

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Friday, 19 December, 1980

Time — 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK (St. Johns) introduced Bill No. 5, An Act to amend The Gasoline Tax Act, The Motor Fuel Tax Act, The Revenue Act, 1964, The Retail Sales Tax Act and The Tobacco Tax Act.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: At this time I should like to introduce to the honourable members a Grade 9 class from Shevchenko College under the direction of Mr. Ron Slezak. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Emerson.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Minister responsible for the Rent Stabilization Board. I'm not certain who he is or she is, quite possibly the First Minister could answer. We've just received the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation survey data pertaining to rental information in the City of Winnipeg and that information is startling insofar as the contents of what has occurred during the six-month period April 1 to October 1, Mr. Speaker. It indicates that in one-bedroom suites, for example, the rents have increased, 50 percent of all tenants are now paying more than 250 compared to 32 percent back last April, and 50 percent are paying more than 300 per month compared to 35 percent last April. So my question to the First Minister is, does the government have any plans to deal with the inflationary trends that are taking place in rents in the city of Winnipeg?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, without in any way accepting the premise or the figures upon which my honourable friend bases his question, I'll be happy to take the question as notice on behalf of the minister responsible.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the First Minister. In view of the rental accommodation families, families sharing rental accommodation three-bedroom suites and suite apartments, it

illustrates that 27 percent in April were able to enjoy apartment suites 250 and less compared to now 14 percent. This dealing with the lowest income, lowest cost rental suites in the city of Winnipeg. Again my question to the First Minister, which again he may wish to take as notice as apparently the government hasn't been monitoring effectively what is taking place, hasn't been taking any action, again to the First Minister is any plan of action intended?

MR. LYON: The same reply, Mr. Speaker, with reiteration of the same caveats in accepting either the premise or the figures stated by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then further to the First Minister. Under present laws that exist in the province, if in a neighbourhood all the rentals increased by 20 percent can the First Minister advise as to what action can be undertaken by tenants that are caught within that situation of having all rents go up within a general neighbourhood by 20 percent, what steps can indeed take place under the present legislation, under the portfolio of his minister, the Minister responsible for Rent Stabilization?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, the question is hypothetical. We'll take whatever substantive part of it which is not hypothetical as notice.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the First Minister suggests that the question is hypothetical. If he would refer to today's Winnipeg Sun he'll find that the official with his own department, Mr. Julius, has confirmed indeed that a 20 percent increase would be okay if matched by other market conditions in a neighbourhood. Mr. Speaker, again I suppose we have to leave it as notice with the First Minister, whether or not there's anything that the government proposes beyond a means test in order to permit tenants to challenge substantial increases in rent that have been taking place recently.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, the Legislature at the last session dealt with this matter, if there are any further suggestions or amendments they can be considered at the forthcoming session when we reassemble.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then am I to conclude, by way of the First Minister's response, that amendments are being considered for the next sitting of the Legislature when we resume sitting in February or late January?

MR. LYON: No, Mr. Speaker, I said, that if amendments were found to be necessary there would be time to do them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Community Services. In view of the fact that under the CRISP Program, I

believe that the cheques will be going out in early January, I wonder if the Minister can straighten something out? According to the new service put out by the Information Services Branch of last December 18, it is stated here that a single parent with three dependants, that the benefit would cease when the net income reached 11,772 a year. And in the budget last year the information is that this would cease — everything would cease — only when it reached 13,000.00. Now has there been a change or is one of this information that is not correct, and I wonder if the Minister would want to correct it?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. GEORGE MINAKER (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I believe the comparison that the Honourable Member for St. Boniface is using relating to the budget was a family of four children; the comparison that he is referring to in the press release is, I believe, a comparison of three children in the family. I can advise the honourable member that in actual fact we have increased the actual net salary that can qualify for the CRISP Program by some 6 percent above what it was stated in the budget address.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Desjardins, I thought I was referring to the same thing, maybe we can check this after and get back to the Minister.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister. In view of the fact that there is so much inflation, and the people of course that are suffering for it are those that are getting less in revenue, for instance, those that on a fixed pension, and that are receiving a supplement, a net increase of 7 and some 80 cents a month, does the Minister and the government intend to increase this amount of the supplement for those people, to cover at least the inflation rate?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, I'm quite surprised that the Honourable Member for St. Boniface asked that question, because when the government introduced their program, I believe it was back in 1974, they did not increase it one iota but we doubled it, and the same Honourable Member for St. Boniface said it was pittance to double it, yet they as a government had the program for some four years and did not do anything with it and we, as the MSP have doubled what they have given out for the four years that they had the program so I think that we have taken a very advanced forward step in doubling that particular payment for the MSP fee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, in view of the ministerial statement I imagine that it would be in order to reply to the statement at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. Order please. This is the period for questions. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: I thought I would get at least the same leeway as the Minister but I'll ask a

question. Does the Minister think it's fair to use the funds from the taxpayers to make a misleading statement of doubling and talking about 5,000 when they're ready with that Safeway cart? Actually, what the Minister is doing and the government is doing is increasing by 7.80 — probably buy a cauliflower, three radishes and maybe green onions or something. Now my question, Mr. Speaker, is not asking for a speech. If he wants to discuss the program of three or four years when conditions were different, this is something else. You ruled that I can't discuss it with him at this time. My question was a very plain, very clear question.

Because of inflation and because those people are suffering more than anybody else, does the Minister intend to look at the supplement with the intention, with the thought, the possibility of increasing it to at least keep up with inflation?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Boniface is fully aware that it's tied with the guaranteed income supplement that the federal government issues, and as they elevate the qualifying income to qualify for the supplement, we automatically do the same.

In regard to the advertising of the program I am happy to say, Mr. Speaker, that in the matter of three months we have almost got half of what we anticipate are qualifying for that program on the rolls and it took the federal government five years to get the 95 percent of qualifying people on their guaranteed income supplement. In a matter of three months, by spending approximately less than 1/2 percent of a year's benefit of roughly 4 million, the total program is roughly about 23,000 that we have been able to get out and on the rolls half of the people that qualify. I might say that with the program we now have an additional 7,600 people receiving these payments.

MR. DESJARDINS: It's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister follows Ottawa now. I wonder if the Minister would think that maybe there should be a little bit of leadership. The Minister stated, I believe, that it depends what Ottawa will do, then automatically they would do the same thing. Can't they lead once in a while instead of following Ottawa?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Honourable Member for St. Boniface is awake as yet this morning because what he is suggesting, he didn't do when he was a Minister for three or four years, whatever it was. It's a program that has been followed by the former administration and we have continued with that program.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable —(Interjection)— Order please.

MR. DESJARDINS: I would like you to rule, Mr. Speaker. When a Minister is asked a question, can he go back three years, and if so I think that the House and you, Sir, should allow it . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Order please. When a member asks a question of the Ministry, the Ministry is not necessarily bound to answer it. If they do answer it, it should be as short

an answer, as briefly as possible. That way we do not get into attempts at debate during the question period.

MR. DESJARDINS: I imagine that you are ruling that both sides should do the same thing, and the Minister should answer the question, not answer something that happened three years ago, without a chance of the Minister of the day . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The honourable has not a point of order.

The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SAMUEL USKIW (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I would like to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. If members want to carry on private conversations, I suggest they withdraw from the Chamber and carry them on in the corridor or some other place in the building.

The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Minister of Economic Development, since the Premier is not in his seat, just when, Mr. Speaker, will we know whether or not there is any substance to the announcement that the Alcan group is interested in building an aluminium smelter in Manitoba and what the time frame is on their decision?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister for Economic Development.

HON. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I think the time framing on Alcan has been made very clear. As a matter of fact it was made very clear when they had their press conference. Alcan has been doing a study of Manitoba for the past eight months that is not completed yet. When that study is completed, which they feel will be completed very soon, it will lead them into some final studies, looking at the province of Manitoba. I don't think anybody is in the position to give an actual timing but I can assure you Alcan has worked with consultants in this province, they've contacted all kinds of people in this province, they haven't hidden anything. I don't know that there can be actual timing but I think everybody is very aware of how hard they're looking at the province of Manitoba.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the Alcan announcement involved some two years of feasibility studies after which they will make the decision, but what gives rise to my question of course is quite obvious, Mr. Speaker, and that is that the government decided that this was something that was important enough to be included in the Throne Speech as an announcement.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the Globe and Mail on December 16 there's an announcement that a similar study is under way for a location near Montreal, a .5 billion Alcan study and it's based on the premise that they will have cheap energy and that they have a port facility, sewer and water facilities built for them and all these other infrastructure items. So I want to ask the Minister of Economic Development whether or not that we are now in a position of having to

compete with the province of Quebec for the location of that facility in this province, or whether Alcan is proposing to build two plants in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'm also very aware that Alcan is looking at plants all over the world as a matter of fact, but Alcan believes that Manitoba is an area that has a very high potential for their type of operation and I assure you that they're very serious at looking at Manitoba.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Economic Development confirm that the interest on the part of Alcan — and Manitoba has more to do with the invitation of the province of Manitoba to Alcan — to do a feasibility study, rather than their own initiated interest in the province of Manitoba and that in essence what we're into is a bargaining game and a whip-saw situation as between the province of Quebec and the province of Manitoba?

MR. JOHNSTON: Nothing could be further from the truth. We're dealing with the assumptions again from the member. —(Interjection)— Yes, Alcan was invited to come to Manitoba. They came to Manitoba and looked, saw and decided that Manitoba should be investigated as a very viable place for Aluminum Canada there.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. R. (Pete) ADAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Community Services in regard to the Conservative propaganda done with taxpayers' money on the Manitoba supplement. Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of a budget for a person who qualified for that and it was advertised that this Manitoba supplement was to help those who deserved it most, the lower income. So my question is, that this lady qualified for the Manitoba supplement but she's worse off than she was before, she is now penalized 15 a month. She has to wait three months to get her money when she was getting it every month from the social assistance. I ask the Minister why these people have not qualified, since they are in the lowest income group in the country?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, I don't know the particular case that the honourable member is referring to, but I'd gladly review the case for him. Any senior citizen in Manitoba that is between the age of 55 and 65, they're retired and over 50 percent of their income is from a pension of some type and are below, I think the average figure is roughly 4,500 if they're single, will qualify for that supplement. And it is not intended to be a pension, in the same way that the MSP, when the former administration had that pension or supplement for those receiving Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement, it was not intended to be a full pension. It is a supplement to assist them if they already have a pension. And if the honourable member has a particular constituent that has a problem I'll look at it with them and try and sort the problem out.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, there was a case yesterday brought to the Minister's attention by the Member for Rossmere where the same thing is happening. They qualify for the Manitoba supplement, but they only get it every three months, instead of the way they were getting it before. They were getting 15 a month from the social assistance in addition to their pensions.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Has the honourable member a question?

MR. ADAM: I'm asking the Minister that every person who's in these circumstances gets the same thing, is that not a fact?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member is obviously out of order. He's making a statement and not asking a question.

The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose with a question.

MR. ADAM: Will the Minister not agree that every person who's in this situation . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Questions of agreement are out of order.

The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose has indicated that his constituent is doing exactly what we would like to see Manitobans do. They have an option, if they want to go on this program, rather than be on the welfare rolls, they have that option and obviously that constituent of the honourable member has chosen that route. Now whether the person gets it every three months or once a month they will not be any further in terms of less benefits by taking that approach. Now that was the approach the government has taken, that we want to see that people in Manitoba, the last source of resort will be welfare, and that is what the program is doing.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to send a copy of this budget to the Minister so that he could review this, that there is an injustice being made and I want the Minister to confirm that this lady is not worse off than she was before, without the Manitoba supplement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance — we assure the Minister of Finance that we on this side did miss him when he was gone — my question is to the Minister of Finance in his capacity as Minister responsible for ManFor. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of rumours circulating in the community of The Pas in terms of the present situation of ManFor, and I wonder if the Minister could bring us up to date, whether the ManFor Complex, Manitoba Forest Industries at The Pas, has been sold, or whether there are negotiations under way for the sale of that operation at The Pas?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, as much as I can tell the member is that is contained in the Throne Speech, that we've been looking at the many options or various options that might be available to secure the future of that operation to improve the produce line, expand it or whatever, and I haven't anything further that I can report at this time, except obviously the operation has not been sold if that is of some concern to him. As soon as I have information I'll send it to the House.

