

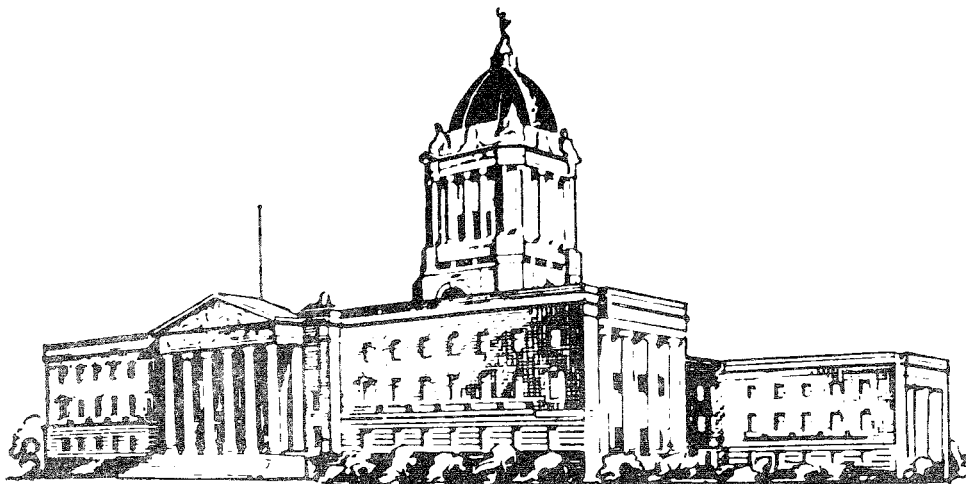


First Session — Thirty-Fourth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

37 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fourth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIBERAL
ANGUS, John	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BURRELL, Parker	Swan River	PC
CARR, James	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIBERAL
CHARLES, Gwen	Selkirk	LIBERAL
CHEEMA, Gulzar	Kildonan	LIBERAL
CHORNOPYSKI, William	Burrows	LIBERAL
CONNERY, Edward Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
COWAN, Jay	Churchill	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James Hon.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Emerson	PC
DRIEDGER, Herold, L.	Niakwa	LIBERAL
DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIBERAL
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Laurie	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
EVANS, Leonard	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen Hon.	Virden	PC
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Ellice	LIBERAL
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HEMPHILL, Maureen	Logan	NDP
KOZAK, Richard, J.	Transcona	LIBERAL
LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.	Inkster	LIBERAL
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANDRAKE, Ed	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
McCRAE, James Hon.	Brandon West	PC
MINENKO, Mark	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
OLESON, Charlotte Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald Hon.	Pembina	PC
PANKRATZ, Helmut	La Verendrye	PC
PATTERSON, Allan	Radisson	LIBERAL
PENNER, Jack, Hon.	Rhineland	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
ROCH, Gilles	Springfield	PC
ROSE, Bob	St. Vital	LIBERAL
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
TAYLOR, Harold	Wolseley	LIBERAL
URUSKI, Bill	Interlake	NDP
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
YEO, Iva	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, August 3, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I have a ministerial statement and copies for the House.

Last week, I had the pleasure of meeting with members of the Manitoba Stroke Association to sign a proclamation declaring the month of August as "Stroke Survivor Month."

Stroke is the number one disabler in Canada. An estimated 6,200 Manitobans are stroke patients with approximately 1,000 new Manitobans being affected each year. This disease affects either directly or indirectly 25,000 Manitobans.

The Stroke Association of Manitoba was founded in 1971. They are the first and oldest stroke association in Canada.

This is a volunteer organization to service all of Manitoba, and have commenced their fund-raising campaign during the month of August. This Stroke Association offers new stroke victims and their families help to overcome the disabilities caused by stroke, and provides needed services for patients and their families throughout the province.

I know that all Members will join with me in wishing the Manitoba Stroke Association every success in their fund raising during the month of August and continued good success to this very valuable volunteer organization in the Province of Manitoba. Thank you.

* (1335)

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): I welcome the Honourable Health Minister's statement as it regards the Manitoba Stroke Association.

We know that there are a lot of problems they are facing. The number one issue which I want to bring to the Minister's attention is the serious lack of speech therapists which we are facing in Manitoba today. Some of them, some of our stroke patients have to wait for eight months for assessment. I think that is a disaster, and we should hire more speech therapists and we should look in terms of rehabilitating them. I think that will be our message to them so that we can convey to them we care about them. Also, we should be looking at providing more support services for their families. Also, there are certain patients who wait in the personal care homes more than is required. I think we should be looking more in terms of placement services, in terms of community services, and the support services. Thank you.

Mr. Gary Doer (Concordia): I would like to join with other Members of this House in wishing the Stroke Association every deal of success in their fund-raising attempts this month, and congratulate the Minister for proclaiming this month as appropriate for the Stroke Association and Stroke Survivor Month.

We believe very strongly that the key to this medical issue is lifestyle and prevention in our everyday workplaces, leisure time and home experience. I hope the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) will see fit to double the prevention budget in the health care field, as we did last February, in putting money and resources into prevention and lifestyle issues in this province so that all Manitobans will in the future be able to, through lifestyle, through good health, through proper nutrition and through education, not have to be a victim of this terrible disease. Thank you very much.

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Natural Resources Development Act): I would like to table the report of Moose Lake Loggers Ltd., 1986-87.

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): It is my pleasure to table the report for Manitoba Mineral Resources Ltd., for the year ended December 31, 1987.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Before proceeding to Oral Questions, I would like to direct the attention of all Honourable Members to the Speaker's gallery, where we have two exchange students visiting our province. They are Mr. Kartsen Petersen from Denmark, and Mr. Magnus Sedar from Sweden. Both gentlemen are here under the sponsorship of the Warren and Stonewall Lions Club and I would ask the House to welcome them.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Man. Cttee. on Wife Abuse Report release

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): We in the Opposition understand that Ministers do not have to answer questions if they choose not to do so. However, we do hope that when they do answer questions, they will answer them in an accurate and informed manner. Surely, this is fundamental to the principle of ministerial responsibility.

So I ask the First Minister (Mr. Filmon): Will he please demand of the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) the tabling of the report and audit done on the Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse?

* (1340)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): The Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) has indicated in this

House that she will table that report when it is in final form. The Manitoba Committee on Wife Abuse had had some difficulties, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) may recall, last year. There were a number of resignations and quite some controversy as a result of resignations from the organization and so on.

I might indicate to the Leader of the Opposition that I personally met with senior executive members of the Committee on Wife Abuse in March—Judy Hughes and Eunadie Johnson. I might indicate that my Minister has met with them not only once, but I believe has had other discussions with them.

We are very concerned to ensure that the Committee on Wife Abuse is given a full and complete review. There was an audit that was commissioned, I believe, by the former Government, and a review into the organization, their actions, their make-up and so on. That has been done and it is in draft form.

There is a process that takes place. I believe that when reports are done, when reviews are done on organizations before they are put in their final form, they ought to have an opportunity to review the recommendations, the findings and be given an opportunity to respond to them. When they have done that, then we make sure that there are no errors of fact, no errors in terms of analysis, and then that report can be made public. If it is not done in that form, then it has the prospect of being unfair to the organization.

That complete process has not been dealt with; it has not been finalized. When it is, the Leader of the Opposition and indeed all Members of the Legislature and the public will have an opportunity then to see the contents of that report.

Mrs. Carstairs: With a supplementary question to the First Minister: The draft report has been ready for almost four-and-a-half months. The Committee on Wife Abuse itself has seen the draft report and has indicated they would like it released. Why is this Government not releasing this report?

Mr. Filmon: We indicated—and we have no reason to want to keep the report from being public, other than to do it in a form that is fair to all parties concerned, particularly to the Committee on Wife Abuse—when it is in its final form and their input and their concerns have been dealt with to ensure that the report is factual and accurate, it will be made public.

Mrs. Carstairs: The committee has indicated it wants the report, the Government has said the report is ready. When can we expect to have this report tabled in the Manitoba Legislature?

Mr. Filmon: I think that it is incumbent on both sides of the House to be accurate in the information they provide. Just as it is incumbent on the part of Ministers to be accurate in their statements, it is incumbent on the part of Leader of the Opposition to be accurate in her statements. She said the Government has indicated that the report is ready. We have done just the opposite. We have said we have a draft, a draft that requires to be assessed and ensured that all of it is factual and

that all the information is accurate. It is not in a final form, and that is why it has not been released. The Leader of the Opposition, if she were factual, would acknowledge that we have said it is in a draft form. It is not ready and when it is ready it will be released.

Grand Beach Provincial Park Campground - Clean-up

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a new question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), and also about inaccurate information with regard to his Ministers in presenting information to this House.

Last week, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst), just prior to the long weekend, indicated that the clean-up at Grand Beach had been completed. Indeed, as of last night, fully six bays and 152 camping sites were still not open, and yet we were told on Friday that if there was a need to clarify that information it would be clarified as soon as we met yesterday.

Would the First Minister tell this House why we were given inaccurate information and when will Grand Beach be cleaned?

* (1345)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): The Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) knows full well about giving inaccurate information. In the midst of the recent election campaign, she alleged that Air Canada had awarded a contract for airbus that would take away all of the repair and maintenance for those aircraft from Winnipeg.

Of course, her president of her Party, Mr. Morris Kaufman, when challenged as to whether or not the allegation she made publicly on television, on radio throughout this province was accurate, he was asked—do they have any evidence of it? He said, and I quote: "We do not have some information; we are guessing."

That is what the Leader of the Opposition did. She guessed about significant information about people's loss of jobs. She put 400 people in danger and in fear of losing their jobs because she refused to get accurate information just for her own political purposes. So she knows about inaccurate information.

Now with respect to the question about Grand Beach, I will let the Minister of Tourism (Mr. Ernst) answer that question for her.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out something to the Members of the House and to the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). The question asked was: As it was I, as Minister of Tourism, why had not we cleaned up Grand Beach?

