe the same approach has worked with respect to drinking and driving which I might talk about a little while later. The area of domestic violence, as I said, is multi-dimensional. There is no question but that we have to deal with offenders if we are going to make any progress here. We have to understand the dynamics of domestic violence. People who work in the justice system and in the caring agencies have to understand the dynamics of domestic violence too, or else we are all just going to be operating in somewhat of a vacuum, and the same people will be coming back before the system over and over again.

When it comes to violence, there is more than just domestic violence. There are all different kinds of violence, and violence is wrong, Mr. Speaker. No matter how you slice it, violence is wrong no matter whom it is directed against. I am not proud of the fact that I was once asked to leave this Chamber because of a position I took on the issue of violence. I was asked and left. I was constrained to leave this Chamber because I was critical of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and others for their part in what I said at that time had to do with promoting violence on picket lines. I had to leave

this place for that reason, but I believe today -(interjection)-. I do not like that kind of thing, Mr. Speaker, but I do not like violence either, and I do not like people like Daryl Bean who have something to say about violence and I have yet to hear an honourable member opposite repudiate what Daryl Bean thinks or says about violence and the use of violence in dealing with people who cross picket lines to go to work. -(interjection)-

I hear them cackling from their seats, Mr. Speaker, but I have not heard anyone deplore what this man, Daryl Bean, wrote to three women, Helen Fraser, Dianna Haight and Jackie Nezezon. -(interjection)- Someone asked what he said in his letter. He wrote, and all three of these women are grandmothers and this is what Daryl Bean had to say to these grandmothers whom he accused of being what is called, in the vernacular, scabs.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. McCrae: After I am finished reading what Mr. Bean had to say to these three grandmothers whom he accused of being scabs, to use the union vernacular, perhaps some honourable members in the opposition—I know the Liberals do not go along with this kind of stuff. The New Democrats, by their own behaviour in the past and hopefully not in the future, have demonstrated where they stand when it comes to violence. Now, the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), I want her to hear this, and I want to know what her reaction is going to be to this kind of talk to three grandmothers.

It says here in a letter written by Mr. Bean—I think maybe some of these honourable members know what is in this letter and do not want to hear it again. I see the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), the union boss, sitting in his seat and smiling, and I want to know what this union boss thinks about what the other union boss, Mr. Bean, has to say. I have not heard anything from the Leader of the Opposition about this yet, but I will put it on the record so that he will hear it one more time.

It says this: After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad, and the vampire, he had some awful stuff left with which he made a scab. A scab is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a waterlogged brain and a backbone of jelly and glue. Where others have hearts, he carries a tumor of rotten principles. No man has a right to scab as long

as there is a pool of water to drown his carcass in or a rope long enough to hang his body with.

Now I want to know what the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) in this province thinks about that kind of language directed at three grandmothers. What does the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) think about language like that directed to three grandmothers, Mr. Speaker? What does the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) think about that kind of language directed at three grandmothers? What does the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) think about that kind of language directed at three grandmothers? When will they make their positions clear on Mr. Bean's comments to three grandmothers? They sit silently, Mr. Speaker, because they support this kind of garbage in our free country. If a grandmother happens to be a scab, I guess drowning or hanging is good enough for them too. Well, it is not for me. That is what the NDP stand for and I do not.

Where does the honourable member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) stand on this issue? We know something of his views about women. Does the same go for women in the union movement? -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): I would just like to clarify for the record that this problem was discussed at an NDP status of women convention or conference, and we did recommend nonviolence be used in all labour relations.

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

* * *

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, it is very nice to have the honourable member for Radisson going on record, partly setting the record straight as far as she is concerned, but what does she say about Daryl Bean? Does she repudiate what Mr. Bean had to say? Where do we read that in the front pages of the newspapers: Marianne Cerilli deplores comments by Daryl Bean? Where do I see that? Nowhere.

The honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), of course, we know where he stands because of his position in the 1987 SuperValu strike, the fact that he was out there on the picket line and going along with the activities there, pulling innocent

people's groceries out of carts, throwing it on the ground and bumping into their cars, and doing all kinds of unpleasant violent things. The honourable member for Thompson, where was he? He was on the picket line. That is where these people stand. -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I believe the member was kicked out once in 1987 on the same instance. I advise him to be a little bit careful of how he phrases, particularly with the absence to the four years in terms of myself or others. He was kicked out for statements made four years ago. I suggest he might want to continue with proper debate instead of reliving that incident.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable opposition House leader (Mr. Ashton) does not have a point of order.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): He wants my position on violence: Those who live by the sword shall die by the sword.

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

* * *

* (1750)

Mr. McCrae: Well, we have heard from the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) and the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos). Of course, the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), Mr. Speaker, only goes to serve to repeat what he has said and done in previous years. I am very mindful of his advice, mind you, and I do not intend to have myself evicted from this Chamber again for positions I take, but I will tell you, I cannot condone violence.

I cannot condone the kind of thing Mr. Bean writes to three grandmothers, but I wonder where that leaves the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). I wonder what Ed Schreyer would have thought about that approach to labour relations. I wonder what one of my heroes, Tommy Douglas, would have thought about that kind of approach to labour relations and about violence against women and against others. I wonder what Stanley Knowles would say about that particular approach. I suggest the New Democrats are a whole new breed, Mr. Speaker; they are very different. I have not heard from the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms.

Wasylycia-Leis) on this issue; she sits rather quietly in the light of this kind of approach.

I believe it was a well-known Manitoba academic who said that there is an organic fusion between the New Democratic Party and the labour movement. Well, that is true, there is, because of the silence I hear opposite in the light of suggestions of violence about hanging and drowning with respect to women in the labour force. I find that regrettable.

At the same time, while we are talking about violence and union and labour relations, where do honourable members opposite stand when it comes to farmers in Manitoba? I hear them in the House asking the odd question about the agricultural problems that we have in our province. Well, I do not know how many of them know very much about it. I do not claim to know a whole lot about the agricultural industry myself, but I do know enough to know that farmers are not doing as well as grain handlers are.

Where do honourable members opposite stand when it comes to tying up grain shipments at our ports? Where do they stand? Where does the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) stand? What does he tell the farm community in Manitoba when they ask the question: Where do you stand when it comes to putting people to work and getting our grain moving? He sits and makes comments from a seat that I cannot hear, but they are probably not good enough to be 10-second clips.

There is the union boss sitting over there, Mr. Speaker, and we know where he stands. There is no secret about it, it just needs to be told more often. I will tell you, the farm community is what makes my community go. It makes it tick, it makes it run. I will tell you, farmers need our respect. Farmers' concerns need our attention and farmers do not need to take a back seat to grain handlers who should be moving their grain. Honourable members opposite ought to know where the constituencies are and who they are in this province. The farmers are the backbone of this province and honourable members should remember that when they are sticking up for grain handlers in Thunder Bay and in Vancouver.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to a productive session here. I look forward to putting aside and standing up for what is right, and seeing it once in a while from honourable members opposite, and

hearing it, instead of playing their cute kind of politics that we see too often.

The honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes), in what I thought was a thoughtful presentation, spoke about the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, and I have some comments that I will be making at the earliest opportunity about that. Of 293 recommendations, I heard the honourable member refer to about 15 or something less than 20 in his comments this afternoon, although he did say he supports all 293 recommendations. We look forward to hearing his comments on each of the 293 recommendations. I am sure that when he speaks, he has caucus support for everything that he says on his feet in this House, and he has committed himself to all 293 recommendations. So we look forward to discussion about those 293 recommendations that the honourable member for Point Douglas supports, and I take it his Leader supports as well.

We will also talk about the consistency of that support for all 293 recommendations with positions that he and his caucus have taken with respect to the constitutional task force, and we will try to add up whether that all does come to a correct total or not.