MR. McBRYDE: I would ask the Minister then whether the promises made in the Throne Speech debate in regard to the expansion of the ManFor plant are contingent upon a sale being made of that operation; and I would also ask the Minister, in the negotiations that he indicates are going on, what protection is there for the workforce at The Pas if, in fact, the Province of Manitoba sells that operation to private industry?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the only options that we are looking at are options which will expand the opportunity for employment in that ManFor operation.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could reassure us that we don't get into another Kasser situation, or another McKenzie Seed situation, and whether he could answer the first part of my previous question, how will the existing jobs be protected if the operation is sold?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to the member, every option that we are looking at looks at the expansion of job opportunity, not the elimination of job opportunity at The Pas.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Cultural Affairs, and ask her whether it's true that all three levels of government will now be forwarding grants to the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra in an attempt to eliminate what is now a projected 1 million deficit?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia): Yes, they will, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister confirm the statement by Winnipeg Mayor Bill Norrie, that no private or corporate donations have yet been solicited? If this is not true, can the Minister indicate how much corporate money has been raised?

MRS. PRICE: Mr. Speaker, the fund-raising program has been initiated and it is going into production this week.

MR. DOERN: Can the Minister confirm that even after six months of being in receivership and the appointment of her blue ribbon committee, that she has been unable to find a chairman to lead a committee to solicit corporate donations?

MRS. PRICE: Mr. Speaker, I believe that there has been a chairman selected for the fund-raising and it is going to be announced within the week.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

HON. JUNE WESTBURY (Fort Rouge): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Finance and I'd like first to welcome him back from the important meetings that he's been attending.

Mr. Speaker, my question refers to the 1.4 million which the Auditor reported resulted from unsatisfactory monitoring of commitments against a spending authority in Department of Government Services, what specifically is being done to prevent this from happening again, Mr. Speaker?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I think that the member ought to probably refer that question to the Public Accounts Committee. There have been a number of measures that have been taken over the last three years which do tighten up all of the management systems in the government, and we're satisfied that they have been effective. But I think on the specific of it I would refer the member to the Public Accounts Committee for details when the Auditor is also present.

MRS. WESTBURY: Well, Mr. Speaker, then I wonder if the Honourable Minister can tell us what the money was spent on, or should I address that also to someone else, I understand that the Auditor wasn't able to find that out. Would the Minister tell us please what this money went for?

MR. CRAIK: Well, I think, Mr. Speaker, the member probably has two options, either a detailed Order for Return or simply to refer it to the Public Accounts Committee when it sits and I think probably the Public Accounts Committee would be the most direct way of getting information because the Auditor will then be present. It is his statement and I think he should be present to elaborate on it as well.

MRS. WESTBURY: Well, Mr. Speaker, maybe I can get an answer to a third question. The Auditor also is quoted in the press as saying it was not his job to make a department look silly. In view of the fact that the department did look rather silly, will the government require departments to report fully overspending to the Auditor and explain fully how it happened so that there won't be a further waste of taxpayers' money.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I can't take the responsibility for another person's selection of words but I want to assure the member that we are satisfied that the management systems in the government have been substantially improved and offer good protection to the taxpayer. Beyond that, I think again to get into the details, the person who is attributed with the comments ought to be present when these kinds of questions are raised and that, of course, is at the Public Accounts Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question I believe should be addressed to the Minister of Finance and it is regarding the

negotiations which are undergoing now in respect to the ManFor complex in The Pas. I would ask the Minister of Finance if he can confirm that the government had commissioned a private consulting firm to do a prospectus regarding the feasibility of selling ManFor to the private sector, to a corporation in the private sector, and has sent that prospectus out to the major industries in the forestry production industry.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I think the comments are probably essentially, as the case is, there was a firm involved that was engaged, who did a thorough study of the ManFor project and came up with certain recommendations for either changing the product line, or expanding the operation, or getting some support back from the federal government because of the loss of tariff protection under the GATT round of negotiations and so on.

That firm has, in turn, been involved in looking at the entire industry and of the options that may be open with other firms that are now involved in the industry and can offer either market potential, or internal consumption, or vertical integration, or whatever will give us the best opportunities at The Pas. In so doing no doubt there has been prospectus material, if you like to call it that, presented to those firms and that process is still under way.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The obvious remark is that this method is a little more subtle than their 1956 method of putting an ad in the paper regarding the forestry production in the northern part of the province.

I would ask the Minister, therefore, because it is more subtle but it is less open, if the Minister is willing to table that prospectus so that members on this side and other interested parties may have the opportunity to peruse it in order to make determinations and judgments as to what the government is undertaking at this moment.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps in due course, certainly if action is taken upon this with a party outside of the government Crown corporation, that all the material that may have been involved, or pertinent to the transaction and is part of it, would probably be made available, but I don't know that it would serve any useful purpose — I can't even advise the member whether there is one single prospectus document — I suspect there is substantial information but it may vary depending on the circumstances. So I don't think it would be appropriate, during a period when a party that we've engaged is carrying on negotiations with any number of other parties, to try and undertake to make the documentation available. I am not even sure the public interest would be served at this stage to do that sort of thing.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't think it should be necessary to remind the Minister that this is a Crown corporation and that the people of this province and the opposition representing those people, do have a vested interest in what the government is undertaking and what is contained in

that prospectus. I would, therefore, ask the Minister what it is that he is attempting to hide by denying access to this particular material at this time when a very important decision is in the process of being made which will, in fact, affect many numbers of people in northern Manitoba and throughout the province if a bad decision happens to be made in this case. And I must remark that I am not suggesting that it is a bad decision . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The honourable member has asked his question. I would suggest that the remarks should be made by someone attempting to answer it if they choose to answer it.

The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I don't think the member has got a very good selection of words when he tries to suggest that something is being hidden. I think that it would be incomprehensible to think that if you were in a negotiating circumstance, whether you are negotiating for salary scales or negotiating the sale of a public property, that any public interest would be served to the better by doing it in the arena where, if there is going to be competition for it where your chances of getting the best possible deal for the Province of Manitoba, are reduced and that is, Mr. Speaker, what my assessment would be of what would happen if we were to follow the suggestions of the member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance and it follows on his answer with respect to the future of ManFor. Can the Minister clearly tell us whether, in fact, it is the intention of the Manitoba Government to sell ManFor to a private company, or is it the intention of ManFor to expand the operations of ManFor as a Crown corporation? What is the alternative? Is it going to sell it away? Has it done anything with McKenzie Seed . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. That question has already been answered.

MR. PARASIUK: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I am asking a question as to whether, in fact, it is the intention either to sell it or to expand it as a Crown corporation . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. That question has already been answered. Does the honourable member have another question?

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would ask you to peruse Hansard and determine whether that question has been asked because I am certain, from my recollection, that it has not been asked. I will rephrase the question but I would ask you if you look at Hansard to ensure that you continue, as you have in the past, to be impartial. I would ask the Minister if it is the intention of the government to expand the operations of ManFor as a Crown corporation, on behalf of the people of Manitoba; or if it is not that intention, is it the intention of the government to sell it?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that I have to get up and reinforce your ruling but the Member for The Pas asked essentially the same question and I answered it.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, since the government has put in the Throne Speech the notion that it will do something at ManFor, but yet isn't clear whether it will sell it, give it away, deal with some people in Switzerland on it, or expand it as a Crown corporation, can the government tell us if it has any positive policy and program of action with respect to ManFor in The Pas?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose. The Honourable Member for Transcona with a supplementary.

MR. PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the Minister of Finance if he would look into the situation in Saskatchewan where, when faced with a similar situation, the Province of Saskatchewan decided to take 100 percent ownership of the pulp and paper mill at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan because it felt that the market was right for an expansion of the operation there and it used the instrumentality of the Crown to do so. Would the Minister look into that to see if it applies to Manitoba, to ensure the people that the people of Manitoba regain and retain the biggest benefit from the forestry resource?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the member has read the full story on the efforts in Saskatchewan and, if he did, did he not notice that the Saskatchewan government was also looking at the option of divestiture?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Agriculture could confirm today if the milk commission has approved a cost-of-production formula. I'm not sure whether you heard my question yesterday or whether he intentionally avoided answering but I'm wondering if he could confirm today if there is in fact a cost-of-production formula in place for the producers of milk.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): It's my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that the commission are in that process at this particular time and that is, establishing a cost-of-production formula.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the Minister of Agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture had indicated that he was attempting to straighten out the confusing series of incorrect material that he had provided on October 31 and October 16, statistics pertaining to farm income. Can we have the

assurance of the Minister that clarification on that incorrect material supplied by the Minister will be tabled prior to this next Tuesday?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, in reference to those numbers, I had indicated that they did come from Statistics Canada and when the clear explanation was ready and available that they would be made available, plus the fact that they were projections and some of the reasons that the projections had changed because of higher interest rates and costs that have been calculated differently, through a method different than has normally been done, and when that is available and ready, Mr. Speaker, I will make it available.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition with a final question.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister prepared to supply the House with data, with information illustrating that indeed he did receive that incorrect information from Stats Canada, not from his own head or better still from the air above us?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm quite prepared to further pass on the Stats Canada information that we used to the member so that he can assess it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for question period having expired, we'll proceed.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, on a matter of privilege. I made reference to a CMHC survey data earlier in the question period, just as I would like the Minister of Agriculture to table his material that he's relied upon, I would like to table the CMHC survey data pertaining to the increasing difficulties pertaining to rent increases and thus vacancies occurring within the City of Winnipeg.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we proceed with Orders of the Day I should like to introduce to the honourable members, 20 students of Grade 5 standing from Woodhaven School under the direction of Miss Sanford. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

And we have 31 students from the Katimabik Group under the direction of Miss Bernadette Chabot. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: Adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Minnedosa and the amendment thereto by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge has 31 minutes.

MRS. JUNE WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I was interrupted by 10 o'clock last evening, I had been referring to the decline of Manitoba throughout the 1970s vis-a-vis Canada, in terms of domestic product, and employment and the decline of Manitoba population, as compared with western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, capital investment in the manufacturing sector in Manitoba is down. In the last decade private investment has gone down while investment in utilities has gone up. In the first part of the last decade we had in power a party whose vision of the role of government and whose lack of concern for market forces caused it to undertake large capital investments, Mr. Speaker, which weighed heavily on our taxpayers' shoulders and which, instead of widening Manitoba's options, narrowed them.

In the latter part of that decade, and up to the present, we have had in government a party whose laissez-faire attitude and restrictive philosophy have let our social capital deteriorate and have seen free market forces pass by Manitoba. Manitoba has been and will continue to be passed over by the resource-related boom in the other western provinces. What is needed in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, is a middle of the road government which is not obsessed with a right-wing or a left-wing ideal and which will adopt policies to manage the challenge before us in the 1980s but will avoid flying in the face of market forces as is the current practice.

Mr. Speaker, the address by His Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, began with reference to constitutional questions and the general area of relations between this province and the federal government. The government confessed that they had been preoccupied between sessions with these questions and their preoccupation certainly was evident in the lack of preparation on a whole range of important issues facing the people of Manitoba.

Although I strongly disagree with the position which is taken by this government on the recent federal initiatives regarding the constitution, Mr. Speaker, I do not question the propriety of seeking a judicial interpretation of current differences. I suspect that the province of Manitoba actually is being asked to be somebody else's messenger boy in this question and I find it rather ironic that a Premier who has been so vociferous in his concern about the role of the courts in protection of individual liberties should immediately seek the protection of the courts against what he believes is an intrusion in areas of provincial authority.

However, Mr. Speaker, my basic complaint is none of these, it is fact that in the intensive negotiations regarding the future of this country, that have taken place over the past few months, the First Minister has taken positions under the guise of protecting the authority of this Legislature which have been counter to the fundamental interests of this province.

Our Confederation is based on an economic cornerstone of sharing. It is demonstrated in cost-sharing agreements; it is reinforced by frequent negotiations regarding tax points; it is dramatized that the principle of equalization payments between those areas of Canada which have opportunities and our less advantaged citizens. The government has expressed concern in the Throne Speech about the

intentions of the federal jurisdiction to renegotiate these agreements, yet it is the Premier of this province who has supported positions and espoused changes in the fiscal arrangements of Canada which would seriously weaken the ability of the federal government to carry out these fundamental redistribution responsibilities. It is this government, Mr. Speaker, which has been most reluctant to acknowledge partnership roles enjoyed with the federal jurisdiction in Manitoba in a whole range of development activities and institutions, such as the Manitoba Enterprise Corporation. The government cannot have it both ways.

They cannot on the one hand demand greater federal revenue sharing and at the same time advocate the destruction of the fiscal ability of the federal government to meet those responsibilities. Manitoba has the most to gain when the federal system works, and the most to lose when it does not. It is the responsibility of the government of this province to bend every effort towards solutions to current tensions in federal-provincial relations. We must make constructive contributions rather than being a major contribution to the problem.