I indicated to the Honourable Member who asked the question, Mr. Speaker, that it was not my responsibility but that of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner). I said at that time he should ask the question of the Minister of Natural Resources. He did, on his next question, ask that question of the

Minister of Natural Resources. The question was taken as notice by the Acting Minister and that information should be provided in due course.

Mrs. Carstairs: With a question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), because indeed the Minister of Tourism (Mr. Ernst) said in a discussion with the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) that indeed the Grand Beach clean-up had been completed.

When—will the First Minister inform this House—will this clean-up take place, and when will the citizens of Manitoba be able to enjoy the rest of this summer camping at Grand Beach?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): In regard to Grand Beach and the clean-up of Grand Beach, as I had indicated previously to both the Ministers that were questioned and also to the Premier, the job of clean-up had, in fact, ended. It had simply been ended because of the dangers that were involved in the clean-up process.

There were many, many little children and other people on the beach at the time of the holiday season. There are portions of the parking area or the camping area that still will need clean-up after the season. They will be opened and cleaned up as soon as the danger of people at the beach area is over and done with, hopefully right after the school holidays.

There are many other areas when disasters such as the tornado or the high winds that went through our beach areas and other areas such as camping trails, such as skidoo trails, such as ski trails, that will need a massive amount of clean-up.

We have had numerous offers from organizations such as snowmobile clubs and ski clubs and those kinds of things that will assist us, but only when the time comes and the safety factor has fully been taken into consideration.

Mrs. Carstairs: With a final supplementary, then, to the Minister of Natural Resources.

Can the Minister assure this House that there is not indeed a major safety factor involved in leaving these campsites a mess, where children can indeed get into the mess and that, indeed, is more of a safety factor than would be resulted in the actual cleaning up?

Mr. Penner: It might interest the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that I have been assured by my staff of the danger that we would have incurred if we had attempted a clean-up of those areas by movement of big payloaders, huge trucks on beach areas, large equipment, chain saws.

I think the Honourable Leader of the Opposition needs to have witnessed a chain saw kicking back and hitting somebody in the face. It is not a pretty sight! But those kinds of dangers we were trying to prevent, and will prevent. That is the reason we have closed off that area.

Pharmacare - Deductible Increase

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld).

Does the Minister support the decision of his Government to raise the fees for Pharmacare for seniors—the Pharmacare deductible?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): Mr. Speaker, the seniors of this province are quite prepared to pay their way the same as everybody else, and I do not think the increase is so substantial that they cannot pay that way.

* (1350)

Mr. Doer: I wonder what seniors organizations the Minister has talked to, consulted with and dealt with to get that kind of advice. A 12 percent increase on the Pharmacare deductible is certainly well above the inflation rate, maybe three times the inflation rate.

An Honourable Member: Over how many years?

Mr. Doer: Maybe that is the same kind of advice the Minister received when his Party was dealing with the drug patent laws in this country.

What seniors organization supports a 12 percent increase in the Pharmacare deductibility and a 20 percent increase in the deductibility for people under 65 years old?

Mr. Neufeld: As a member of the community over 55 years of age, I am well aware of the cost of Pharmacare and other medical services. The Government is very concerned about the cost of Pharmacare and the cost of other medical services to the members of the community and especially the seniors. The Government is under tremendous pressure to keep costs down and the senior population is as interested in that area as anybody else. I suspect they are probably more interested in helping the Government at this point.

Mr. Doer: I asked the Minister what organizations did he consult with prior to the Government making the decision to increase the deductibility by three times the inflation rate for seniors in this province, many of whom are on fixed incomes, many of whom do not get a 12 percent increase in their income per year.

I ask the Minister: Who did he consult with to proceed with this kind of decision of three times the inflation rate for people over 65, and 20 percent, maybe four or five times the inflation rate, for people under 65?

Mr. Neufeld: We are concerned about the concerns of the seniors. That is why we have a Seniors Directorate, and as time goes on, if the money is available, there may be changes in the cost of Pharmacare and medical care to seniors. There may be changes in the cost of Pharmacare and Medicare to everyone. But at this point in time, we are not in a position to reduce those costs.

Mr. Doer: The seniors on drugs are getting a double whammy. On the one hand, they have got Brian Mulroney's drug patent law that has hit them with increasing costs in drugs and, on the other hand, we got a 12 percent increase in the deductibility. We refused to raise the deductibility in our Budget this year because we were concerned about seniors.

I would like the Minister to tell us what groups he consulted with to get the go-ahead for a 12 percent increase on their deductibility this year.

Mr. Neufeld: The seniors who I have spoken with are all in agreement that they are prepared to pay their share of the cost of running this province and that we are no longer in a position to give handouts. We are no longer in a position to pay the full cost. The seniors are more prepared than any other group in society to pay their own way.

Meech Lake Accord - Public Hearings

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): My question is for the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

As the First Minister knows very well, the eyes of Canada will be on this House as it begins to debate the 1987 Constitutional Accord, but to date we have heard little, if any, discussion at all from the First Minister about the detail and the substance of the Accord.

Does the First Minister support the resolution as currently drafted, or will he consider amendments after the people have spoken?

* (1355)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will tell the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Carr) exactly as I have told the public countless times throughout the course of the debate on Meech Lake.

I support the Meech Lake resolution in principle but I am prepared to listen to the people of Manitoba. That is why we fought for public hearings. That is why, when we were in Opposition in this Legislature and there was a proposal to bring forth an amendment to the Constitution without public hearings, we fought tooth and nail. We fought and fought and fought until we got a change to the rules that ensures that we will have public hearings throughout this province so that all people will be heard.

I have taken the position that I support it in principle, but I am prepared to listen, unlike his Party and his Leader who have said their minds are made up. They do not want to be confused by the facts and they do not want to listen to the people. They have said that they will not change their minds on Meech Lake. Their minds are made up; they are opposed to it. I will not take that position. I will take the position that will listen to the people.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary to the First Minister.

We are taking leadership on this issue. We are telling the people of Manitoba what our ideas are for the Meech

Lake Accord. The First Minister may know that during his speech last night, the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) announced to this House that public hearings will be occurring this fall. I presume that he was speaking for Government policy.

Could the First Minister tell us precisely when the Accord will be introduced and when the public hearings will begin?

Mr. Filmon: In due course, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Carr: Another example of open Government from those who sit across from us here.

With a final supplementary to the First Minister: Can the Premier give assurances to this House that the public hearings, whenever they arrive, will not occur simply in the City of Winnipeg but in fact throughout the Province of Manitoba?

Mr. Filmon: Beginning with the comment on open Government, firstly, that matter, as he should know, is a matter for discussion amongst House Leaders. My Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) will discuss with his Opposition House Leader (Mr. Alcock) and the House Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Cowan) about the committee that will be struck to go out to public hearings, about the dates and times of those hearings, and about the places of those hearings.

One thing I can assure is that they will not be held just in the City of Winnipeg. I have said time and time and time again, when asked that question, that I expect that they will get wide coverage throughout the province, that there will probably be at least as many locations as we had during the French language hearings in this province, and that we will listen to the people throughout the Province of Manitoba. I do not understand why he would have any question to that effect.

Speech therapy treatment

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

Line-ups for health care services are becoming a way of life in Manitoba and our children are suffering as a result. Right now there are about 250 children with serious speech disorders between the ages of 18 months and five years who are waiting up to 14 months for an assessment. If they do not get treatment on time, they can suffer from intellectual, emotional and behaviour disorders.

Would the Honourable Minister guarantee Manitobans that he will take steps to protect our children from suffering unnecessary handicaps?

* (1400)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, regrettably, there are line-ups in the Province of Manitoba for needed medical health services and those line-ups have grown over the last number of years, unfortunately.

I am pleased that the Opposition Health Critic has posed that question following my address to the Throne

Speech last night, wherein I identified the woeful inadequacy of speech therapy services available to preschoolers. That service is woefully inadequate. There are waiting times of up to 12 months for an appointment for an assessment and a further 12 month wait before any treatment can be received by those youthful children.

As a result, Mr. Speaker, one of the actions I have taken, since becoming Minister of Health, is I have met with the Association of Speech Therapists for the Province of Manitoba. We are to meet again this fall after the association has met and discussed with their Board of Directors where the most urgent and priority needs are, because speech therapy services are not only woefully inadequate for preschool children, they are also inadequate for many of the victims who are celebrating, not celebrating, but for whom we declared the month of August, "Stroke Victim Month." They also are in need of speech therapy services. I am anticipating a meeting this fall with that association of Speech Therapists of Manitoba so that they can indicate to me their priorities and how they believe Government can adequately address, with limited resources, the very necessary needs amongst the community.

Mr. Cheema: Children of Manitoba cannot wait for another four to six months. At present, there are about eight speech therapists dealing with children in all Manitoba hospitals.

Will the Minister tell the House what he is going to do to increase the number of therapists and track down the delays?

Mr. Orchard: Again, I have to indicate to my honourable friend, the Health critic, that this is a long and lingering problem. Contrast that with the Province of Alberta, which the previous administration constantly held out as being woefully under-delivering services.

The number of speech pathologists available to provide speech therapy to Albertans is in the neighborhood of 80 compared to some eight who are working in our hospitals and a number of others who work throughout the Province of Manitoba, to a limited degree in rural Manitoba, to a major degree in the City of Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Health Critic for the Opposition will know, if he has investigated this circumstance, that the professional training of speech therapy is not available in the Province of Manitoba. It is a service which is under great demand and student enrollment in either North Dakota universities or elsewhere in Canada has very limited spaces. So we have two problems to confront us. First of all, the budgetary problem; and second, the availability of qualified speech therapists. Both issues are to be addressed this fall in my meeting with the Manitoba Association of Speech Therapists.

Mr. Cheema: My final supplementary. I would like to tell the Minister that there are people available but there are a lack of funds.

Mr. Speaker, babies with physical development problems have to wait for six to eight weeks and even

longer for access to physiotherapy. A wait of two months to treat a one-year-old baby who is already six months behind development is criminal.

Would this Honourable Minister advise this House what step he is going to take to correct this unfortunate situation?