An Honourable Member: You have the statements on CJOB in July.

Mr. McCrae: Yes, the honourable member referred to CJOB and a Globe and Mail article that he read from, and I made a note, something about the report being merely the opinion of two individuals. -(interjection)- Well, yes, but you see The Globe and Mail does not write down everything, and the honourable member knows that when he says things, not everything gets written down too.

You have to remember that this is indeed the opinion of two individuals after consulting many, many Manitobans after a year or so of public hearings. In the same way that our constitutional task force represents the opinion of seven individuals, headed by Wally Fox-Decent and other members of the task force, including the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr), and myself, and the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), and the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), of course, and the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render)—those are the seven people—that is our opinions after having listened to many Manitobans. The two judges

listened to many Manitobans too, so it is always important to get things in some kind of context.

While we are talking about context, what could possibly have been Daryl Bean's context when he talks about drowning people, when he talks about hanging people? That is what the honourable member for Point Douglas supports, drowning and hanging. Well, I do not. That is the difference between me and the member for Point Douglas.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I know that sometimes we get carried away when we give speeches in this Chamber, but I am sure, on reflection, the minister will recognize that what he said was a little bit farfetched, definitely unparliamentary and not really in keeping with the cut and thrust of debate. I would like to ask you to call him to order. Perhaps he may wish to withdraw those words, because I am sure he did not mean what he said.

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

Mr. McCrae: Anything at all that I said that was unparliamentary I withdraw categorically.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable Minister of Justice.

* * *

Mr. McCrae: I do not mean to get into that kind of a situation, but I do deplore anyone who could even be perceived to be supporting violence, and honourable members opposite could be perceived to be supporting violence by failing to repudiate, largely and liberally, the comments in the letter written by Daryl Bean to three grandmothers who decided they wanted to work.

Now, if I have said something wrong, I certainly did not mean to, Mr. Speaker. I did not want to finish today without calling attention to the fact that we are at one of those times of the year when we try to feel good about each other.

Having said all that I have said, that is out of the way now, and here we are at the time of year when we talk about peace and good will. The honourable members know that I mean it when I talk about my wish for them and their families, that they have a peaceful and enjoyable holiday season, that I wish them well in the coming year. They know that, so I do not think I need to talk very long about that. I do

ask them, please take part in the red ribbon campaign that we announced today with the help of Jennifer Nash from the Teens Against Drunk Driving. They do not call it the red ribbon campaign. They call it the tie one on campaign. When I was a youngster, I knew what tying one on was all about, but they talk about tying it on in a different kind of way.

They want you to tie a ribbon so that people will be reminded about the dangers of drinking and driving and that people will have some sympathy for those who have been touched tragically by the actions of drunk drivers in our jurisdiction or anywhere else.

I ask honourable members and all of the people with whom they come in contact to tie one on, tie on a red ribbon on your doorknob, tie one onto your car somewhere so others can see what you stand for. Sometimes it is important to deliver that message.

The honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) suggested that message should be the message all year. I agree with him. It is. We have our Alertmobile, we have our check stop vehicle working all year round at various times of the year, and this is one of those times of the year that we all

should have fun and be merry and joyous and spread the good will and the good cheer, but the only thing I say is do not get behind the wheel of a car if you are under the influence or over .08. That is not only against the law, but it is also very, very dangerous.

With those comments, I look forward to a very busy time ahead, from my point of view, dealing with my constituency's concerns but also dealing with the issue of domestic violence in co-operation with other people in the community and in this House. I look forward to an extremely busy time dealing with the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report and all of the recommendations in there. I know honourable members get to their feet and talk about important things like that and put their position on the record. I appreciate the position of the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) that all 292 recommendations must be acted on. I look forward to the debate in the future on that, and I look forward to the resumption of this session early in—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m. and in accordance with the rules, I am leaving the Chair and will return at 8 p.m. at which time the honourable minister will have three minutes remaining.

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

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