The first duty of the government of Manitoba in the opinion of my party is to act in the best interests of the people of this province. It is not to advance its own special theories of provincial authority. It is not to stand for a dogma in relation to federal-provincial issues. It is not to be the unshakable ally of political colleagues to the west. It is to act for Manitoba and that is precisely what this government has failed to do.

I share the First Minister's concern about the importance of new negotiations with the federal government regarding cost-sharing agreements, joint ventures, tax points, and equalization payments. There is no question that in a province where the revenue side of the ledger is about 50 percent dependent in total on the whole complex of these agreements that these negotiations are of fundamental importance, Mr. Speaker. I hope they will not be characterized by the kind of acrimony from Manitoba's side which are being characteristic of constitutional discussions. I hope they will not be carried on in an atmosphere of name calling and blame placing. I hope they will be entered into by this government with some sense of Manitoba's needs and Canada's opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, of prime interest to my constituency of Fort Rouge is the government's reference to the Winnipeg core area initiative. I say reference rather than statement or announcement, Mr. Speaker, because it seems as dependent on ifs butts and maybes as the rest of the speech. No dollar figure was attached to the statement but in question period next day I asked the question, how much? I asked the Minister of Urban Affairs if a committee of inner city people including MLA's could be formed to assist in the planning for expenditure of the possible Manitoba contribution of 32 million — if, but and maybe a few things — and of course, Mr. Speaker, that committee would include the government's own inner city MLA's if they are willing.

The Minister of Urban Affairs responded with a facetious remark about my gaining access to the federal minister. What does that have to do with it? My question was addressed to him, Mr. Speaker. Is

the Minister seriously suggesting that the people of Fort Rouge constituency are not entitled through their MLA to information of the type sort, because some of them as well as the Minister's own constituents elected a liberal member of parliament? Is he telling Fort Rouge which includes much of the core, that this government in its arrogance refuses to give information or accept suggestions from a member not of his party? Mr. Speaker, I respected that Minister when he was a city councillor and have considered him one of the civilized members of his party but his arrogant response to my questions reflects his party's panic following their recent polling in the province.

In all sincerity, Mr. Speaker, I urge the government to consult the residents and the business people of the core area. Get the feeling of the community, get the feeling of the people as to what should go into the core area initiative. I feel sure that in a city MLA's would be pleased to assist in this consultation with the community in order that the best possible use of the anticipated 100 million of government money can follow, with the private sector involved both financially and in planning.

An argument could be made that this is the city's responsibility but the city has not prepared an adequate development plan, Mr. Speaker, which we must have if we are to attract private development money. Developers will make investments where land use plans are clear for the foreseeable future but in the absence of a plan they will continue to follow the examples set by the city and spend available funds in the suburbs.

Former Chief Commissioner, Don MacDonald, said in 1979 that 80 percent of the city's budget has gone to the former suburbs, only 20 percent to the inner city. How can we depend on the city to place proper emphasis on the core area? As long as the city's concern is seemed to be in the suburbs and as long as the demand is on the suburbs, that is where private money will go. This government cannot pretend a hands-off attitude to city planning when it's common knowledge around City Hall that the government does apply pressure where it has an interest. We have an Urban Minister. He has taken five months to make an if, but or maybe commitment to match federal and city commitments to the core. Now let us see some action and some responsibility for downtown Winnipeg.

In addition to the Urban Minister and the MLA's there are a number of other ministers who should be part of the planning process and for lack of whose direct involvement, downtown Winnipeg has been at a standstill. The Minister of Community Services should be involved. The Minister responsible for Historical Resources could more vigorously pursue tax measures aimed at making viable restoration of our beautiful downtown historical buildings, some of which the Main Street banks and the Empire Hotel for instance, are right for the investment of private capital if incentives are available.

And what can one say about the Minister who is said to be responsible for Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation? In the entire last session, Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear a single new idea on housing or related services from that Minister. In the children's story, the wolf huffs and he puffs and he blows the house down. Mr. Speaker, this Minister,

the Minister responsible for MHRC huffs and he puffs and apartment blocks come down, parking lots appear. The Minister responsible for Housing and Renewal Corporation, who also wears a hat for Economic Development, huffs and he puffs and a grocery store disappears where a hotel is supposed to be built at the corner of Broadway and Donald, and that hotel never appears, that corner is now, guess what? — A parking lot, Mr. Speaker. And this Minister of a so-called free enterprise government huffed and he puffed in this House last session as he boasted of his refusal to negotiate with a free enterprise grocery chain for use of land under his control, for provision of the grocery store so desperately needed for viability of downtown Winnipeg south of Portage Avenue.

This major landlord of the elderly and the handicapped in the area between the Assiniboine River and Portage Avenue turns a cold shoulder to the needs of his tenants and others. He seems more sensitive to the pinpricks of his ego than to the despair of people anxious to maintain as much independence as they can in the years of their retirement. Mr. Speaker, I'm hearing from people now who can't get to the grocery store across the river. The city is telling them not to use the city sidewalks, Mr. Speaker. They need a grocery store close by where they live. In this kind of winter weather how can these elderly people continue to live in the area?

Mr. Speaker, I again urge this government to insist upon an immediate land use plan. We of the Liberal Party would expect such plans to provide relief for the anxieties of residents of the Sherbrook area to include stimulation of development north of Portage Avenue, with extensive involvement from the private sector. I would remind the Minister that only a very few years ago the downtown business association through Mr. Mel Michener presented a plan for that area, a plan which has been filed and forgotten apparently.

We would hope that private developers would be encouraged to take over some of the miles of surface parking south of Portage, including provision for needed parking within their residential and commercial accomplices. And we are looking for action in the east yards, recognition at the fork of the rivers of their major historical importance, exciting development proposals including family, elderly and handicapped housing, desirable commercial use and perhaps even the field house so long awaited by our amateur athletes.

However a word of warning, Mr. Speaker, rumour has it that this government is contemplating keeping its election year promise of a field house by paying for it out of core area initiative funds. This is not an acceptable use of this money, Mr. Speaker, it would be altogether unacceptable. Honour your commitments to the athletes, yes, but not at the expense of the core initiative program.

Mr. Speaker, I want now to speak for a moment about the day care program. The Liberal party appreciates the government's recognition of the desperate need for major expansion of pre-school child day care and of lunch and after school programs, but it is critical that quality not be expanded at the expense of quality and that is where the government is failing. Existing boards and staff

were not consulted or even apparently considered. The new fee schedule will force some existing centres to cut back their care.

New programs, of course, will be added and we welcome that but good existing programs will suffer. For 2.00 a day, Mr. Speaker, they cannot provide both the staff and the hot lunches that are now provided. Maintenance grants have not been increased since 1975, so neither this government nor its predecessor can take much pride in the matter of top level care for our most valuable resource.

We, in our party, are extremely disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that the speech included no commitment for early identification of special needs children or to the principle of the equal right to educational opportunities of all children. There is a commitment to the recommendations of the council on aging, Mr. Speaker, but did you know that it is impossible to obtain a copy of these recommendations? What are the recommendations that the government promised it would keep? I've been trying to get a copy and I can't get them, Mr. Speaker. The Liberal Party does welcome the acknowledgement of the International Year of Disabled Persons and wonders why Manitoba has yet to announce a delegate to the national committee founded several months ago with representations from all other provinces to promote programs in this area for the year, 1980.

In the provision of health care, Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech was cautiously silent, except for brief reference on Page 8. "Phased replacement of older nursing homes and expansions, replacements and new construction in the hospital field." This government continues to view health needs and health care as construction opportunities. One of the most urgent needs of our elderly and those who try to care for them at home is more encompassing home care and preventive care. Mr. Speaker, care services will look after an elderly incontinent person in his or her own home only during the day while the family is at work, but the middle-aged son or daughter cannot stay up all night to ensure that a mildly confused elderly parent does not wander, or turn the gas on or light a cigarette carelessly, or take medication too early or too late, whatever form a mild confusion may take. Many adult offspring would gladly keep parents at home if it wasn't for those long night hours. It is time the government addressed this major need. Manitobans 60 years of age and over represent half the cost of health care in this province and the number of elderly will double by the year, 2000. This government has failed to develop funds for alternate health care, Mr. Speaker. People are still occupying acute care beds while awaiting personal care space and there are people in personal care who could be in their homes with adequate home care: The cost of an acute care bed is what these days, 190, 200, Mr. Speaker? The per diem cost for acute care would more than pay for a full-time sitter in the patient's own home. The government's health program just cannot get turned around so that emphasis is on prevention rather than on the impossible task of building enough brick and mortar structures to keep ahead of the increasing senior population.

Liberals are gratified to learn that the government intends to renew emphasis on medical research in the province and we will await details with

considerable interest. But where else in the world, Mr. Speaker, would we find a Department of Health with a budget of nearly 600 million and no Deputy Minister? I asked questions in the House last session about the appointment of a Deputy Minister of Health and was told his office was being painted. What nonsense, Mr. Speaker] We have an Acting Deputy Minister who apparently doesn't want to be Deputy Minister. This government which in the past has paid lip service to the principle of recognition of worth in the Civil Service has for too long perpetuated conditions in the health ministry and health department which reflect the government's unimaginative brick and mortar approach to health care and their lack of direction in preventive care. No Deputy Minister. The Executive Director's position in Rehab Services was billeted four months ago and has not been filled yet. There is a shortage of psychiatrists, a shrinking number of ophthalmologists, a drastic shortage of anaesthetists, but I have to admit that's not confined to Manitoba. One epidemiologist in the entire province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when one of our Ministers responsible for health care is challenged by the public on some failure of government provision of health care, we hear, well I am monitoring that situation closely. Manitoba has the best monitored health program in the country. It is time to stop monitoring and start motoring. Unfortunately, the Throne Speech gives no indication that this government has any such intention.

The government has belatedly responded to the amazing and spirited public support for the mentally retarded. The 1980 marathon raised nearly 300,000.00. It was hoped that the government would respond by pledging 19,000 to apartment-living programs for the moderately retarded, instead the Minister has announced 25,000.00. In human terms, this means home for 40 instead of 78 young people. Those who have supported the aspirations of the retarded, Mr. Speaker, wonder why the government refuses to fund four-bed group homes for moderately retarded people. The association reports that it has much better public response to four-bed homes than to eight-bed homes, much less public resistance. Establishment of residences for moderately retarded adults has met with cruel opposition in some neighbourhoods where residents don't understand the gentle weariness of these young people who are trying so earnestly to become independent, who are trying to become self-supporting to the extent of their ability. If it is easier to have them accepted in four-bed group homes, Mr. Speaker, why must the Minister be so intransigent?

My party welcomes the announcement that additional training and placement programs will be proposed to assist women in non-traditional occupations. We congratulate the Attorney-General and his department on his work in the area of family maintenance. Personally, I support and our party supports the Minister and the government, the Attorney-General and the government, in the position taken at the federal-provincial level with regard to divorce jurisdiction, Mr. Speaker.

Regarding the government's general description of the Manitoba economy in the Speech from the Throne, we found it lacking in substance and lacking

in vision. I want to refer particularly to two critical areas of economic activity. First is the small business sector. Government does not seem to realize how critical small enterprise is in the economy of this province. In the Speech from the Throne there was no commitment to act, there were merely gestures and promises. Small business has always been the backbone of Manitoba and diversity is our strength. The cost of credit is the real threat to this vital sector of Manitoba activity. It is not enough to express concern; it is totally inadequate to content ourselves with complaining about the policy of other jurisdictions. The government of this province must commit to a plan of action in support of small business. There are a variety of options within the authority and the fiscal capability of this government. You could provide relief through the taxation system with further exemptions, tax credits, rebates. This government has some regulatory authority in this field. It has the option to enter the market, if need be, in the interest of the small business community. Manitoba's small businessmen expect to see more than words in this session; they expect to see action and support of this vital factor of Manitoba's economic life. To date this government's policies have resulted in an unprecedented wave of bankruptcy. The promised aid to small business has turned out to be nothing more than a figment of imagination.

The government has announced that a series of major projects are on the horizon. The horizon looks increasingly like the illusory pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. I will not repeat what has been said already about the time frames involved which were announced by this government as if they were immediate; I will not refer to the terrible embarrassment caused by the frank response of representatives of some of the industries affected, who tell a different story from that in the Speech from the Throne.

But I would remind the House that the Liberal party does not object to the use of major projects as a spur to economic development in Manitoba, we will not take the position that participation of capital controlled by multinational corporations is, by definition, wrong for this province, as members of the Official Opposition have suggested. However, we do believe strongly that the value of these projects is related entirely to their function as economic catalysts.