Mr. Orchard: Again the Honourable Member has identified an issue in which the provision of service is not as immediate as all of us in this House would prefer to have, myself included as Minister of Health.

I think that if the Honourable Member has some patience, he may be very interested in entering this debate and this discussion as we approach Estimates because the issue of physiotherapists and their availability, I might add, to my Honourable Member the Opposition Health Critic, that the need for physiotherapists is all across the province but is even more acute in rural Manitoba where we have additional recruitment difficulties to get those specialists into rural Manitoba.

Pharmacare Deductible Increase Criteria

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): My question is to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld).

Before addressing the question specifically, I would just like to remind the Minister as to what was said in the recent Throne Speech in regard to seniors, where it stated, and I quote the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, "A Minister responsible for Seniors has been designated to ensure that issues of concern to seniors are given the attention they deserve."

I would ask the Minister responsible for Seniors what criteria he used in determining the impact of this increase in the deductible on the seniors of Manitoba?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors): The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) is absolutely right. It is the concern for seniors that caused the Government to appoint a director for seniors. The increase in Pharmacare, or the increase in the deductible of Pharmacare, is the first one in a number of years. It is not so great if the seniors are not prepared to accept it. The seniors, as I have said before, are the most responsible people we have in our community and will bear their fair share of the cost of the problem; indeed, over the years have borne more than their fair share. It is with regret that we have to increase the cost, but it is necessary.

I ask the Member for Churchill to look back to see the number of things that he has done for seniors, the number of things that their Party has done for seniors, and did they appoint a director?

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, when there is more time to enter into that debate, I would be pleased to enter into any debate with any Member of the Conservative Party, or the Liberal Party, in respect to what the NDP has done on behalf of the seniors and elderly people in this country for generations to come. Let him not throw

out that challenge unless he is prepared to accept that debate, and I, Sir, am prepared at any time to undertake that debate.

The question to the Minister . . .

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Churchill has the floor.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, all their heckling will not betray the fact that they have increased the deductible to seniors.

I ask the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld) if he will answer this question: What criteria was used by his directorate or himself when determining the impact of this increase in the Pharmacare deductible on seniors and on other individuals in this society who are on fixed incomes and who are unable to afford this sort of arbitrary increase in what is already too meager an income?

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member's question is repeating in substance a question which was previously asked and, therefore, is out of order. The Honourable Member for Churchill.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, I will then ask the Minister—as he chooses not to answer that question, I can only assume there were no criteria used—is the Minister responsible for Seniors prepared to live up to his responsibility and to call upon—

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): I suggest abusing the Question Period by using his questions as an opportunity to debate—in addition, he has alleged that there was no answer given by the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld), which is absolutely not true—the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) knows better than this kind of behaviour and yet he conducts and carries on that way day after day in this House. I suggest that he be called to order.

Mr. Speaker: I have ruled that the Honourable Member is out of order, and I recognize the Honourable Member for Churchill.

* (1410)

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister if he will live up to his responsibility to seniors and call upon the directorate to immediately undertake full scale evaluation of the impact of this increase in Pharmacare deductible on the seniors in Manitoba.

Will he undertake that investigation immediately and report back to the House, this Legislature, as to the results of that investigation? Further to that, I would ask him if he would impose upon the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and his First Minister (Mr. Filmon) to ask

them to stop this increase until such an evaluation has been done and he has had time to consult with seniors as to the impact of this on them.

Mr. Neufeld: The concern for seniors, Mr. Speaker, is ongoing. We will, and are, at all times, examining the effects on seniors of all legislation. We will, as time goes on, do whatever is necessary to make the life of our seniors the best we can make it.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Free Trade Agreement - Water Resources Protection

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) and relates to the effects the Free Trade Agreement will have on Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen the federal Government respond to the protection of Manitoba waters, and this Government was not even aware there was a problem. My question relates to the \$28 million six-year program that has been cost-shared between the federal Government and the Province of B.C. over what is called the great "A."

My question is: What assistance has the Premier been able to give the federal Government that will help negate the negative impact on free trade on Manitobans?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) has raised the issue of water in the Free Trade Agreement.

Clearly, the Minister responsible for Trade, Mr. Crosbie, has indicated, in introducing that legislation in the House of Commons, that it was not something that was needed because water was not covered by the Free Trade Agreement. The fact of the matter is he put it in because the farmingtoners from the Liberal and New Democratic Parties were whipping up the issue to such a public extent that he wanted to assure people that he had no difficulty in putting forth that in the legislation because there was no fear of it. So it was not giving away anything, it was not adding anything to it; it was just simply restating what was already the case.

But, Mr. Speaker, more to the point, as a Liberal, I am sure he is aware that the concerns about water being used in the Free Trade Agreement are ones that were raised as a result of the Liberals in the past.

I quote what John Turner said—they might know who John Turner is. I do not know if their Leader does, but I am sure some of the others know who John Turner is. He said in 1968—in fact, he wrote in 1968 with respect to trade: "If someday we can agree on the sharing of this continent's water by offering some of our water for export, we might want at that time to insist that if water is to be considered as a continental resource, markets should also be considered on the same basis. We might wish to export water not for money but in return for access—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please. The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

Mr. Angus: It is surprising, as a new Member to this House, when I ask a direct question in relation to the protection of Manitoban rights, I get rhetoric that is not applicable.

My question is: Given that there may be large groups of people that may be hurt by the Free Trade Agreement, what action can we expect to protect these disadvantaged groups in Manitoba who may be adversely affected by free trade?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, let us begin with the knowledge which probably has escaped the Member for St. Norbert, and that is that every single empirical study of the Free Trade Agreement has indicated that there will be increases in employment in Canada, and particularly in Manitoba, somewhere between 12,000 and 15,000 net new jobs in Manitoba alone as a result of the Free Trade Agreement. It does not matter whether it is the Economic Council of Canada or the Canada West Foundation or the Government of Manitoba or the NDP Government's own study, they all show that we would be a net benefactor in terms of net new jobs.

In terms of the changes that might take place in the employment place where some jobs would be gained and some would be perhaps lost along the way, the changes that would take place would be less, by far, than the normal changes that take place in the marketplace each and every year, a small fraction of that normal change. So all of the programs that are set up in Canada for retraining between federal and provincial Governments cost share initiatives to ensure that we are always retraining our people of our province for the new opportunities that they face as the marketplace changes. Those programs will remain in place and they will benefit Manitobans in future.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, the First Minister of this province would do better if he listened to Manitobans instead of to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has said that this Free Trade Agreement is not a panacea. He has said that there are flaws in it and there are disadvantaged groups.

What is this First Minister going to do for the people at McCains Foods, whose vice-president has indicated that their plant is in jeopardy? What is he going to do for the people who are shipping grain and are worried about the lobbying groups that are trying to turn it down? What is he going to do about the people who are losing their subsidies to ship canola? What are you going to do for the people of Manitoba instead of just trumpeting the Brian Mulroney song?

Mr. Speaker: I would like to caution all Members that a long question does seem to work in a long answer, so I would caution all Members.

Mr. Filmon: The Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) is not anymore knowledgeable about free trade than he was about pot holes when he was on City Council.

The reality of the situation is that every empirical analysis says that Manitoba has much to benefit. Our farm community and every single commodity group represented under the Keystone Agricultural Producers supports the Free Trade Agreement because they see expanded markets, expanded opportunities and economic benefits to the farm community.

The people in the manufacturing sector see increased opportunities. In all areas of our economy, there are increased opportunities. As a result, I do not accept the premise that there are damaging aspects of the Free Trade Agreement. There will be changes and shifts in the economy and those changes and shifts will be addressed as a result of training programs that we have between the federal and provincial Governments to ensure that our work force is always trained to access the opportunities for jobs that occur in the marketplace as it changes from time to time, as it always was and will in the future.

Pharmacare Deductible Increase Criteria

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I, too, have a question arising out of the concern being expressed on this side of the House for the announcement today of the increased Pharmacare deductible. My question is to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Oleson).

Given that the poorest members in our society are, by all statistical approaches, older women, senior citizen women, and given the fact that there are approximately 132,000 families who are recipients of the Pharmacare deductible or participants in this program, will the Minister responsible for the Status of Women inform Members of this House what analysis was done by the Women's Directorate in determining her input into this most recent decision?

What criteria were used by the Minister responsible for the Status of Women and her staff for determining the impact of these very significant increases on senior citizen women of this province and on single-parent families headed by women, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): Thank you to the Honourable Member for that question. The same criteria was used in studying this as was used when the NDP Government increased Pharmacare deductibles.

An Honourable Member: That is right.

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

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: I have a ruling for the House.

On July 27, the Honourable Member for Dauphin rose on a matter of privilege complaining that two statements made by the Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation on July 26 cast aspersions upon him.

The first statement related to the withdrawal by the Saskatchewan Government of funding for the Churchill Development Board. On July 27, the Honourable Minister withdrew this statement and apologized to the House. That matter, I am sure, is therefore resolved to the complete satisfaction of the House.

I have reviewed most carefully the second statement regarding the twinning of Highway 75. I have also examined with great care the various parliamentary authorities.

What exists in this case, I believe, is a dispute over the facts relating to a particular set of circumstances. Beauchesne (Citation 19(1)) and Maingot (pp. 190-191) both state that a dispute between two Members over questions of fact does not constitute a valid question of privilege. A number of alleged matters of privilege have been ruled out of order on these grounds by previous Speakers.

This may be a suitable opportunity to remind all Honourable Members that while speaking it is unparliamentary to impute unworthy motives to a Member or to make a personal charge against a Member.

In rereading the remarks of the Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation respecting the twinning of Highway 75, I note that he mentioned neither the Honourable Member for Dauphin nor the former Minister of Highways and Transportation. I therefore find it difficult to accept that these remarks have cast aspersions upon the Honourable Member for Dauphin.