Let me explain what I mean in relation to the proposed smelter for Aluminium Company of Canada. The government has not been candid in this House about the nature of the discussions. If they are at a stage where some degree of privacy is required they should not have been mentioned at all. The government has not indicated whether the smelter will be dealing with bauxite or alumina. If it is bauxite which is to be shipped from Canadian port cities, I understand the smelter will raise a very serious environmental problem. Our assumption from the announcement is that the discussions have been focussing on the final processing of alumina. It would be helpful if the government would confirm that this is the case.

However my point, Mr. Speaker, is that the long-term value of this project is dependent upon the degree of processing that takes place within

Manitoba. If the smelter is designed simply to produce aluminum ingots for shipment and processing elsewhere, aside from the sale of 300 megawatts of power and the initial impact on the Manitoba economy of the capital investment, the project will not have the impact it really could. The government of Manitoba must negotiate with this company to ensure that processing which takes place in Manitoba is carried to such a level that industrial benefits in the form of manufacture of aluminum products can logically be located in Manitoba. If this is not the negotiating position of this government they are selling the people of Manitoba short.

I must also observe that I have some anxiety about the premature revelations in relation to this project.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): The honourable member has five minutes.

MRS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not share the concern of the Leader of the Official Opposition regarding disclosure in this particular instance. There is an appropriate time for such an announcement. I am concerned that the government may have seriously weakened its negotiating position to act in our best interests, because of its desperate desire to have accomplished something when, in fact, all it does is talk.

The government's sins of omissions extend also to their complete lack of concern for the human elements, the workers without whom there wouldn't even be the minimal amount of industrial development we have. Mines aren't just shafts hewn out of stone, and factories are more than buildings and machines, they are also people, people who invest their time and energy, and their health, Mr. Speaker, to provide for their families. The work ethic is still very much a part of our way of life. Men and women continue to take pride in doing a day's work for a day's pay, whether a miner, factory worker, or sewing machine operator the worker contributes a lot more to the economy than he takes out, and he asks little from government. However, what he does ask, and demands, is a proper level of health and safety in his workplace, Mr. Speaker, an environment within which he can work without fear of losing life or limb or suffering the ravages of work-related disease.

In the Throne Speech the government boasts about the high level of mining activity. But there are statistics they don't boast about, statistics that paint a much grimmer picture of the mining industry in the province, statistics that measure the loss of life and crippling injuries.

The Liberal party welcomes any additional jobs that increased mining will provide, but we would welcome even more some substantive steps to ensure that those employed in this industry are provided with sufficient safeguards so they don't take their lives in their hands every time they report for work.

I mentioned the grim statistics associated with mining and one of these is the 70 recorded deaths over the last ten years; 70 Manitoba miners killed on the job, the last no more than a few months ago. Even this does not tell the full story. The number of non-fatal accidents is scandalous. Last year there was one accident for every five miners for a total of

close to 1,200. This in a civilized society under a so-called civilized government. The government's ignoring of this situation won't make it go away, Mr. Speaker. If apathy were the answer this government would have solved all our problems.

What can be done to minimize the risks of those employed in mining? Nobody has made a conscious attempt to hide them from the government. They are self-evident to those who have taken the time to study the situation. It is apparent that many mining accidents are directly attributable to defective equipment. As well, there is some question as to whether underground workers are adequately trained before being sent into the mines. cursory orientation courses are insufficient preparation for employment in this industry and the government should make safety training mandatory at all levels.

The apathy of this government towards safety in the workplace is not confined to mining; they have shown a similar disregard for workers in almost every other employment sector. Recent reports indicate that many Manitobans are dying every year of cancer caused by exposure to harmful substances at the workplace. We see no real evidence of government concern, no concrete action, only lip service to address this tragic phenomena.

The 1979 report by the U.S. Surgeon General indicates 20 percent of all cancers may be work related. If this holds true for Manitoba this would mean approximately 1,000 cases of cancer which originated in Manitoba in 1978 could be directly traced to the workplace. This is an astounding statistic and one that certainly should be studied.

Every year many workers go on compensation as a result of industrial diseases from hearing impairment and silicosis to tuberculosis. These diseases are a by-product of the industrial revolution. What is needed is a revolution for their prevention and treatment. We have only recently become aware of the abundance of insidious poisons in the air, the chemical agents that are no less virulent because they are invisible. They must be addressed; workers should not be exposed to proven health hazards such as lead, asbestos, sulphur dioxide and silica dust; robbed of their best years. This is not only exploitive but criminal and it must stop, even if it means that employers must be forced to place worker's safety before maximum profits.

It will take time, effort and money to correct the lamentable conditions in many workplaces; it will require a proper labelling of toxic substances so that workers know the hazard they face; training to ensure that such substances are safely stored and handled; it will require considerably more than 19 inspectors. I'm advised that the Workplace Safety & Health Branch carried out over 9,000 inspections at worksites last year and ordered improvements in more than two-thirds of them. This indicates the immensity of the problem and raises a couple of vital questions. How many worksites were not inspected due to a lack of inspectors? How much follow-up was there to ensure the required improvements were carried out?

Regarding the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, I would have no problem voting for an amendment which indicts the failure of this government, but a serious problem voting for an amendment which makes the indictment, as it were,

a comparison with the record of the previous government, and I am not prepared to vote for an amendment which supplies support of that record.

The Speech from the Throne was a very lackadaisical effort which did not address the major problems of our province, it is not good enough for this particular time in the history of our province. While I have applauded some few government efforts the total effort is frightful.

In closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, may I extend to you, Sir, to all members of the House, of all religious faiths and to the staff persons who serve us all so well, my own and my party's felicitations this Christmastide; my sincere wish that we share a New Year in good health, in a prospering province; that we may move toward an election campaign, Mr. Speaker, determined to fight in a fair way for those principles in which we believe.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my first words, Sir, are words of pleasure at seeing you in your familiar place and seeing the Honourable Mr. Speaker, for whom you are the Deputy in his familiar place in the Speaker's Chair as you resume your duties as the arbiters of the debates of this Chamber and the protectors of the rights of all of us who sit here and serve here, Sir.

My second words would be words of pride in Manitoba and encouragement engendered by the bright prospects for this province and the bright record of this province outlined in the Speech from the Throne which I obviously, Mr. Speaker, support wholeheartedly and to which I wish to attach my comments from the perspective of a government member and a Member of the Treasury Benches and a Manitoban who has considerable concern over the performance and the tactics that have been displayed by the opposition, the so-called loyal opposition, in this province during the past three years.

Before I get to that however, Mr. Speaker, I do want to express my congratulations to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge and the members of the Liberal Party on the election of their new leader, which is a political event which has transpired in this province since last we met. We have some doubt as to whether the secret formula, Formula 44, for producing success at the polls has been achieved through this leadership change any more than it was achieved through earlier leadership changes and quests by the Liberal Party, but we are encouraged to see the political process at work in that party as in other parties participating in this province and we congratulate the new Liberal leader and wish him well.

Mr. Speaker, I would also want to comment very briefly on the substance of the remarks just made by the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge. She hasn't been in the House very long and we all appreciate that and we accept some of her comments with gentle tolerance. When she's been here for a little more time she'll appreciate that no government lays out in detail every corner and every aspect of its programs in the Throne Speech, and I think it's both

premature and superficial and regrettably but understandably uninformed of her to expect that the kinds of programs that will be introduced late before this House for approval in Health and in Community Services and in Economic Development and in the field of Government Services and Consumer and Corporate Affairs and all sections of the spectrum of government, to expect that those should be laid out in detail in the Throne Speech reveals, I think, a lack of understanding at this point of the process itself. But I attribute that to the fact, as I say, that the honourable member hasn't been in the House very long. I would just caution her not to either have expected too many details in the Throne Speech or to be dismayed because they were not revealed in the Throne Speech, because those programs are there, Mr. Speaker, and those details are there and they will reveal themselves as the individual departments and their ministers bring their Estimates before the House and ask for legislative approval.

I think that the comments on health care reflect the superficial observations of a newcomer to the province, namely the new Liberal leader. He is a man who does not yet know and understand either the size and scope of the health care system in Manitoba or the rapidly changing dynamics, both social and fiscal, in the health care field and the comments reveal that. They fall into the same simplistic traps about equating occupancy of active treatment beds by long-stay patients with occupancy of personal care beds by long-stay patients that the first time observer always falls into, Mr. Speaker.

The fact of the matter is the problems in the health care field in Canada, in Manitoba, in every province in this country, in every state in the United States, and in every country in the western world, are complex, profound and do not lend themselves to simplistic, superficial solutions such as are implied in the observations of the Leader of the Liberal Party reflected through the comments of the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge. In any event, we will deal with those when we deal with health care issues.

I want to say to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge and her leader that I have never suggested that our health care system is perfect but I can tell the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge that it is widely and that it is highly envied by representatives and individual citizens of jurisdictions, the length and breadth of this continent. I have continual and ongoing contact with my colleagues in the other provinces in Canada and through an international legislative committee with health commissioners in states of the United States, and the Manitoba health care system is highly and widely envied and there is jurisdiction after jurisdiction wealthier, far wealthier than this province across this continent, which stands in awe of what a jurisdiction of one million people has been able to put in place here, in terms of health care that carries in most cases no and even in the exceptional cases, very little direct cost to the consumer or the citizen. I emphasize of course the term direct cost because obviously all citizens in their capacity as taxpayers pay for the system. But what is in place here far outshines, far supercedes what is in place in most jurisdictions of this continent.

There are some areas that require expansion and improvement and innovation, no one denies that.

Those new and innovative measures are not always easy to come by and one of the biggest stumbling blocks to progress in the health care field is existing attitudes in the field itself, existing attitudes of health care professionals, starting with the medical profession. If the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge and the leader of her party don't understand that, and it's obvious that they don't, I simply repeat what I said, that they are taking the simplistic, initial easy solution, superficial attitude of the first time observer. But when they get into the system and look at it and learn something about it and understand it a little bit, they will come quickly to the conclusion that there are no simple answers. All of us are working towards improving and reinforcing the system but you don't simply do it by saying that you can equate one kind of bed with another kind of bed and move that patient into that other kind of bed and that's going to save you so many hundreds of dollars a day, that is absolute superficial rubbish. (Interjection)

My colleague, the Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, described it as typically liberal and it really is typically liberal. We've had that experience provincially and federally in this country and particularly in western Canada for a great number of years, that kind of middle of the road, no commitment, compromise solution, simplistic solution to problems. It's got this country and this province into a lot of trouble and not very many of us are very impressed by those quick and easy soft answers to challenges.

But I respect the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge's interest in health care and I appreciate that she has the concerns of the citizens of Manitoba and the health and social services field at heart, and I would welcome a constructive comment and proposals from her, but I just caution her not to jump to too many conclusions from a Throne Speech, which in fact did contain much more in the way of references to health care than she gave it credit for. She raised in particular the question of care for the elderly and programs needed in that field, yet in her reference to what was contained in the Throne Speech, she ignored the Throne Speech reference to the recommendations coming out of the Manitoba Council on Aging, that will serve as — (Interjection)— the honourable member says she mentioned that. She mentioned the Manitoba Council on Aging and she mentioned the fact that she hadn't seen their recommendations. What I'm suggesting, Mr. Speaker, is she did not acknowledge that a specific section and an important section in the Throne Speech states quite clearly that this Legislature will be asked and I quote, "To consider a number of new programs in the health care field including programs arising out of recommendations of the Manitoba Council on Aging established earlier this year". Obviously we are talking about programs in the field of geriatric medicine and in the field of support and reinforcement and institutional change to accommodate our aging population and changing age demographics in our population.

So I just would like to bring the examination of the Throne Speech material to that point for the edification of the honourable member. There are programs contemplated that will be laid before this Legislature in the course of the next three or four

months or longer that address what I recognize and what she says she recognizes as one of the continuing ongoing and major challenges in North American society today, and that is the readjustment of our programs and our institutions and our attitudes to accommodate the fact that our population is growing older and that the elderly segment, the elderly component of our population, is becoming larger and larger and representing a bigger and bigger percentage of our total population each year.

My third words, Mr. Speaker, would be words of dismay and disappointment and I referred to them earlier. In the leadership that's being offered by the Honourable Member for Selkirk at this time, as Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in our great province — and I wish the Leader of the Opposition were in the Chamber, I know he was here earlier and hopefully he can return — because I intend to tell him what I think he is doing in terms of damage to the province of Manitoba and I don't like to do it when he is not present, Mr. Speaker. This, however, is my only opportunity in the Throne Speech debate and I think it has to be said.

When I talk about leadership in connection with the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, I talk about it justifiably I think because in our system the Leader of the Opposition has a participatory role and a participatory share of the responsibility to a minority degree, but nonetheless a share, in the leadership of his or her province or in the federal context, the leadership of the country. I can tell the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that scores of thousands of Manitobans are bitterly disappointed and dismayed by the tactics and the techniques, at this point in time of Manitoba's history and development and challenge, the tactics and techniques of the Leader of the Opposition.

Completely bereft of any saleable platform of their own, Mr. Speaker, they have under their Leader from Selkirk seized upon the opportunities of the moment, opportunities for them, to fashion a climate of worry and a climate of anxiety that they think they can exploit and they think they can ride to political victory. I think, Sir, that those tactics and that rhetoric represents political opportunism of a very cynical kind. I think it has to be said, because a lot of Manitobans feel it.

They've pandered every grievance and every petty frustration that can be found in any society of one million persons, any day of the week, under any government and they pander also to the natural tendency of society and the media to go for the doomsday story. That is a natural weakness in all of us; that's why it reflects itself through our media. This opposition, the opposition led by the Honourable Member for Selkirk, panders to that tendency and exploits it to a degree that I think, Mr. Speaker, constitutes a very serious disservice to the future of this province.

The Leader of the Opposition has blamed this government for every difficulty and for every challenge facing Manitoba today and he has done it without regard for objectivity, without regard for intellectual honesty and without even very much distinction between the important and the trivial. About the only thing he hasn't blamed this

government for, Mr. Speaker, is the winless streak of the Winnipeg Jets, and that will probably be next.

I want to say, and I wish he were here because I don't like to say it without his being here but I hope the Honourable Member for Elmwood and the Honourable Member for Rupertsland and the Honourable Member for The Pas, etc., will take the message back to him, that the Honourable Member for Selkirk is the quintessence of the paper tiger. Even that description pays him a compliment that he doesn't truly deserve because, Sir, the classic paper tiger really has a justifiable base from which to employ his strategies. He may roar empty bravado and he may rattle dull sabres, Sir, but at least he does so with the interests of his territory at heart. He does so out of a motive to protect and defend that territory. But in the outbursts of the Leader of the Opposition and some of his colleagues, not all of them but some of his colleagues, we don't have a politician who is in any way concerned with defending and protecting his territory and its prospects and its immediate condition and its immediate challenges, that is, the territory being Manitoba.

We have a politician who sees in Manitoba's struggle against difficulty and some natural adversities over which there were no defences, the opportunity to exploit the situation to his own advantage. That is what shocks and dismays so many Manitobans that I talked to and who talked to me today, Mr. Speaker. We have an opportunist saying, in effect, that Manitoba is going to hell in a hand basket and posturing about economic and social rack and ruin and through his own cynical opportunism, Sir, he contributes to what could become, unless reasonable men and women check it, he contributes to what could become a self-fulfilling prophesy. If there is anything Manitoba doesn't need at this point in time in its development and in its history, it is purveyors of doom and gloom and negativism such as are manifest in the Leader of the Opposition and many of his colleagues.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Selkirk has no feeling for the danger that he is doing to the spirit of this province. He has no feeling for the psychological climate that's so influential to success or to failure in any society. He's just concerned with a scenario that he feels, he and his zealots feel, can be turned to their political advantage.

Here we have a simple solution posed by the NDP and the NDP Leader, Mr. Speaker, to all Manitoba's problems, the great salvation for the province that is in such terrible shape. (Interjection) It's to be found, that's right, the Member for Elmwood has anticipated me. It's to be found in the simple exercise of restoring to office the same shabby collection of NDP zealots who occupied these government benches for the first eight years of the 1970s and who were only turned out of office by a grateful electorate three years ago.

They say to solve the problems to save Manitoba's slide into economic ruin, you've got to put us back. You've got to throw out the Conservatives and put us back. We were only in office for eight years, the first three-quarters of the decade of the 1970s. We've only been out for three but, by golly you know, we didn't finish our job. They certainly didn't

finish their job but they came close to finishing it. They came close to finishing it and that's one of the reasons, Mr. Speaker, why we face such a formidable challenge and why any government in office in Manitoba today would face such a formidable challenge of turning this province around and making it more competitive than was the case in 1977. (Interjections)

Well, I just want to suggest to the Leader of the Opposition and members opposite, Mr. Speaker, that they should think about the fact that this kind of liturgy of doom and gloom that they keep spouting, is really a damning indictment of their own record, of their own abysmal legacy because no matter how they want to slice it, Mr. Speaker, three years does not equate to eight years.

If we face difficulties and challenges in Manitoba, it's not because they were invented three years ago on October 11, 1977. The fact is, Sir, that they have been building for a long time, largely as a result of external factors and influences. But part of the reason why they have come together in this combination in the early 1980s is because there was little or no foresight or anticipation practised by those who had the responsibility for guiding the affairs of this province before 1977.

There was little or no anticipation or foresight or talent of that nature demonstrated by or possessed by that NDP administration that was in office from 1969 to 1977. Even if there were, Mr. Speaker, even if there had been some such talent of anticipation and foresight, there would have been little chance of that government's building any cushions against future shock for Manitobans because, Sir, need I remind you that their hell-bent centralism, the gallantarianism, anti-professionalism, and their inherent dislike of individualism, their inherent dislike of the individual and the individual spirit guaranteed, Sir, that they would scare off the influx of brains, energy and capital investment needed to keep Manitoba competitive in an intensively competitive North American environment. Their demonstrated arrogance, anti-professional and anti-individual arrogance, the arrogance of mediocrity, guaranteed, Mr. Speaker, that they would leave Manitoba unequipped for the emerging economic and social challenges of the 1980s, that's one of the contributing factors to the situation of challenge that this province must address today.

So, Mr. Speaker, this province through this government, this government elected in October, 1977 under Premier Sterling Lyon, is addressing that challenge today. We have inherited a pretty formidable responsibility. We have inherited a responsibility to equip this province to meet the emerging problems and challenges of the 1980s for which there was no groundwork laid in the period to which I have referred and despite the handicap of a late start, and despite the handicap of considerable and continual misrepresentation of our record to date, we are progressing, Mr. Speaker, on that considerable task.

Moreover, the majority of the people of Manitoba know we are making progress. They are not swayed by the high-pitched tirades of a political opportunist. They are not stampeded by hysterical headlines. They are not converted by woolly essays written by fuzzy economics professors in Brandon East who

peer out myopically from beneath their examination papers and declaim, "The decline of the Manitoba economy under the Conservative government", especially when those same fuzzy economists, Mr. Speaker, served as Minister of Industry and Commerce during the wasted years that I have referred to. Yet, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the untenable position that their own record places them in, notwithstanding the intellectual dishonesty and the absurdity of these charges that lay the difficulties and the problems of Manitoba — every one of them — on the doorstep of the administration of the day, and notwithstanding the damage that does to the spirit and to the prospects of this province, the Leader of the Opposition keeps it up. (Interjection)— The Member for Selkirk keeps it up and that's the shocking and unbelievable thing.

One can only conclude, Sir, that the Leader of the Opposition desires at the moment that Manitoba does go to hell in a hand basket. That's the only inference one can draw. I don't suggest that he wants Manitoba to go into economic disaster and depression for all time, I wouldn't accuse him of that, but just for now, he wants it just for now, just for a little while, just long enough to get him and his ragged troupes elected as the next government of this province.

Further, Mr. Speaker, if Manitoba isn't yet in fact going to hell in a hand basket, the Member for Selkirk is going to keep on saying it. He's going to keep on saying it because he knows he'll be quoted and he's going to do his level best, Mr. Speaker. I suggest to you the Leader of the Opposition is going to do his level best to do all he can to make sure that Manitoba does meet that fate because it will serve his cynical opportunistic political ends and that is the shocking incredible unacceptable thing for Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, by his own conduct.

By his own conduct he is willing to employ the tactic of using his province for his own ends and that, Sir, is why I began my remarks by saying that one of the most important and urgent comments that I wish to make in this Throne Speech Debate, was to observe on and convey to the Leader of the Opposition the keen disappointment that is felt by many many Manitobans over these tactics and strategies of his at this point in time, his total disregard for the good and for the interests and for the prospects of his province. Win at any cost, you know. Manitoba hasn't got the oil that Alberta has got and it hasn't got some of the natural resources — at least not up to this point in time — with which other jurisdictions are blessed, so we face a much sharper, in many ways, a much more profound competitive battle to stay abreast of economic and social developments on this continent that many other jurisdictions do, but no acknowledgement of those realities. No acknowledgement either of the natural disasters that have plagued this province for the last two summers, or of the uncontrollable global fiscal forces that oppress all jurisdictions in North America, with the exception of the two wealthiest, but impact most heavily on a province in the situation that Manitoba is in. None of that. No acknowledgement of facts, of honesty, or reality, simply Manitoba's difficulties are attributable to this government; Manitoba's in deep deep trouble; people are leaving; the province is headed for

economic ruin; and despair is at hand everywhere, and it is the fault of a government that's been in office for three years. Well I don't particularly mind that sort of spacious attempt at laying political blame on the government. That's all too frequent a tactic in politics and I don't think any political party is immune from using that kind of strategy.

My objection, Sir, is that the Leader of the Opposition translates all of his grievances against this government into stories of despair and into a doomsday scenario for Manitoba, which feeds that very negative climate and atmosphere, existing in the province because of the real economic difficulties that face us and over which we have no immediate control. So that what he does, Sir, is he contributes to and feeds this destructive atmosphere. I see no other explanation for the kind of unfounded, exaggerated woes that he repeatedly ascribes to Manitoba and blames on this provincial government every time he has an opportunity to make a public statement, Mr. Speaker, than that explanation; the fact that he would like to see Manitoba hit economic rock bottom because he thinks it would help him get elected as the Premier of Manitoba. Well, that's not going to win him many marks with the majority of Manitobans, Mr. Speaker.

I would say to the Leader of the Opposition that he should watch carefully what he's doing. He will live to regret the dangerous course that he's on, Mr. Speaker. The real problem for the Leader of the Opposition, of course, is that he is a sheep in wolf's clothing, that's his real problem. He is a sheep in wolf's clothing and the dress ill suits him, Mr. Speaker, he should have stuck with the sheep. At least as a sheep he was credible, people believed him but now, Sir, he fools nobody. He's adopted this jingoistic posture, near hysteria whenever he has the opportunity to fulminate against the government and exaggerate about the problems afflicting and effecting Manitoba, and nobody believes him, because it's no out of character for that mild, young man, that nice young man, stumbling along in his legal profession in Selkirk; attending to a mortgage here and a land sale there; and holding hands with his neighbours; it's so out of character for him to come in as a fighter and as a would-be leader. He isn't pulling it off, Mr. Speaker. And because he isn't pulling it off he has adopted this cynical tactic — and I say it's very cynical, Mr. Speaker — he's adopted this cynical tactic of trying to exploit Manitoba's difficulties, to give himself a political platform.

The reason I'm taking time, Mr. Speaker, is because I'm concerned about my province and I'm concerned about the propaganda campaign which has been picked up and disseminated far and wide that says, that Manitoba is in deep deep trouble. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that although the Opposition may not have started all of it, seeing that in front of them and bereft of any reasonable solutions of their own, they've seized on it as the only platform available to them.

Mr. Speaker, if this great province of ours is in trouble, it's not in the kind of trouble that the NDP is trying to pretend exists. It's in trouble because of that atmosphere, that phoney atmosphere, that scare atmosphere, that has been promoted and widely spread and cultivated by the Leader of the

Opposition and some of his followers. I don't blame it on all members of the NDP and I urge those who have not fallen into that trap, to caution their leader and to protect their own interests and their own futures in this regard, not to fall into that trap of preaching doom and gloom and destroying the spirit of Manitobans, not to continually run Manitoba down and that's what the Leader of the Opposition, the paper tiger from Selkirk, does. He continually publicly runs Manitoba down and Manitobans are getting a little tired of it, Mr. Speaker.

Many Manitobans are not only dismayed and shocked by it but they're getting mad about it. They're becoming angry with that kind of cynical, political opportunism. This is one of the great jurisdictions in North America. This is one of the great societies and one of the great provinces. We are fighting against conditions over which we have not had entire control, against external factors over which we have had nowhere near the kind of control that we would like to have, Mr. Speaker, and we are making progress against those difficulties, making progress in those challenges. I think what is necessary in Manitoba more than anything else today, Mr. Speaker, is a coalition of the spirit of Manitoba and Manitobans, rather than this kind of partisan opportunism; rather than this kind of cheap politicking to take advantage for the political gain of the Leader of the Opposition. So I appeal to those supporters in his party who are as dismayed as many other Manitobans are, at the conduct of the Leader of the Opposition, not to fall into the trap of that strategy, Mr. Speaker.