With respect, I must inform the House that the Honourable Member for Dauphin has failed to establish a prima facie case of privilege. In my view, this matter is a dispute over the facts. I must therefore rule the Honourable Member's motion out of order as a matter of privilege.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1420)

ORDERS OF THE DAY THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), who has eight minutes remaining.

The Honourable Minister of Health.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to clarify for Honourable Members of the House some of the rather inaccurate information that these people are putting on the record today on the Pharmacare deductible.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell honourable Manitobans that on June 1, 1986, the NDP, this Government that is crying wolf today, increased the deductible to senior citizens by not 12 percent but by 28 percent.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Orchard: Then what did they do on January 1, 1987? Six months later, they increased the deductible not by 12 percent but by 16 percent.

Now, it is against every rule in this House to describe Honourable Members as hypocrites, and I will not do that, but today was a demonstration of how two-faced any Party can be once they change sides of the House. Now all of a sudden, without consultation in 1986 and 1987, they raised the deductible by 28 percent to seniors, 16 percent six months later without consultation to the seniors, without consultation to the Status of Women, and now they have the gall to stand here and say that we have done something in error.

My Lord, Mr. Speaker, how low can they step, how low can they grovel to try to pick up their fortunes with the people of Manitoba when a scant 22 percent of Manitobans voted and supported that incompetent group while they were in Government? I am sick and tired of the hypocrisy.

I simply want to tell the people of Manitoba that there was no joy on our side of the House in Treasury Board or myself as Minister of Health to have to announce an \$8 increase in the deductible to seniors of Manitoba. There was no pleasure taken on my behalf or in Treasury Board or by Members of Cabinet to increase the deductible for Pharmacare by Manitobans by \$20 per year for those under 65.

I want to tell Manitobans that despite those increases in deductibles, the refund to Manitobans and the support provided by the Pharmacare program will increase this year despite the increase in deductibles. The program will benefit Manitobans to a greater degree despite this increase in deductibles.

If my honourable friends in Government had not left us with a \$585-million-a-year interest charge, we would have the ability not to raise deductibles. It was the outlandish squandering of the resources of the Province of Manitoba by six years of Howard Pawley and the incompetence of the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Evans), the incompetence of the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), the incompetence of the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), and all of their colleagues that left this province in such a dismal fiscal condition that a new Government, regardless of political stripes, had no option but to make some tough decisions.

I want to tell honourable friends over here that, had the Member for Brandon East looked after his responsibility as a Cabinet Minister and protected the taxpayers of the Province of Manitoba instead of raising the amount of interest payments outside of this province by \$490 million per year in six short years of Government, we would have resources to provide the speech therapy that was asked for today by the Opposition in Health. We would have the resources to roll back and eliminate the deductible in Pharmacare if it was not for the squandering of that \$490 million in extra interest costs that they have forced on every living breathing Manitoba and generations yet unborn. So do not come to this House crying wolf.

You people in Government increased senior deductibles by 28 percent on June 1, 1986, and six

months later increased it by a further 16 percent, and you have the gall and the nerve to stand here and question a 12 percent increase. After two years, where are you coming from and where is your decency and where are your principles?

I can assure you today that there will not be very many senior citizens who are happy about having to pay \$8 per year more for their prescriptions. I can guarantee you that. There are not going to be droves of Manitobans coming and bringing accolades for increasing their Pharmacare deductible by \$20 per family in the Province of Manitoba, and I accept that. But when you are Government and you inherit a bloody mess from the NDP incompetence, you have to make some tough decisions. We are prepared to make them and we stand by them.

Mr. Speaker, I simply want to point out to you, in concluding my remarks on the Throne Speech debate, that if one reads the Throne Speech debate, they will find a number of initiatives that are of benefit to Manitobans. I take exception to the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) yesterday. The Member for St. Johns attempted to paint a picture of an uncaring Government that was anti-women in the newly elected Progressive Conservative Government under the leadership of my Leader, the Member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon).

I simply want to tell Manitobans that it was the Progressive Conservative Government that has now reversed a decision that was made by the NDP to close the only women's treatment centre for women suffering from alcoholic problems in the Province of Manitoba. That is an initiative that was announced in the Throne Speech. We would not tolerate that closing of the residential program that the NDP were closing.

* (1430)

I object to the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) pandering to this House, saying we do not care about women and we do not care about women's issues, because she sat in Treasury Board where that decision to close River House was made by an NDP Government. We have -(Interjection)- my honourable friend, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), now says, "Oh, it was not us, it was the AFM, and we only provide funds to the AFM. Therefore, they cut it and it is all the AFM's fault."

I want to tell you what we had to do. We had to increase the funds to the AFM to reinstate that service at River House to women with problems with alcohol and drug abuse. We did that willingly, voluntarily and gladly because we care about women's issues, contrary to the phony issue put on the table by the Member for St. Johns and her dirty dozen colleagues.

Enough of this silliness in this House from an NDP Government that received support from only 22 percent of Manitobans because of their fiscal mismanagement, their poor direction in Government, their wretched management. Manitobans voted for a change and, as 78 percent of them said, enough of the previous administration. Today, those same Manitobans are going to say, enough of this silliness of saying we do not care

about women's issues and forget the Conservative Government and the silliness that we do not care about senior citizens because we have raised their yearly deductible by \$8 a year.

I reiterate and I close, had we not inherited \$490 million per year additional interest charges alone from the previous mismanagement of the NDP, we would have money for all kinds of wonderful programs. Thank you.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus).

Order, please. If Honourable Members would like to carry on a private conversation, we do have rooms off to the side of the Chamber. I wish we would give the courtesy to the Honourable Member for St. Norbert in his Throne Speech.

The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Let me begin by suggesting that if there was less blame-shifting and less finger-pointing and more positive programs in a Throne Speech that told the people of this province exactly how these guys were going to solve these problems, there might be an awful lot more respect from this side of the House on how they are going to do their job. There might be an awful lot more of us who are prepared to support their programs.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by welcoming you to the office of Speaker. I applaud you in your appointment. I am very respectful of your position, and while I may get a tad anxious on occasion to make my points, it is simply the ambiance of the club that I have come to join and the leadership that is being shown through example on how I should be handling myself.

You, Mr. Speaker, are one of the only Conservatives who was kind enough to sit down with me and discuss with me what is happening in the House, what should be happening in the House, and how the House is to work in spite of the fact that I also have a number of so-called friends on that side of the House. So, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that you have risen to this particular level. I am supportive of your position and I am supportive of the indications you have given to try and bring some respect, some decorum and some politeness through the unusual tactic of perhaps listening.

Mr. Speaker, my compliments to Mr. Mark Minenko, my colleague as well, the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks, that guy over there. There are a number of people who I am required to thank. I feel very fortunate that I am here and there are people that I would like to acknowledge.

The very first person I would like to acknowledge is the First Lady in my life, Janis, who is very supportive and very cooperative all the time. The whole time that I was running, that I was pursuing this career, she was

standing beside me and helping me accomplish this task. I am very appreciative of her and my children, Colin and Susan, who are very, very supportive and very helpful in bringing me to this particular position.

As well, the constituents who voted me in, the workers who helped me in my campaign and all of the people who have continued to support me in my effort to bring responsible Government to the Province of Manitoba.

I would also like to thank my friend, Gerry Mercier. I think that it would be very untoward if I did not acknowledge the contribution that he has made both to university ward in the City of Winnipeg as six years as a city councillor and 12 years of being a very successful, very popular, very highly thought of MLA. Very early in the campaign, Mr. Mercier and I sat down and discussed the upcoming campaign and we agreed in conclusion that we would let the people decide. I am very pleased that the people did decide because they did decide on my behalf and in my favour. But at the same time, we are all very respectful of the contribution that Mr. Mercier made.

I would also suggest that the St. Norbert constituency is one that is unique in the Province of Manitoba in that it has a number of qualities that I think other communities would desire. It has a Trappist Monastery that was founded some many decades ago and has been occupied in the St. Norbert area and has now been made an historical park by this Government.

I am very proud of the tradition that is in that area and I can remember as a boy in St. Norbert when I was growing up that I used to go down there with my dogs and be chased by the Monks because they did not like us harassing them and their vows of silence and solitude that they maintain in that area on the banks of the La Salle River.

Mr. Speaker, it is very important that I identify the fact that I lived and grew up in St. Norbert, as my children did, because I think the community of St. Norbert has an opportunity to hold itself up as a model community in this country of how Anglophones and Francophones can live together as Canadians—Canadians in cooperation, Canadians who are prepared to work out their problems, to work together to solve their community efforts. They do not always agree. They sometimes do violently disagree with each other's opinions, but they respect the right to make decisions collectively. If there is one thing that I am very, very concerned about, it is documents like Meech Lake which are divisive and designed to separate societies that have demonstrated in this country that they can work together, that they can get along and they can cooperate.

There are some 26,000 people in my area and I have represented their interest for 12 years before I came to this particular position. In this area of the City of Winnipeg, there is a golf course, a university, a library, two great big parks in excess of 100 acres, and many other amenities including a hospital. We have all of the things that a community requires and it is because people like myself and my predecessors and the community at large have worked together cooperatively to bring these things to realization.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mark Minenko, in the Chair.)

I think it would be untoward of me not to acknowledge the development and the growth of the St. Norbert constituency. We started out with Fort Richmond where, as a young boy, I used to ride horseback on Mr. Holland's ranch right where the community is now, where the Silverstone Arena is, when the river banks were not developed and when the community was not there.

I can well remember the fact that there were five individual and personable councillors in the old R.M. of Fort Garry led by the Mayor, Mr. Dick Wankling, who was a personal friend of mine. I can still remember Ariel Campeau from St. Norbert who took his time to visit with people, even young children at hockey teams, and talked to them about various things.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is representation by popularity and by population. We still have that to a degree—representation by popularity. We have representation by individuals like myself who have been elected by a popular majority, by a majority who are prepared to support the things that I stand for and the things that I want to see done for this particular province.

It distresses me when I see the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) reduce the representation by population in the whole of the City of Winnipeg which used to be 136 individual elected councillors representing their interests. I know that other communities that are smaller than my ward have a number of people who are prepared—in the municipalities around the province—to listen and talk to and stand on their record with the people. If they do not do their job, they are turfed out. If they do their job, they are re-elected; but to see them willy-nilly without any consultation with the City of Winnipeg, with the stroke of a populist pen try to reduce the number of councillors who are going to represent the interest of the people of the City of Winnipeg, distresses me. It distresses me that they are taking that form of an attitude.

* (1440)

I appreciate Mr. Orchard's lecture on fiscal responsibility. I respect what he has said and I recognize that it is not an easy set of circumstances that they have been left with. I am sure that they are going to be working diligently and continually to try and rectify the problems as they see they should be rectified.

It also distresses me when the Throne Speech indicates the amalgamation of departments and the destruction of people in their jobs. I am concerned that that is not the only way to solve the fiscal problems that this province has, that there are other opportunities which are available.

I am encouraged by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) when he suggests to me that we can, as individuals, provide suggestions to him. I am encouraged that he indicates openness and that he wants to communicate with us and he wants to hear our ideas. But it is very difficult when, as first elected

to this House, I find myself in a position of being many, many weeks wondering what is going on, trying to find out what the role of a critic is in this Government.

When I finally have to confess to the Minister in a public forum that all I want is what any ordinary sales person would get if he happened to say to an individual Minister, "Tell me, what does your department do?"—no more, no less—I do not want him to give me any secrets of Cabinet privilege. I do not want him to discuss with me those decision-making things that they are going to be involved in because they have to hang their hat on those opportunities. I would like the courtesy of being made aware of what is going on in their departments, what can be happening.

It appears to me that the Rules of the House are an embarrassment, that they are "stick it to them, try to catch them off guard." I will give you perfect examples of the lack of cooperation, the lack of listening and the lack of understanding. When I stand up to ask a legitimate question of whether or not water is something that we should be concerned about, I do not get specific answers. When I hear rhetoric that evades the answers, when all I want to know is, on behalf of Manitobans, whether or not we as Manitobans have concern in this province about the protection of our rights under free trade; whether we are going to lose our rights to control our water; whether we are going to lose our rights to determine the prices of our hydro products; whether we are actually going to be forced to set up blood banks; whether we want to or not, to commercialize and sell blood—those are concerns that I have.

As a newcomer, I would hope that I would be able to get new blood from the Conservatives that would give us information, give us answers, give us direction, because I think that is what the people of Manitoba want. They force us into framing our questions in such a way that they do not have specific answers, that they cannot give us the details that we want.

I am a free trader, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am a businessman. For most of my life, I have been a straight commissioned salesman and I am still a straight commissioned salesman. I am rewarded in direct proportion to my ability to produce. If I produce on behalf of the people that I represent, if I look after their needs, if I express their concerns adequately in this House, then I will be rewarded by being able to continue in this position. I have been all my life on that edge of a business-oriented relationship with my income. I resent the fact that they suggest that I am anti free trade.

Quite frankly, there are a lot of things in this agreement that are worth while. There are a lot of things that are very positive and a lot of things that are very desirable. I do not want to be one of those people in Opposition who is cast into a role of negatively criticizing the Government in every aspect of everything they do. Believe it or not, I do want to cooperate, I do want to try and get along, I do want to suggest to them in a positive fashion that there are improvements they can make, but they are not taking that position. They are putting the interests of a federal Party, the interest of an election trumpet by their Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, or the Prime Minister of Canada, ahead of

the interests of Manitobans. That disturbs me. It does disturb me.

I think that we should be interested. I think we should be interested enough to say wait a minute, hear my questions, please pay attention to what I am saying. You do not have to defend Brian Mulroney to me. His arguments on free trade will be fought at a different level. It will be fought in the Senate or it will be fought on the streets of Canada in an election process.

By God, if there is the possibility that an individual will be able to, because of the lack of preparedness of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), because of the unawareness of the Minister of Health, because of the unconcern of the Minister of Health, because he will not take time to listen to what it is we, as Opposition, are trying to say to him about the possibility of individuals going into a particular American medical institution and selling a pint of blood for their \$5 or their \$10, if he wants to do that, then let him do it as a conscious decision.

If he wants to not do that, then let him say I do not want that in the Province of Manitoba because I do not want that in the Province of Manitoba. It has nothing to do with whether Ottawa passes a free trade agreement or not. It has to do with the quality of life that we demand and desire as Manitobans. I wish that the Honourable Minister of Health, who is so encouraging to us to contribute positive ideas, would pay attention to what we are trying to say and not just ignore us and walk away.

It becomes frustrating, but I can learn to play the game if they insist on that. I would rather not sink to that level. I would rather work in cooperative basis. I would rather see us work cooperatively to get a fair price from a company like ManOil if we are going to sell it. I would rather see you say to me, "What ideas do you have, the Member for St. Norbert?" I would rather see them come across and say, "How can we work together?", rather than defending all the time, unjustly, not even being prepared to listen. It just is very, very frustrating.

I think that we find that there is a certain degree of interest in being fiscally responsible. It seems to be a catch word. I am reminded of budgeting constraints that we have tried to enforce in the City of Winnipeg. I am going to avoid such cliches as penny-wise and pound foolish. I am going to tell you that I believe in fiscal responsibility. I believe in managing your House in a fashion that you can afford.

I think that the people in Manitoba are agreeing with my description of a Liberal philosophy. My description is that those people who genuinely need help like the elderly, like the infirmed, like the mentally ill, like the physically handicapped, disadvantaged people of that nature, I am prepared to help them. I am prepared to invest our tax dollars in helping those people because that is the type of society that I want to live in. But those people who are prepared to help themselves and those people who can help themselves and those people who want to excel by their own specific and individual effort, by God, let them do it! I do not swing as far to the left as my colleagues on this side of the House. I

do not believe in a cradle-to-grave logic of looking after them—those guys on that side over there—over there, Reg. Pay attention, eh! I do not go that far, but I do not swing back as far as these individuals across the Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because they go too far.

My arguments at the city and in this election campaign to the people were very, very straightforward. For six years, I was in the city and elected and represented my area while Premier Pawley and his Government ran this province. They were very, very good on their social programs and they were very, very short on their business skills. I said, for six years, I represented this area under Sterling Lyon and for six years they were very, very good on their business skills, but they did it at the expense of people and they did it at the expense of social programs.

The people of St. Norbert agreed with me when I said to them that there must be room in the middle for some common sense, practical application where we can make decisions that will help people as much as we possibly can and yet not penalize them with things like the payroll tax, and not have disincentives, and not automatically run to the taxation well every time we believe that we have got to solve a problem and try to shift the blame onto somebody else. Stand up and be accountable and say this is what we stand for, this is what we are going to do, and if you have a better idea, come and talk to us about it. I, for one, am prepared to listen to them.

I would like to close my remarks by pledging to this House and to my colleagues and to the constituents of my area something that I read many, many years ago that affected me and I have always remembered it. Whenever I felt in need of some pick-me-ups, I have been able to recall this particular expression. The expression goes like this: "I intend to pass through this world but once; any kindness I can show to my fellow creature, let me do it now; let me not defer it or neglect it, for I may not pass this way again."

I intend to apply myself diligently on behalf of my people, to work as hard as I can in their best interests, as cooperatively as I can with this Government and/or with any other level of Government as long as they are prepared to share with me. But if they close the door on me, if they do not want to hear my ideas, if they just want to belittle me as an individual and belittle the 26,000 people who I represent, I am not going to stand for that. I am sure my colleagues will not stand for that.

We are for good Government. We are for supporting this particular Government, but I think being prepared to sit here and support should not be misconstrued as a vote of confidence. I do not have the confidence in this Government that they can do the job. I do not have the confidence that they can do the job that they think they can do. I do not have confidence based on the few short weeks that they have been in power, but I am prepared to give them a chance. But please, send them a message if you can. Let them know that we are standing for good Government and that is what we are going to support. That is what I am going to support, and that is what my colleagues will support. Thank you.

* (1450)

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): As is customary in this Legislature, I would like to begin my comments today by offering to the Speaker my congratulations on his election to the highest position in this Chamber. That will require a great deal of patience, understanding and firm guidance on the part of the Speaker. It is a task which I am certain the Speaker will exercise with both fairness and responsibility.

It will not be an easy task for the Speaker; nor, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will it be an easy task for yourself when you occupy that Chair or when you occupy the Chair in the centre of the room here when we are discussing Estimates during the Committee of Supply, for there are some very strongly held beliefs in this Chamber and emotion in this Chamber quite often runs high as the debate is undertaken and we discuss issues that are not only important to us as individuals but issues that are important to us as legislators and representatives of the different constituencies across this province. So the debate that is going to take place can sometimes lead to different stages of, as Beauchesne states it, heat and confusion.

However, I have every confidence that the Speaker and yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will attempt to fulfill those responsibilities to ensure that those debates are conducted in the most orderly fashion possible, in a fair and responsible manner.

This is my fourth opportunity to participate in the first Throne Speech of a newly elected Legislature. Four times I have been elected to represent the interests of those who live, work and raise their families in the Churchill constituency. I am appreciative and thankful for their continuing support over the past decade and then some. Further to that, I am humbled by the responsibility which they have entrusted with me on those four separate occasions.

This debate in reply to the Throne Speech provides a unique opportunity to reconfirm my personal dedication and my personal commitment and that of my Party, the New Democratic Party Opposition, to work with all Northerners in helping them, in helping all of us build a stronger North, and, by building a stronger North, we are in fact building a stronger province and a stronger country.

It is both interesting and enlightening that at a time when voting patterns across the province were undergoing some dramatic changes—and some very surprising shifts, I might add—that northern Manitoba did not desert the New Democratic Party. That loyalty to the New Democratic Party did not just happen. No, that loyalty to the NDP is there because the NDP has been loyal to the North. We have never broken faith with northern Manitoba, and that is why this last election was so particularly humbling for, at a time when it was very obvious that we would not form the Government to electorate all across this province and in particular to electorate in northern Manitoba, the North, northern Manitoba itself sent five NDP MLAs to this Legislature to protect their interests and to speak loudly and to fight hard for those things that they as Northerners value most.