Where are the Opposition's proposed solutions to the problems that we face? Where are their proposed solutions to the fiscal and economic difficulties which impact so heavily on a province like Manitoba today? What are their answers to the closures of packing plants and flour mills and the need for rationalization and updating of many conventional patterns of North American industry today? Their only answer, Mr. Speaker, is one that they know is totally unpalatable and unacceptable to Manitobans, so they can't resort to it. That's the answer of complete state intervention into our lives and complete state ownership of the economy. They know that is unacceptable —(Interjection)— no, they believe in it but as my colleague, the Minister of Government Services says, they're not quite prepared to say it because they know that it won't get them elected. They know that it is unpalatable and unacceptable, so they search desperately for some fighting ground and they think they've found that fighting ground, Mr. Speaker. But I want to tell them that not only are the reports of our death and our funeral exaggerated and premature, but their confidence in their prospects is equally exaggerated and premature.

Mr. Speaker, do not underestimate, I say to my friends opposite in the Opposition, do not underestimate the intelligence of the voters because when they talk about arrogance and accuse us of arrogance that, Sir, is the greatest arrogance of them all, underestimation of the voter, and the voter's intelligence. That's the great pit and pitfall of arrogance into which they fall. They believe that Manitobans can't see through the cynical smokescreen of doomsday prospects that are

painted and promoted by the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, I have a word of friendly advice for the Leader of the Opposition. Manitobans can see through it and have seen through it and Manitobans are dismayed and shocked by his opportunism, and Manitobans will let him know in no uncertain order that he has lost his credibility. He cannot offer himself now as a statesman with a real interest in his province, because he has abdicated that responsibility of leadership and states . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Minister's time is up.

The Honourable Member for Point Douglas.

MR. DONALD MALINOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm always glad to confirm through our traditions in congratulating the mover, the Honourable Member for Minnedosa, and the seconder, the Honourable Member for Springfield to the Speech from the Throne. Also I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr. Douglas Lauchlan and I wish him well.

Mr. Speaker, once again I express my pleasure in seeing you occupy the difficult job of the Speaker of this House. Especially, Mr. Speaker, — not you — because right now you are Deputy Speaker, but the actual Speaker, the difficulties which we had not so long ago, namely Tuesday, with our Member for Wolseley. Mr. Speaker, I was deeply moved by what happened in our Chamber and I pray, and I hope it will never never occur, something like that to any MLAs or M.P.s or any parliamentarian.

Mr. Speaker, I will try not to add to your difficulties but naturally I am only a human being so I can't promise you that.

It is now, Mr. Speaker, only a few days before Christmas. It is supposed to be the season of peace and goodwill and I wish, Mr. Speaker, it were possible for me to make just a very short speech on this occasion. I wish it were possible for me to say that the Throne Speech was one of the best ever presented in this House. I wish there was much in it to benefit those in greatest need. I wish the government had such an excellent record and performance so that all I would have to do on this occasion is offer my congratulations to the government and wish you all a Merry Christmas and then sit down.

But, Mr. Speaker, again the Throne Speech is a distinct disappointment. What is projected in this speech falls far short of what is urgently needed. My responsibility as an MLA makes me face this sad fact. Mr. Speaker, my leader has fully detailed the shortcomings of what is projected in the Throne Speech. He has also fully detailed what were the shortcomings and failures of the government during its term in this office. Mr. Speaker, our leader has also outlined the alternative policies an NDP government would have pursued on many issues including rent control, aid to small business and many other issues.

One of my big disappointments about the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, was the absence of any mention about increasing the minimum wage. I spoke at length on this issue in the previous session. If the minimum wage was inadequate then it surely is totally inadequate now. Following are the figures for

the minimum wage in the different provinces, and this, Mr. Speaker, appears in the *Globe and Mail* on November 25, 1980. Saskatchewan minimum wage is 3.65; Quebec is 3.65; Alberta, such a rich province under Conservative regime, 3.50 but Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, is 3.15 — it's 3.15, Mr. Speaker. I won't take the time of the House in listing all the provinces, but I am not happy or proud that Manitoba is so far down on the list.

Considering the present cost of living I doubt whether anyone in this House really believes the minimum wage in any province is high enough to permit those living on such a wage to have a decent standard of living, Mr. Speaker.

There is at least one thing all of us are agreed on. Whether Conservatives, Liberal or Social Democrats all agree that Canada, in terms of real wealth, is a very rich country. We are one of the big food producing countries, Mr. Speaker. We have an abundance of material required for good housing for everyone in the country. Look around and you will see the supermarkets, the stores, all kinds of them, shops and boutiques filled up to the rafters with goods of every description. The business people in Canada are now spending over three billion, Mr. Speaker, a year in advertising on the radio and on TV and in the newspapers, and they are saying all the time, please come and buy, buy this, buy that, whatever you want we have, a special price on sale, whatever, buy more of everything, we hear nothing but buy and buy, buy and buy. Mr. Speaker, many businesses have failed in the past year because they couldn't get enough customers with enough money.

It doesn't matter, Mr. Speaker, how rich the country may be the people living in it can't buy any more than what they can afford on their incomes. Believe you me on the prevailing inflationary prices you can't buy much if you are living on the minimum wage.

The National Leader of the Conservative Party has often talked about the need to do something to stimulate the economy. The Honourable First Minister has likewise talked during the election that his government would do something to stimulate the economy. Mr. Speaker, you can hear this phrase about stimulating the economy in almost every Conservative speech. Even here, right here in this very Chamber, the previous speaker, he was giving us all kinds of stories about it, how good they are, how they are trying the best to stimulate our economy. But still it doesn't work, Mr. Speaker. There is only one sure and proven way of stimulating the economy, and that is by stimulating the people with low incomes to do more buying. You stimulate the economy by increasing the purchasing power of those whose incomes are now totally inadequate to meet their needs.

Mr. Speaker, our leader in his speech made references to an increasing number of bankruptcies in this province. He also mentioned the super-abundance of shopping centres. In the last session I dealt at length with this aspect of development in Winnipeg. I pointed out then that we have more supermarkets, shopping centres and shopping malls than a city of this size can reasonably support. A couple of weeks ago one of the TV stations, I believe it was CKND, had a short documentary on this. These TV cameras ran over the vast numbers of

huge shopping centres and shopping malls that have opened up in recent years. The TV cameras showed that many of the buildings in those shopping malls were empty. Many of these small businesses change hands very rapidly. Many people are enticed to start a small business and many of them fail. The fact that many businesses, big and small, have either gone out of business or have left the province is a well-known fact.

And, Mr. Speaker, I have here some surveys concerning this situation and talking about the Conservatives, when they promised that we will have a better future in Manitoba and I found out that as businesses closed, such as Tribune, Swifts, Transair, . . . , Jordan Wines in Selkirk, Bata Shoes, Host's Rent-A-Car, Brandon Co-op Store and recently, Mr. Speaker, Maple Leaf Mills. Also talking about the offices which moved, we have heard that Willson's, Shaino's, Salisbury House and Grey Goose.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that a large number of people who have lost their jobs have also left the province is also something that is well known. And, Mr. Speaker, I have here figures concerning the migration. Examining interprovincial migration on a quarterly basis in 1978 and 1979 we can detect an acceleration in the net loss during the four quarters of 1979, in fact, the fourth quarter increase in the net loss of 82.2 percent is by far the largest increase of any quarter.

And, Mr. Speaker, for illustration I would like to just put the first quarter 1978, we lost 1,430; second quarter 1,768; and the third quarter 4,289; and the fourth one 3,006 — total 10,493, Mr. Speaker, in 1978. You can notice, Mr. Speaker, that it didn't happen that the people just left at once but gradually. They thought that maybe this is only a temporary hardship here in Manitoba but they had a hope that maybe the situation will change, that that promise which they got during the election campaign in 1977 that situation will change. Mr. Speaker, actually it didn't, it went even worse. I'm talking about the Canadian population increase which we had in 1979 was 9.4 percent for 1,000 persons, the Manitoba population change was 4.8 percent, Mr. Speaker. Manitoba is the only province with a negative rate of population change. Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is the lowest one in Canada. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to go a little further because I would like to summarize the three years of their administration.

Mr. Speaker, in 1978 the Manitoba migration was 10,722; in 1979 15,457; and in 1980, the present year, we have 14,000. So all together the estimate is 40,179 persons we lost here in Manitoba, they left us. Now I heard many times, Mr. Speaker, that they were saying after all we built 30,000 new jobs. Mr. Speaker, a little later I will come to this about how they are manipulating all kinds of things and this is not the truth. The facts are showing us something different, the figures, and I believe that you and me agree with that, that two and two makes four regardless of how you put it.

Mr. Speaker, the previous speaker here who just finished his speech, he was talking about the great future and opportunity for Manitoba. I would like to just quote, Mr. Speaker, from his own pamphlet under the title, "Opportunity", "Jobs mean opportunities" he said, and this is the biggest single

crisis we face. I don't believe any of us want our people to have to look to other provinces and states in order to pursue their ambitions when we lose our people, young and old, we are losing everything. Mr. Speaker, that's true, I agree with him. If we're losing young and old, well educated, well prepared people, we are losing everything. And, Mr. Speaker, according to those figures which I have we lost already 40,000 of them. Now I'm still continuing and I quote what he said, "One of the most important challenges the next government of Manitoba faces is to stop the drift of the talent out of this province". Mr. Speaker, he's talking about us. We are the only alternative. We will be able to stop this threat to leave the people of Manitoba, not them, they proved it, they are already three years in power. What are we doing? We are losing people.

And I can't say anything if they are calculating their own way that they created 30,000 new jobs. Mr. Speaker, let me just put one figure again. If right now approximately in Manitoba we have 28,000 unemployed, 28,000, we lost 40,000, over 40,000, so it means that we lost altogether 68,000 people. And by this calculation, if they have created 30,000 new jobs still if we add it all together we will have 38,000 people unemployed, people who left our province. Mr. Speaker, I'm not criticizing them for the sake of criticism. No, I am saying what actually happened and I am giving the facts.

I remember in the last day of the session, Mr. Speaker, I even complimented the First Minister for his good speech. Naturally he delivered a very good speech but mind you my leader is giving 100 percent better speech than he did, there's no doubt in my mind. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, not only that, the Honourable Member for Roblin he doesn't agree with me. Okay, Mr. Speaker, then I will change my mind and I will put it in a different way.

The First Minister is only a talker and talk is cheap but my leader, he is a doer. So this is a big difference. Mr. Speaker, giving these old figures so we may go around and around, so we may call it a vicious circle. Mr. Speaker, we have shopping facilities expanding at a numerous rate at a time when the population is declining and there are lost potential customers. The decline in customers and increase in shopping outlets has resulted in a further competition. This is forcing many out of business through bankruptcy proceedings. I just said how many companies left and they were not Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, they were the private enterprise. I doubted why they left this paradise, rather so cold paradise.

Mr. Speaker, they rightly stress the important part played by the small and medium size enterprises. The Conservative government was going to be the champion of such enterprises and do wonders for them, but the performance has fallen far short of their promise.

Mr. Speaker, I was glad to see at least some mention of the core area of Winnipeg in the Throne Speech, but this is not the first time, Mr. Speaker. In the first Throne Speech which we have here, we heard also that they are taking care of it. They will, they promised but nothing happened until now. A large part of the area is in the constituency that I had the honour to represent for a considerable period. I am familiar with the area and the problems

of that area. I will be ready to commend this or any other government for whatever improvements they can bring about, but for the time being I must wait and see what specific proposal will be acted upon.