Northerners in all northern electoral constituencies showed that faith in the New Democratic Party at the time of that election. They demand no more out of that faith than that which the rest of the province enjoys. At the same time, they expect no less than that which the rest of the province enjoys, and they will accept no less than that which the rest of the province enjoys. Northerners want only the same opportunity to participate in building a better province and stronger communities in which they can live and work and raise their families, the same opportunity as is available to all other Manitobans.

What are some of the specific things that Northerners would like to see us, we as legislators, address on their behalf? Northerners want the chance to work at meaningful, productive jobs. No matter what community you travel into in northern Manitoba, whether it be Red Sucker Lake, a community which I have enjoyed visiting on numerous occasions and the home of my colleague, the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper); or whether it be Brochet or Lac Brochet or Shamattawa or Tadoule Lake or Granville Lake or South Indian Lake or Split Lake or York Landing, all communities in my constituency; or whether it be Churchill or Gillam, Lynn Lake, Leaf Rapids, Sundance, the industrial communities in the Churchill constituency, Northerners in all those communities have as their main priority the same thing and that is the opportunity to work at productive jobs.

They want their fair share of jobs at Hydro construction sites and it does not matter whether they come from Red Sucker Lake or Tadoule Lake or Churchill. They would like to have the opportunity to participate in building our vast hydro potential in northern Manitoba. That maybe is one of the reasons why they sent five northern MLAs back to the Legislature as New Democrats. They were really quite upset when the Conservatives said that they were not in favour of preferential hiring clauses for northern Natives, which they said very clearly in this House during the Sessions previous.

I understood what that meant. That meant that if there were construction projects ongoing in northern Manitoba and if there was a Conservative Government, there would be far less likely a chance that there would be preferential hiring clauses in the contracts that would ensure them nothing more but nothing less than a fair share of the jobs on Hydro construction sites. They also know that those jobs and the opportunity that they represent for Northerners all across the province, and for Southerners as well, would disappear if Hydro construction is stopped.

That is why they were alarmed when the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) refers to the Limestone project as "Lemonstone" and when she says that she would stop Hydro construction in northern Manitoba. The Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) is saying that is what she said, and she was also critical of McKenzie Seeds, jobs for friends. The Liberal Leader agrees that yes, in fact, that is what she did say because it is a matter of the record. Very clearly, and I can remember the chagrin in the demeanour of the Liberal candidate in the Churchill constituency when it was reported that

his leader—the Liberal Leader—had stood up in Thompson and said that if a Liberal Government were elected, they would stop Hydro construction and were so critical of the ongoing Hydro construction that they termed it "Lemonstone."

Now I know that the Conservatives have not really been any great fans of Hydro projects such as Limestone.

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Labour; Environment, Workplace and Health): If they are profitable, you had better believe it.

Mr. Cowan: The Minister of Labour and Environment (Mr. Connery) says if they are profitable, they would be supportive and I think if that is the case then we will find their support coming on stream very quickly because those are going to be, and they are, in fact, very profitable projects.

* (1500)

But the fact is that even with their skepticism and their cynicism which has stopped them from proceeding with Hydro construction projects in the past, they have never demeaned existing projects to the extent that the Liberal Leader did during the election when she called the Limestone project "Lemonstone."

Of course, the Northerners also know full well and they remember quite well what happened under the Lyon Conservatives when Limestone construction was not in existence, when the construction project was stopped for four long years, and even the community of Sundance was shut down and mothballed. So they are not going to forget very soon what a Conservative Government means to hydro projects in northern Manitoba.

What is concerning them now is the fact that the newly appointed chairperson of the board for Hydro is again taking that same anti-development position when it comes to Hydro construction in northern Manitoba. He is saying the same things that were said under the Lyon administration when the Limestone project was shut down for those four long years. What concerns them is not only his words alone but the encouragement that he has gotten in the past and I imagine will continue to get from the Liberals in respect to criticism and the mothballing of Hydro projects in northern Manitoba.

Not only do Northerners want to be able to work in their own communities, they want to be able to work in productive jobs, building better communities through their own efforts, and that is what I believe to be unfair and arbitrary cutbacks in northern projects under the Manitoba Community Places Program and so depressed northern Manitobans.

Once again, it is obvious that with the Conservatives in Government, there will be cutbacks in services, programs and opportunities in northern Manitoba that go far beyond what cutbacks take place in other parts of the province. If there was a region of this province that was particularly hurt during the Lyon administration, it was northern Manitoba.

Given the facts that we have all seen presented in this Chamber to date respecting the recent cutbacks in the Manitoba Community Places Program, it is obvious that if there is a region that has been hurt more than others by those cutbacks it is northern Manitoba. So it is the same old story once again. Once again, it is obvious that the Conservatives will continue that tradition of cutting back those programs, services and opportunities for Northerners.

I would not find that quite so depressing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if in fact I felt that the Liberal Opposition, the Official Opposition—

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Her Majesty's Official Opposition.

Mr. Cowan: Yes, indeed. The Member for Lakeside, who is the Dean of this Legislature, says Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. In this case, I think they are being a bit too loyal to the Government when they, too, say that if they were in power they would cut back the Jobs Fund, they would cut back job creation programs, and they would undertake the same sort of regressive actions which the Conservative Government has already started with its cutbacks on the Manitoba Community Places Program. As a matter of fact, I recall very distinctly the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs), previous to and during the last election campaign, saying that she would cut back on the Jobs Fund if not eliminate it totally, cut back on Jobs Fund projects.

The Manitoba Community Places Program is only one of the many programs in northern Manitoba that had provided opportunities for Northerners to work in their own communities, to build those stronger communities. Quite frankly, they value that program very dearly. They do not want to see those sorts of programs eliminated, reduced or cut back. As a matter of fact, given their choice, they would want to see those types of programs increased because there is a crying need in northern Manitoba for productive jobs and for help to communities to build those stronger communities.

Northerners also want to be able to exercise more control over their own destiny. They want self-Government to be more than just a long sought after goal or some theoretical initiative that never takes root in reality. They want to be able to shape their own future through greater control of their own communities and greater control over the land that they have inhabited for centuries upon centuries. That is why they were so disappointed when the Premier of the Conservative Government betrayed his own understanding of this issue and his own understanding of the aspirations of aboriginal people by paying lip service to self-Government at a time when the concept of self-Government required support right across this country. In paying lip service to that concept, he did little more than mouth the lines of Premier Vander Zalm, Premier Getty and Premier Devine in saying that this Government, his Government, the Conservative Government, cannot support self-Government until it can be more fully defined.

We know that has been the criticism that those three Premiers, which I mentioned previously, all Conservative

or Conservative-thinking Premiers, have used on every occasion when they wanted to stall the constitutional talks which could have resulted in greater levels of self-control for Native people and aboriginal people.

Aboriginal people deserve respect for their aboriginal rights and for their aspirations. They deserve acknowledgment of those aboriginal rights and they go beyond hunting, fishing and trapping; but those are the three areas that are foremost in the minds of aboriginal people and Governments when they sit down at the constitutional tables. For that reason, they are priorities. They also demand respect for what they are as productive members of Canadian society and the values that they bring to all of us.

That is why they were shocked and extremely disillusioned when they heard the Liberal Leader stereotype all Native people by blaming Native time when Native leaders in Norway House were not on hand to meet her. What did she say at that time? I think it is important to put on the record her comments when she was upset during the latter part of the campaign after she took a trip into Norway House and the Native leaders that she thought were supposed to meet her were not there. She said, and I quote, "We never know if we will get two people or 20 and they always get the time wrong."

Now what does that tell you about the attitude of the Liberal Leader—and I expect she speaks on behalf of her Party—in respect to Native values? It tells me that either they do not have a very good understanding of Native values or that they do not have very much respect for Native values. In that one short statement she betrayed a complete misunderstanding of northern circumstances and, I believe, an unacceptable lack of respect for all Native people. It was not I alone who believed that to be the case, because if you look at what Native people said in response to that statement, they felt too that she had betrayed a lack of understanding and respect for their values.

It is important to note that this incident involving the Liberal Leader took place the very same day that Conservatives in one of their campaign flights were mimicking Native accents in front of a media on a northern flight. The individual who did that, I understand has been appointed to a higher position in the Government now, following that incident, but I do not think it is connected.

* (1510)

Northerners, beyond wanting respect for their values, for their culture, for their aspirations and their goals, want to be able to access the same Government programs and services that are available to other Manitobans in their home communities. That is why the previous Government, the New Democratic Party Government, when it had the opportunity put in place so many special programs such as the Air Ambulance Program, the Special Access Educational Programs or training programs at community levels, and the list goes on and on. We did that because we know that in order for those programs to be most effective, they have to address the needs of the individuals that they are

designed to serve. They can best address those needs in so many instances at the community level.

That is not to say that every program can be implemented in a decentralized manner at the community level, but it is to say that when reviewing programs and considering activities, one should take into consideration those values and those aspirations and those goals, and wherever possible go out of their way to the extent possible to define program parameters and to set up the framework of those programs in such a way so as they can be accessed at the community level.

That is why Northerners are really quite apprehensive about the fixation and the fiscal that dominates the Conservative philosophy.- (Interjection)- The Conservative Members from their seat are saying "No, it does not." I think, if they look very clearly at the record to date and the actions that they have taken, and if they look at the actions that they have not taken and the activities that they have not undertaken, then it becomes very clear very quickly that they are, in fact, fixated on the fiscal. They are going to put fiscal concerns ahead of all else.- (Interjection)- The Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) says those are only my thoughts. He is half right, those are certainly my thoughts; but he is wrong when he says those are only my thoughts because when I talk to Northerners, when I talk to people who have the most to lose if a Government betrays their confidence, they tell me that they are apprehensive, they are frightened, they are scared, given past experience, as to what could happen under this Government.

What this Government has been saying since it has been elected is giving no confidence to them that they will do anything other than retreat to that regressive right-wing reactionary restraint-minded mentality. So it is not only my thoughts, but it is the thoughts of hundreds of thousands of Manitobans across this province.

They have seen the result of that right-wing mentality from 1977 to 1981. A lot of Members in this House today were not in this House at that time, but I think they saw from their particular vantage point the impact of acute protracted restraint on the entire province, but perhaps they did not see as well the impact of acute protracted restraint and the Conservative mentality in northern Manitoba, because it was devastating. It set the North back for decades.

When we assumed power in 1981, our first job, our first responsibility was just to spend the first number of months and perhaps even years undoing the damage that had been done in four short years under a Conservative Government. Quite frankly, we do not want this Government to have four years to be able to impose that same sort of devastation and destruction in northern Manitoba so that we will have to spend that much time when we again regain power and assume responsibility for programs and for policies in northern Manitoba.

While some in this room may not remember those hard times in the North, northern Manitobans remember

those hard times. They see all the same signs of a resurgence of acute protracted restraint start to show through the smiling facade of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Conservative Government as they stand in this House to answer questions, as they attend meetings and as they go to press conferences.

But what they find even more disconcerting is that the Liberals in this Chamber, to quote one legislative reporter, are and I quote: ". . . out right-winging the Conservatives." That is what was said, and I now know why we sit in this particular section in the Legislature because, if the Conservatives and the Liberals sat together, one would be unable to tell the difference between the two and there would be sort of an osmosis. I think they would just sort of melt over into this and they would melt over into this, because I know that there are some Members on this side who are more left-wing thinking, not more left wing, than some of the Members on this side, and I know that there are some Liberals, and the Leader included on many issues, are more right-wing-minded than some of the Members on that side.

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): But Jay, they tend to wear red ties. Just check, even bow ties. See, most of them wear red ties. That is how you can tell us apart. They wear red ties.

Mr. Cowan: The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) has told me that the reason that we can tell them apart is that the Liberals wear red ties and the Conservatives wear . . .

Mr. Enns: . . . a few of us have a few red spots.

Mr. Cowan: The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) now tells me, and points to his own tie, that a few of the Liberals have a few red spots in their own ties. I wonder if there is any significance in that. However, time will tell.

They find disconcerting that right-wing approach of the Liberals. The Liberals are opposed to Limestone. The Liberals are opposed to the Jobs Fund. When we bring up an important environmental issue in this Chamber, what do the Liberals do? They consult with Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting and then they take the side of the Conservatives. I think it was an important comment that should be repeated when our Leader, in walking by one of the Liberal Members in the hall, said to him, you defend Dow Chemical. That is exactly what the Liberals are doing. When they had a choice to make, and there are all sorts of times that we have to make choices in this Chamber, they chose to side with the Liberals, with the Conservatives—see even I get the two confused when speaking—on a major environmental issue. There was no difference whatsoever.

The Liberals during the election suggested that hospital patients could pay for meals, toothpaste and other incidentals, non-essentials. These are the types of comments that, quite frankly, define what the Liberal Party is in Manitoba and encourage those who want to take a hard look at what the Liberals are to make

the statements such as they are out-right-winging the Conservatives, because in fact they are.

What particularly bothered me was the Liberals' decision to vote with the Conservatives against a motion for an emergency debate on the Port of Churchill. That brings us to the issue of this year's shipping season for Churchill. I want to focus on that issue for a bit, because I believe the way by which the Government has dealt with this crisis—and it is a crisis—and the way by which the Liberals have responded to our efforts to force the Conservative Government to act more aggressively in support of the port is illustrative of a lack of commitment to the Port of Churchill specifically and to the North in general.

(The Acting Speaker, Ed Helwer, in the Chair.)

Firstly, the issue before us goes far beyond this year's shipping season, and I think the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) and the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) will agree that is the case. Let there be no doubt about it. There are some very powerful interests at work against the Port of Churchill. They have been at work against the Port of Churchill for a very long time and they will use every opportunity, every occasion, every chance that they get to degrade, to denigrate and to diminish the impact of the Port of Churchill in the overall shipping industry in the country. That is a historical fact, and I do not think anyone in this Chamber would deny it. I know the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) would certainly agree with it and I think other Members would agree with it.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mark Minenko, in the Chair.)

While this opposition most of the time is an undercurrent, from time to time, it rises to the surface such as the time the Conservative, Jack Murta, said very clearly that the Port of Churchill is a luxury that we cannot afford. That undercurrent in that particular instance was rather obvious, that there are those who are opposed to the Port of Churchill and who will speak out against the Port of Churchill. We have to bear that in mind when we review the situation that confronts us today.

A second consideration, if no grain is shipped through Churchill this year, it will be that much harder to get grain shipped out of the port next year. I looked at the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) for confirmation of that, because I think with a nod of his head he can say that will be the case. In fact, that will be the case.

The excuse that is being used for not shipping grain out of the Port of Churchill this year, and it is an excuse, is that the drought is having an impact on the ability to ship grain to and through that particular port. Well, Churchill works off of last year's grain shipments historically. Last year was a banner year for grain exports, a record year for grain exports in this country. So if Churchill is working off of last year's shipments in most instances and last year was a record year, there should be no problem in finding grain to ship through the Port of Churchill this year, so that excuse does not wash at all.

* (1520)

That is why I was somewhat surprised when the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) from his seat, when I introduced the emergency resolution, came forward with that excuse by way of aside comment. It just does not make logical sense. I look to my friend over there, who is very well versed in logic, for confirmation of that. If in fact it works off of last year, if last year was a banner year, then there should be no problem finding grain for Churchill in this particular year. But if in fact it does work off of last year's shipments or the previous year's shipments and this year is a drought year and the shipments are down, then next year it will be more difficult to find grain for the Port of Churchill. So if we do not have a shipping season this year, we are really talking, unfortunately so, about the extreme likelihood of not having grain to ship through the Port of Churchill next year.

What that tells me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that we are in fact facing the potential beginning of the end for the Port of Churchill. If you do not have grain shipped out of that port for two years and there are powerful interests at work, then in fact we will have a situation where it will be nigh on impossible to get that port started again.

Now I hear the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey), and I am going to digress for one moment. Mr. Deputy Speaker, can you tell me approximately how much time I have left?

An Honourable Member: Unlimited time.

Mr. Cowan: Those who are saying they will give me unlimited time have not heard me speak in this House before.- (Interjection)- Some of you have.

I am sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, could you advise me as to how much time I have?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member has 10 minutes.

Mr. Cowan: Ten minutes. Then I will digress very briefly.

The Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) is very prone to cast suggestions across the floor either from his feet or from his seat that, when in Government, we did not do much for the Port of Churchill. He ignores the Port of Churchill Development Agreement, he ignores the Hydro line in Churchill, he ignores the dredging, he ignores the new tug, he ignores all sorts of activities which took place. Let him do that because those, while substantive, really could not be said as having sole impact on the Port of Churchill. There is only one statistic that one could use to determine whether or not the port was faring better under one set of circumstances of that particular Government as opposed to another Government.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Quite fortunately, we have the statistics available to us for the amount of grain which was shipped for export through the Port of Churchill under the Lyon administration, 1978 shipping year to 1981 shipping year, and the amount of grain which was shipped under the New Democratic Party administration from 1982

on. In the Lyon years, on average, 460,000 tonnes were shipped through the Port of Churchill on average on an annual basis. As a matter of fact, one year under their administration, there was the lowest tonnage shipped out of the Port of Churchill since 1955, and that was only 380,000 tonnes.

Under the NDP administration, the last number of years, the six years, the annual average was 527,000 tonnes. So in fact, there was more shipment of grain on an export basis in the Port of Churchill on an annual basis under the New Democratic Party administration than there was under the Conservative administration. That is the one criteria that is definitive. How much grain goes through the port?

What I am afraid is that what is at stake here today is the future of the Port of Churchill, and time is fast running out. We are approaching the point of no return for this year's shipping season. The fact is that there has been no grain shipped to the port this year, and that is unprecedented. I have talked to individuals in the Port of Churchill, I have talked to individuals in the community, and none of them can remember a time when the elevators were not full or nearly full at this point in time in the shipping season. None of them can remember a time when it was not full in July.

The fact is that there are about 10,000 tonnes sitting there now, less than one ship, much less than one ship, and there are no shipments being contemplated right now for the Port of Churchill—none whatsoever. In every other year for at least the last 10 and probably far beyond that, grain has been shipped to the Port of Churchill by the end of July. As well, there are no ships currently scheduled for the port. Again, this is highly unusual and I look to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) whom I think is trying very hard to make certain that there is a shipping season in Churchill this year. I talk to him about it every day and he tells me he is attempting and making contact and pushing and prodding every day, and I believe that to be the case.

But, as a matter of fact, in four out of the past 10 years, ships would have already arrived in the Port of Churchill by August 3—in four out of the last 10 years. In no case during those few years has a first ship arrived at a port any later than August 14. That is how close we are at the time running out. Because remember, this situation is growing even more serious and even more extremely urgent day by day because it takes considerable lead time to arrange grain shipments and ship arrivals at any port. Churchill is no exception, we need action now.

As a matter of fact, we should have had that action a few weeks ago. That is why the New Democratic Party Opposition put forward the motion for an emergency debate and an all-Party delegation to travel to Ottawa to lobby the federal Conservative Government and its agencies such as CNR and the Wheat Board to ensure that there was a shipping season at the Port of Churchill today.

You should also know, Mr. Speaker, several hours before I introduced that motion in this Legislature, I sent a copy of that motion to the Conservative House

Leader and to the Liberal House Leader and a letter. In that letter, I asked for their support of the motion and I asked them to call me if they wanted to discuss the motion. Did they call? No. Did they take up the offer to work together? No. What did they do?