In the past, the Honourable First Minister and his colleagues have always expressed themselves as strong believers in private enterprise and still, Mr. Speaker, they are saying nothing, nobody will stimulate it, nobody will help our economy, just the private enterprise. Mr. Speaker, we are for private enterprise, no question about it but we absolutely don't agree with something like that. If we have natural minerals, let's give it to somebody almost for nothing. Let them exploit, take it away and say, goodbye. With something like that, I don't agree and I believe that the Honourable Member for Roblin, Mr. Speaker, who is a farmer — I am not a farmer — but I don't think that I will call him a good farmer if he will have a big chunk of land, he will have grain and he will give it to somebody, "Okay, go ahead and do it and give me something in reward." You think that you will be a good farmer, though. (Interjection)— Is that right? Well, I'm awfully sorry, I can't agree with something like that because I believe that the minerals which we have belongs to the people, belongs to the land, not to certain people, God knows from where. It might be from Switzerland, from New York, God knows from where. It belongs to the people and should be worked by our people, not give it to somebody else. (Interjection)— Wait a minute. I am talking about the economy, Mr. Speaker, not about the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, they always express the view that the major responsibility of operating the economy must be left to the private sector. The role of government, they thought, was simply that of a referee or law enforcer but I was pleased to note one paragraph in the Throne Speech which indicates at least a slight change in Conservative thinking. There is an indication that in their thinking they are coming a little closer to the views held on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Near the bottom of Page 2 of the Throne Speech appear these words, "My Ministers do not believe the government can afford to stand back as though what happens in the economy were not of its concern. The private sector will continue to be the prime engine of economy growth in Manitoba, but within our mixed economy, government has a variety of roles to play in encouraging development and assuring that developments which take place serve the interests of the people of Manitoba." Mr. Speaker, how can something like that be said, that only the private sector will save our economy? Either way, Mr. Speaker, they don't know to handle it or they are too lazy to do it. I don't know what, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, my leader is helping me. Probably they are lazy, I don't know.

Anyhow, it is lack of leadership. Mr. Speaker, the paragraph I quoted from the Throne Speech reflects a healthy change in Conservative thinking. It indicates a realization that our private enterprise economy is plagued with many serious economic and social problems. These critical problems seriously affect the health, happiness and well-being of many people. No serious thinker, no economist worthy of the name, believes these serious problems can be resolved by the complete reliance on private

enterprise. They cannot be solved by leaving everything to the blind working of market forces. Governments at all levels must accept a much larger responsibility in securing and safeguarding the welfare of the people.

Mr. Speaker, our leader has referred to some field where there definitely should be no room for private enterprise and private profit. Surely, those who are in need of personal care homes should not be at the mercy of those seeking to make a profit out of such homes, Mr. Speaker. Nor should private profit be the motive in the provision of children's day care centres. No way. It should be controlled entirely by the government.

Many Manitobans are seriously concerned about the entry of a big insurance corporation into the field of children's day care centres. This is supposed to be a large franchise operation like MacDonaldis or one of those fried chicken operations. It would be mass production child care, Mr. Speaker. Some women have already referred to it as a system to produce "Kentucky Fried Children". (Interjection)— We may laugh at this, Mr. Speaker, but it is not funny, Mr. Speaker. We can well imagine this outfit has coldly calculated all the cost factors and what is needed to make a profit, nothing but the profit. We can well imagine that this outfit would employ poorly trained staff at low wages, naturally. It would short-change the children of proper care in order to show a profit. I repeat, Mr. Speaker, that it should be no place for profit making in facilities intended to look after the health and welfare of our children.

Mr. Speaker, as we approach the festive season we will wish each other a Merry Christmas and express the hope that the New Year will be a happy one, but we know it will not be very happy for many of those at the bottom income level, Mr. Speaker. It will not be too happy for many unemployed, young people who cannot find jobs. I don't think any of us can be happy when we read or see on T.V. hungry children line up at the doors of the Salvation Army. I know that many people are in poor circumstances because of the weakness of human nature but, Mr. Speaker, we must face the fact that far too many people in our society are suffering needlessly because of the inherent injustice in our social order. They are suffering because of the serious defects in our economy and the failures of the present government. We are living in a rich country, Mr. Speaker. Canada is indeed a great country.

I, who came here as an immigrant probably appreciate this more than those who are born here. This country has the economic potential to provide the highest living standards of any in the world, but especially also we shouldn't forget that Manitoba is in the heart of Canada. Yet, we are faced with massive unemployment and there are many depressed areas where people are shut out from enjoying the full benefits of the country's riches.

Mr. Speaker, the major defect in the Throne Speech is that it holds little hope of improvement for the under-privileged in our society. Mr. Speaker, our present government is talking most of the time about the past, how good it was, or how bad we were when we were in office. Mr. Speaker, they are also promising a great future for the new generation, but for God's sake, what shall we do at the present

time? What shall we do? We are talking past and future, promising. Our people would like to see something on the table, have decent homes; that's what they are looking for. They are not thinking that, okay, we've discovered something, we'll open a new mine or something like that and your children or grandchildren become millionaires, but right now we're suffering. Mr. Speaker, we should put more emphasis right now and try to build a better society, a healthy society. Let us deal with the present social problems and, Mr. Speaker, I think that if we will do so, naturally, our people to whom we represent, they will be satisfied. They will be happy. This is the only alternative; we have to help them.

Mr. Speaker, I will conclude with one more brief quotation from the Throne Speech which reads in part, "My Ministers propose to undertake a number of initiatives to stimulate Manitoba's economy and to enhance the quality of life enjoyed by Manitobans." You think, Mr. Speaker, that it happened, it will take place? I just heard the echo already; the answer is clear. Only two letters, N O, no. They have had opportunity, Mr. Speaker, what they promised during the election campaign and nothing like my leader said. What happened? They just broke one after the other of their promises, and now, because we are close again to the election they are starting again to promise. Just wait, just wait, be patient and you will become a millionaire. Be patient, leave it to us, don't think, don't worry, we will do it for you. Mr. Speaker, we don't want to have such a type of government, a government which we can't trust. My people can't trust such a government and you will see in the next provincial election who was right. You will see.

Just now I may say, Mr. Speaker, be patient and you will see the results. One little three letter word should have been added, Mr. Speaker, to this quotation which I gave. It should read, and it should be the government's desire to enhance the life of all Manitobans, that certainly is the aim of all of us on this side of the House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before I sit down, may I wish through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the Speaker and the members of his family and friends a Merry Christmas and express the hope that in the coming year he may be a happy man in spite of the difficult job he has.

And also I would like to extend my best wishes to all honourable members on both side of the House wishing them Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and see you all next year in good spirits and good health.

Thank you very much.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Matthews.

MR. LEN DOMINO: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's always an honour to enter into the Throne Speech debate and it's even more of an honour when you have such a vigorous and alive audience. It's indeed an honour for me to participate in this, which is now my fifth Throne Speech debate. Many of the things that I've heard over the last several days have saddened me, Mr. Speaker, because I frankly am tired of hearing the members opposite apologizing for Manitoba. I'm tired of listening the members opposite continually running down Manitoba. To quote that very venerable old American, balladeer Merle Haggard, "When you're running down my country, Hoss, you're on the fighting side of me".

Mr. Speaker, I believe that they're making an error in strategy and it's not often that I take it upon myself to correct the strategic errors of the members of the Opposition. That's their problem and they will certainly pay the price for it if they make errors in strategy. However, in this case, Mr. Speaker, I think they're not only bringing potential doom onto themselves, they're also hurting the Province of Manitoba. For some of the uninitiated and some of those who aren't here, who aren't on site, who don't live in Manitoba but who hear what they have to say through the media in other parts of this country, or other parts of North America, some potential investors, some potential citizens of Manitoba, those people may be discouraged from coming here and participating in our society because of the erroneous and the mistaken things that are said by the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech outlines what I believe to be some very major and significant initiatives. The potential Alcan smelter; the potential hydro grid; the potential for the expansion and redevelopment of ManFor; the potential potash mine development, but all we hear from the Opposition continually is bad mouthing. If it's in Manitoba it can't succeed. It's not possible, they're can't be any success stories in Manitoba.

Now when you consider the record of the members opposite, I can see why they're very pessimistic. Why they have a pessimistic attitude toward development in Manitoba because their record was frankly abysmal, but let it be stated clearly that the problems that the last government of this province faced were their own problems; were due to their errors; were not due to anything being wrong with Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I've heard once too often from the members opposite the old familiar theme, "If it's in Manitoba it must fail, oh poor Manitoba, nothing good can happen here, we're doomed". Mr. Speaker, I have confidence in Manitoba. I've confidence in Manitoba's future. I've spent the first part of my life in Manitoba; I plan to spend the rest of the years that are given to me by the good Lord in Manitoba, working and contributing to this society. Mr. Speaker, I'll confide in you that even when members opposite, even when the ND party were in power in Manitoba, even when they held the reins of power, I still had confidence in Manitoba. I didn't lose my confidence. I had no confidence in that government, but I had confidence in the basic soundness of the Manitoba economy, I had confidence in the people of Manitoba and I had confidence in Manitoba's future.

Mr. Speaker, in those years when my party was in opposition, I found fault with the government. I found it wasn't difficult at all to find fault with the government. I disagreed with many of their plans in general terms and in specifics. I don't at all agree with their philosophy, that's to be accepted. We have a different philosophy of government, a different approach to the way in which government should participate in our economy and our society. But, Mr. Speaker, I never lost my confidence in Manitoba. I never lost my confidence in the long-term viability of my province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud that I am a third generation Manitoban. I'm proud that my children will be able to live here and prosper and they'll be

fourth generation Manitobans. I look forward to the day when I will have grandchildren who live and work and contribute in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I know from personal experience and from talking to my fellow citizens that Manitoba is a good place to live. It's a good place to bring up a family; it's a good place to put down roots, and I can understand members opposite when they disagree with the government. This government is not made up of perfect people. This government is not immune to making mistakes occasionally; this government is not perfect, it does not have a monopoly on wisdom, but, Mr. Speaker, that's not what I hear from the members opposite. I don't hear very often specific criticisms; I don't see specific examples of waste or corruption or anything else that involves specific attacks on this government and its record. What I hear are the general attacks on Manitoba and Manitoba's future. I can understand criticism because that's the job of the Opposition, it is their job to find fault, and it is their job to make us a better government. Mr. Speaker, let's not let anyone misunderstand what I'm saying. I believe this is a good government but not a perfect government. It is impossible to find a perfect government anywhere. But criticism from the Opposition, constructive criticism, intelligent criticism would help, because the old saying that good Opposition makes a good government, I believe to be true, and this government is good but it's finding precious little help from the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, why should it surprise the members opposite that Alcan wants to come to Manitoba, and develop a smelter here and take advantage of our power and of our human resources? Why should it be impossible that we should be able to negotiate a power grid, and export what is one of our major natural resources? Why is it so difficult for members opposite to conceive of ManFor being redeveloped and with private investment growing and expanding? Mr. Speaker, I know the projects referred to in the Throne Speech; I know they're real, I know there's a real potential; I know they will come to fruition and they will bring long-term benefits to myself and others members in this House, and to all the people in Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, long after Saunders Aircraft is just a little wee footnote in political history, people will be working at the Alcan smelter, they'll be working on hydro plants, they'll be working in these construction projects, they'll be gainfully earning a living and they'll be raising their children and bringing up their families in a fine heritage of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, projects of the type that have been outlined by the Treasury Benches and by this government in the Throne Speech; those projects represent the future of Manitoba. Manitoba's future is not going to be built on government make-work projects, it's not going to be built on the negative ranting and raving of the Opposition; Manitoba's future is going to be built on our human resources and on our natural resources; on mining, on the firm agricultural base we have in this province; it's going to be built on our forests and those resources; our hydro power; and above else on the skills and enthusiasms of the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I detect that the members opposite have no faith in Manitoba, no faith in the people of

Manitoba. They have come to the conclusion that the easiest route on that side of the House to this side of the House, and let it not be misunderstood for one moment that they very much covet these seats, they very much want to get back into power, and they're placing that desire, that greed, that desperation to get back into power, ahead of the public interest in Manitoba. By all means attack the government when it does something wrong but don't attack Manitoba, because it's a short-term strategy which will backfire, and I am not at all worried that the New Democrats won't return to power, but I am worried about the impression that's being left about Manitoba, about the negative feeling that begins to creep in, and about people beginning to take on a defeatist attitude, a defeatist attitude which is being spurred and fostered by the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have come to the conclusion that if they can destroy the people of Manitoba's confidence in Manitoba they might be returned to power. Mr. Speaker, it's an awful high price to pay. I'm certain it won't work. Mr. Speaker, I see them jump up and down, I see their voices rise several octaves, they begin to squeak and they jump up and down every time they hear of a plant closing, every time they hear of unemployment figures which show that more people are unemployed, out-migration figures, oh, they are just ecstatic with that, Mr. Speaker, they're elated.

Mr. Speaker, they ignore all the positive news about Manitoba, they ignore the opportunity to sit across from this government and suggest ways in which the hydro development could be done in a more intelligent manner. They suggest ways in which to give us constructive criticism on the Alcan development or the ManFor development. Their position is easy. Oh, it won't happen. It can't happen in Manitoba. Nothing good ever happens in Manitoba and we know because we were there for eight years in the Treasury Benches and nothing good happened.

Mr. Speaker, the difference between the Progressive Conservative Government and the ND Party — their approach to economic development — I think it's very evident if you take a look at job creation records. Mr. Speaker, I also happen to be a public school teacher and I teach high school. I also happen to be probably the youngest member in this Legislature. So, I for both of those reasons, have a great deal of contact both as a politician and as an individual with young people; young people who need jobs, who want to stay in Manitoba and so job creation is very important to me. It was a major issue for me the last election, it'll be a major issue next election and it's important.

I think it's important to look at the records. Let's look at the ND Party's approach. Their approach when in government was short-term, it was make-work, it was keep people, as many as you could working, anyway you can, even if it's only a short-term job, and they from 1975 to 1977 were able, according to Stats Canada, to produce 10,000 new jobs. This government in its first three years, 1978, 1979 and what we've already seen of 1980 has produced 30,000 new jobs, and those are hard and fast figures, Stats Canada figures. We've done this, Mr. Speaker, in spite of very difficult circumstances nationally, in spite of the fact that the province of

Ontario for instance, which in many ways is the heart of Canada and the industrial drive for Canada, in spite of the fact that in this year alone the province of Ontario has lost 26,000 jobs through lay-offs. But Manitoba continues in terms of job creation to perform well, to perform better under the Progressive Conservatives than we did under the New Democrats. And we've done this, Mr. Speaker, by ensuring that the private sector continues to have a large and meaningful role in our economy.

Let's take a look, Mr. Speaker, a little closer at what's happened with the job creation. The 30,000 jobs that were created in the last three years in Manitoba, 28,000 of the jobs were not in government, were not related to government, and only 2,000 of those jobs are in what is defined by Stats Canada as public administration or government related — so it's 28,000 in the private sector, 2,000 in government. Let's take another look at the 10,000 jobs that were created by members opposite when they were in government. Of their 10,000 jobs, a full 7,000 were tax-supported public administration positions. Only 3,000 were in the non-government industries. Mr. Speaker, the people of Manitoba will be cognizant of these facts when they go to the polls next year. Mr. Speaker, let's take a look further at certain target groups because I've spoken before about the need to create jobs for young people in our province, and I've spoken about the need to create jobs for women because women have come out of their traditional role as homemakers and strictly as mothers. They now want a meaningful role, a meaningful part in our economy.

Between 1975 and 1977 female employment in Manitoba rose by 11,000, and in the youth category 15 to 24, there was actually a decrease of 3,000 people employed in that category. Now by comparison in the last three years female employment in Manitoba has increased by 20,000 full-time positions. Youth employment, Mr. Speaker, has gone up 6,000, not down 3,000 as the New Democrats but up 6,000, that's 6,000 more young people who are able to find gainful employment in Manitoba, who can live here, who can contribute to our society, who can at some point in the future become parents and grandparents and who can look with pride on their contribution to our province.

Mr. Speaker, there's much talk too about what's happening in Manitoba and the New Democrats, they're always bad-mouthing everything and they say well, but the jobs being created are jobs that are so poor, they are jobs where people are having to work at minimum wage, etc.

I was paging through a Revenue Canada book the other day, it's called Inside Taxation, and in what that book shows is the average income of all tax returns listed by cities in Canada. In 1969, when the ND Party came to government in Manitoba, Winnipeg ranked 50, ranked 50th. So of all the cities in Canada, the tax returns returned by Manitobans or Winnipeggers placed us 50th. We steadily sank throughout the years they were in government — in '75 we were 77th, in '76 we were 82nd, in '77 we were 84th and if they'd won the last election we'd probably be 100th now in terms of incomes in this city, but for the latest figures available, which were in 1978 we have begun the slow process of repairing the damage that was done under the other

government. We are now 65th again, and I'm sure that when the figures come out for '79 and '80 we will continue to rise because our incomes are rising in this city. Regardless of what the New Democrats say, we're not all working for starvation wages. The jobs being created are good jobs, jobs that allow people to stay, to live here, and to contribute fully to our society.

Mr. Speaker, I recall previous Throne Speeches. The members of the opposition have changed their tune this year, but I recall previous Throne Speeches when there was the endless repetition of the old song, the Conservatives don't care about poor people, the Conservatives have no heart, the Conservatives eat babies for breakfast and then there was all that what was on the lowest points in this Legislature debate, there was all the talk about the bed sheets, there was all the politics of the dirty bed sheets, there was no bacon in the nursing homes, things like this. But since the White Paper reforms, Mr. Speaker, very little, the occasional question, the occasional nit-picking question. But there's silence, the basic overwhelming response from the opposition to the White Paper reforms has been silence. And I want to talk about them, Mr. Speaker, because it doesn't fit into their theory, into their stereotypes of what a Progressive Conservative government should be.

Mr. Speaker, of course we did hear something, and I'm not sure who, I believe it was the Member for Lac du Bonnet who said something like, oh, I'm not going to allow the Minister to take money from the productive sector and to pour it into another welfare scheme, no, I'm not voting for the White Paper and the White Paper reforms. Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that all the money spent by this government comes from the productive sector. Every penny we spend we collect, we have no money of our own. Every penny that this government spends it collects from the productive sector of our economy. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm not adverse to saying monies collected from the productive sector and redistributed to those people who need it.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that every penny that's being spent on the White Paper is being well spent, and it's being spent in a fashion that makes more sense than the broad-based shotgun approach of the other government. Mr. Speaker, it is of course very important that we be ever vigilant not to waste money and that we don't do anything at all to increase the already heavy burden on the productive sector of our economy. But I think that the White Paper reforms are one of the most important and one of the things that I am the most proud of in the last three years of government. Mr. Speaker, I certainly can't take credit for all the White Paper reforms. I can take credit only for my own small part for in this House I was one of the first people to mention specifically those sort of reforms and need for them and need for shelter allowances for single parents, and need for help for people who are raising children and who are having to work at wages in some cases near the minimum wage.

During the minimum wage debate I spoke about the real way, the real manner in which you could supply assistance to minimum wage workers. It wasn't to raise their wages astronomically and force them out of work and make them unproductive and

force the small employers to lay them off. It was to find a way to redistribute income to those people outside of the wage structure. And that's exactly what the White Paper is doing. Mr. Speaker, I believe that every penny being spent on the White Paper is well spent and I believe the people of Manitoba realize that and that's why the members opposite are so silent, that's why they don't want to talk about it because they only want to talk about the negative things, and they only want to take the easy, cheap shots. They're not even content to attack this government, they want to attack the province.

Mr. Speaker, the objectives of that White Paper reforms were to provide the most possible assistance, the largest amount of assistance to those who were in the most need and to do it the most efficient and effective way possible. Senior citizens and low income families with children were the main beneficiaries of the tax credit reforms, and I'm proud of them, every single one of them. When the election does come next year I'm going to walk up and down the streets of my constituency and I'm going to talk about them. I'm sure that whoever my New Democrat opponent is, he won't be talking about them; he'll be bad-mouthing Manitoba and trying to convince people there's no future in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the needs of the elderly have been recognized. This government which was stereotyped as being heartless and cruel and not caring for people, this government what has it done? It's increased the benefits of the SAFER Program. First it brought in the SAFER Program which is an excellent program but it increased the benefits under the SAFER Program. The Manitoba Tax Credit Program has been improved, the Pensioners School Tax Assistance Program has been improved, the Manitoba Supplement for the Elderly has been improved and members opposite have the nerve to stand up and complain that we didn't do enough. For four years they did nothing, not a penny was added to it. So we've only raised it a small amount because the people of Manitoba could only afford that. But people such as myself and others on this side will ensure that those raises become larger the very moment that the taxpayers and the productive sector of our society can afford to provide more for our poor, we will.

Mr. Speaker, what else has this government done? Mr. Speaker, we have responded to the real needs of at least one segment of the disadvantaged in our population. We have responded in what I think is a very effective and efficient way, we have responded to the needs of low income, the working poor, because if you take a look at the White Paper reforms they help two groups of people, they help our senior citizens and I'll never begrudge a program that assists our senior citizens, because they have built and they have created everything that I get to inherit and that my children will inherit and my grandchildren will inherit. When I am a senior citizen I hope that they will show respect for me the way I show respect for them, and that I hope in my society will provide me with everything that it can afford to provide with me, which is exactly what Manitoba is doing now.

The other group that's being helped is the same group that we hear so much crying about and wringing of hands on the other side — the working

poor. Those people who are unfortunate enough for one reason or another because of accidents or because of lack of skills or any number of reasons, those people who cannot go out into the economy and produce enough that their employers can afford to pay them a salary on which they can live and live easily and live comfortably.

And particularly, we run into a problem when you talk about single parents trying to raise children, and if you look at the White Paper, if you take an intelligent objective look at it, it's right smack on what the White Paper's trying to assist those very people. And what do we get from the members opposite? We get crying, complaining because the government's trying to inform people about the benefits. They would be very happy if no one applied, if people who needed the help went without it. If children who needed the food were hungry because that might mean a few extra votes for them. Well that sort of short-term, cheap and mean approach to politics gets you nowhere.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to take up a whole lot of the House's time. Mr. Speaker, I have heard and heard and heard about the great predictions of the New Democratic Party sweep, I've heard about . . . oh there's every member who stood up almost has given us reasons and reasons upon why this government's going to be defeated. Well, let me say to you don't count your chickens before they're hatched. And that old Biblical quotation that goes something to the effect that pride cometh before a fall is something you should take to heart because there have been many references as to when this government will be kicked out or when this government will leave. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you when this government will leave. This government will leave at the very day when the people of Manitoba are convinced that the members opposite can supply them with better government and can do a better job of coping with the problems of this province than the members on this side. The question is not whether this government is perfect, it's not whether we have a monopoly on wisdom; the question is, can we do a better job and have we done a better job under the circumstances given than members opposite. Mr. Speaker, the answer to me is very plain. The answer to the people of Manitoba will be very plain too when they speak. Mr. Speaker, of all the people who sit on this side I am probably one who knows this government is not perfect. I'm one of the ones who's probably most qualified to point out the errors in some ways of this government. I don't always agree with what we've done. Inside caucus, outside of caucus even, publicly I've spoken about the errors and mistakes because these gentlemen in front of me aren't perfect but they are they . . . when you take a look at the alternative. You don't get a choice in the election between perfection and the Progressive Conservative Government. You get a choice between the Progressive Conservative government and the ND Party and when you put it in those terms, Mr. Speaker, this group of men and women I have confidence in. I know that they will do a better job and have done a better job than members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, what will happen? The question that the people of Manitoba are going to be asked to answer sometime in the next 20 months or so is, who do you

believe is best qualified to run your province? Who do you believe is best qualified to take care of your affairs, the ND Party, under the leadership of the Member for Selkirk or the Progressive Conservative Party under the Premier and Ministers in this government? Mr. Speaker, I know what the answer will be. The answer will be a resounding, give us more of the Progressive Conservatives because they supply good government, the government with heart.

To be exact, it was the Member for Churchill complained about this government's slogan that we can supply a gentle government. Mr. Speaker, go ask those people who are going to receive the CRISP benefits. Go speak to those people who are eligible for SAFER. Go ask them if this government is not supplying them with a gentle government. We're not ordering them to move into public housing; we're not telling them they have to go on welfare. We're not ordering anybody to raise their salary; we are supplying assistance that allows them to maintain their dignity. We are supplying assistance that allows them the absolute maximum freedom of choice when it comes to where they want to live and how they want to dispose of their own income. Those sorts of policies, Mr. Speaker, will ensure that the Progressive Conservative Government of Manitoba is returned and we will continue to be returned, and returned, and returned until you can supply a better alternative and bad mouthing Manitoba and running down Manitoba will not convince people that you are an alternative. You have to supply concrete, realistic alternatives to what we are doing. I don't hear them and I have no other alternative but to believe that you don't have any, because I know you're not bashful. If you had alternatives that would work and alternatives to what we're doing, you would speak up. You haven't got an alternative for the Hydro grid; you haven't got an alternative for Alcan. All you've got is negativisms. It won't work, it won't work. Well, tell us what will work if those projects won't work.

Mr. Speaker, I'm confident, I don't care when the election comes. I'm confident this party will do well and I'm confident that all we're hearing from the other side is idle boasting because I know that when the people of Manitoba are asked which group of men and women can supply you with best government, the answer will be Sterling Lyon and the Progressive Conservative Government of Manitoba.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to proceed now, but in view of other arrangements that had been today, I thought there was some indication on the part of some members that it be called 1:30.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, certainly from the government's side, we would be amiable to calling it 1:30 at this time.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

OMR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, on that note, I would understand that I would have the adjournment.

Friday, 19 December, 1980

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health, that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 o'clock, Monday afternoon.