While the Liberals built up arguments as to how to explain why it was, they were voting against the Port of Churchill emergency resolution and immediately put together a rather transparent Private Members' Resolution. Now I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that I am prepared to support the earliest possible consideration of that Private Members' Resolution. I do not think it is a perfect resolution; it may even be that we want to amend it to make it better. But I do think it is important that we work together to the extent possible just as we had the opportunity to work together the other day to make certain that time does not run out on the Port of Churchill.

Well, that resolution will not hide the fact that when they had the chance to stand up and support the Port of Churchill resolution in this Legislature, they chose instead to stand up in support of the Conservatives against our resolution.

Later in the hallways, the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) explained their failure to support the port by saying that she tends to side with voting with the Speaker, which means voting against the emergency debate unless it is truly an emergency. When the Liberal Leader sat in this House for three Sessions or at least two-and-a-half or a portion thereof, there were eight separate votes on emergency debates in which she participated—eight separate votes. Six times she voted against the Speaker and with the Conservatives. She is shaking her head, no.

So in 1986, 1987 and 1988, she voted against the Speaker 75 percent of the time; now she is voting with the Speaker 100 percent of the time. What is even more interesting is what she had to say when she did participate in emergency debates, because not only did she vote against the Speaker and in favour of the emergency debates, when the emergency debates were held she participated in them.

* (1530)

The one I want to reference coincidentally is an emergency debate about grain shipments. At that time, the emergency debate which was ruled out of order by the Speaker—Mr. Speaker, you should know that—was proceeded with because as Government House Leader, I, on behalf of the Government, gave unanimous consent on our Party. All our Members gave unanimous consent, as did the Liberal Leader of the day, as did the Conservatives, for the debate to proceed even although it had been ruled out of order. So with that unanimous consent, people began speaking and lo and behold, the Leader of the Liberal Party at that time was one of these speakers.

The issue of the day was a grain handlers strike at Thunder Bay, and during that debate the Leader of the Liberals (Mrs. Carstairs) made a number of interesting comments. Firstly, she said that she would like to see the workers legislated back to work. Yes, she said that

in her comments. But that is a bit of an aside. Secondly, and what is more important, there are two other statements she made at that time that are applicable to the Churchill situation. In the first instance, she criticized the Government of the Day, which was the NDP Government, for not approaching the Conservative critic or herself, to put together a common position that could be sent to Ottawa on behalf of the Legislature to try to put an end to the grain handlers strike.

That is exactly what I had tried to do in my emergency resolution. I called for an all-Party delegation, an all-Party delegation that included all Parties in this Legislature, as well as representatives of other interested groups outside of this Legislature. I sent a letter to the House Leaders of the other caucuses previous to the introduction of that resolution asking for their support. So not only did we recommend an all Party non-partisan delegation, we also approached them for their support before we went ahead with the resolution. But even more importantly, what she said at that time, which is a bit of contradiction to what she is saying now, is, "What matters is that grain is not being loaded onto ships."

So the Liberals want an emergency debate, participate in an emergency debate when there is grain not being loaded in Thunder Bay, but when there is grain not being loaded in Churchill, they deny the opportunity for that debate to take place, and they say -(Interjection)- I am sorry, perhaps the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) would care to make that comment again.

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

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): M. le président, je voudrais me joindre à tous ceux qui vous ont présenté leurs félicitations. La charge que vous occupez est le symbole de la fière tradition de démocratie parlementaire. Je suis sûr que votre sens de la justice, votre intelligence et la loyauté dont vous avez fait preuve à l'égard de notre patrimoine politique inspiront aux membres de cette assemblée le sens de la dignité de leurs fonctions.

(Translation)

Mr. Speaker, I would like to join all those who have extended their congratulations to you. Your position symbolizes the proud tradition of parliamentary democracy in our province. I am confident that your sense of fairness, your intelligence and the loyalty you have demonstrated to our political heritage will inspire in the Members of this Assembly a sense of dignity in their duties.

May I also congratulate my colleague, the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko), on his election to the position of Deputy Speaker. We know that his performance of those important duties will be bolstered by his sense of fair play and to allow competing points of view.

There are many people I would like thank on such an important day for me. At the top of the list are my

wife and children, who have coped so well through a chaotic period in family life. They know that family always comes first. And to all those volunteers, who sacrificed their own family lives to help during the campaign, to them I say, the victory is yours. As all Members of this Chamber know so well, it is the energy and the dedication of all those friends and supporters which makes politics exciting and rewarding. The debt we owe to those men and women is the promise of service and of integrity.

It is with great pride and a sense of partnership that I take a seat in this Chamber beside my Leader. She is a person with great strength and good courage. Her example inspires all of us in the Liberal caucus, and we know that her intelligence, determination and integrity will lead us down the path of history, the path leads to take the first woman in Canadian history into the Premier's Office.

Much has been said about the inexperience of our caucus. It is true we have little experience with this forum of legislative debate. We will have to work harder than more experienced Members to learn the Rules of the House. But let me say this, Mr. Speaker, there is no caucus more energetic, more dedicated to public service, more reflective of our community or more prepared for new challenges than the men and women who make up the Official Opposition in this Legislature.

I take this traditional opportunity to thank the people of Fort Rouge for their vote of confidence. I know full well that the transfer of trust from the people to their elected representatives is the lifeblood of our democratic system. We serve them only so long as we serve them well. More experienced Members of this House know better than I that any betrayal of that trust undermines our legitimacy as politicians, and leads only to a speedy resumption to private life.

As I look around this Chamber, I see many familiar faces and some old friends. May I make special mention of the Mover of the Throne Speech, the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), whose wife along with mine and many others in this Chamber, will give birth likely during the course of this Legislative Session. I am pleased to sit in this House with him and I wish him well.

Members may know that I spent many years as a journalist, writing about politics, and in some cases writing about them. Through those associations I made many friends, most of whom never allowed the momentary tensions that come up between politicians and journalists to break the bond of collegiality. It is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that the cut and thrust of partisan debate will not erode the mutual respect that builds over months and years.

As an example, my relationship with the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) goes back many years, and as some Members likely know, I ran against him in the election of 1986. I ran hard and I lost, but I lived to fight another day. I can remember the people of Tuxedo who said to me that it was very difficult to vote against the Leader of the Opposition. I can also remember them saying that he was rather good at it. We are confident that nostalgia will set in very soon and the First Minister

will be restored to the chair he found so comfortable, right here beside me in this Chamber.

But we should take nothing for granted for my honourable friend, the Member for Concordia, may have his own designs on this chair. I take particular pleasure in representing the constituency of Fort Rouge. There is a fine tradition established by Liberals who have served the constituency so well. May I mention June Westbury and the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, both of whom understood the needs of their constituents. They have set an example that I will strive to equal. May I also wish my predecessor well, Roland Penner. He is a man of principle and dedication, and while we do not share a political vision, I know that students of the law will benefit from his keen mind and breadth of knowledge.

Fort Rouge is a very special place. The name itself is deeply rooted in our province's history, dating back to the travels of La Verendrye in the late 18th Century. Sadly, Mr. Speaker, it is a name which may be lost in the shuffle if the proposed new boundaries take effect. Indeed the birthplace of western Canada at the forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers is the eastern boundary of the constituency. The tragic neglect of our rivers is one of the shameful legacies of succeeding governments. The vast potential of these rivers, their potential and source of recreation for our people has been lost and squandered by short-sightedness.

* (1540)

This Government's determination to revitalize The Forks must not be seen as an end in itself, but rather it is only the beginning of a commitment, long overdue to return our rivers to the people. Just a short stroll from The Forks is the corner of Portage and Main, which is still the symbol of our industrial development as a province, renowned for the powerful winds which whistle out of the north. The corner is now blocked off to pedestrian traffic, Mr. Speaker, a decision which has deprived Winnipeggers and visitors alike from one of life's memorable moments during the heart of the Prairie winter. Fort Rouge is also home for the most recent example of urban revitalization in Winnipeg. The North Portage development has replaced the physical decay of our downtown with new structures and a bright new look, but let us not fool ourselves, Mr. Speaker. The ugly and uncomfortable reality of human misery and degradation has not been altered. It has been simply moved to a less visible place. We must not be content with the strategy for urban renewal which only rents bulldozers and construction cranes. The people who have been displaced by so-called progress, the poor and the homeless, deserve equal opportunity to better themselves and their families.

Training and jobs are what these people need, a sense of hope to displace the despair which accompanies the vicious cycle of poverty which is passed on from generation to generation. This Government must never forget those among us who, through the accidents of birth and circumstance, struggle to maintain their dignity and their sense of worth.

The most exciting moments of the election campaign for me were those visits to the Central Park

neighbourhood. Here during the course of an evening I met men, women and children from all over the world; from Chile and El Salvador, the Philippines and Vietnam, Poland and Russia, Hungary and Nicaragua, Hong Kong and Ethiopia. It is difficult to find words that do justice to the excitement and vitality these people bring to their adopted land. They are here because they have the power to see opportunity and to see hope. In many cases they left behind persecution and poverty to take a chance in a country whose languages they do not speak, whose culture they do not understand and whose climate they could scarcely imagine. But remarkably, time and time again, the human spirit overcomes impossible odds and prevails. This is the story of our province and of our country.

How many of us in this Chamber can trace their roots in Canada back to Confederation? I think only a very few. The rest of us though are citizenship to a pioneering spirit so present in our parents and grandparents which combined with an open and free society to build a country which thrives on its diversity. The immigrant experience is fresh in the minds of many Manitobans. Those of us who have been here awhile ought never to forget the challenges which our forefathers met and overcame.

Multiculturalism is not only food and drink, costume and dance, although these elements of culture are important. Multiculturalism, to have any meaning at all, is a respect for difference, the tolerance for diversity and a commitment to equality of opportunity. It is regrettable that the Throne Speech offers only platitudes on this subject.

I would like to make one other point, and perhaps I am well positioned to make it. Our political system is deeply rooted in the British parliamentary tradition. The genius of our institutions has evolved from the mother of parliaments in Westminster, and I have a deep and an abiding respect for the legacy of freedom and democracy we inherit from the British.

Fort Rouge is also home to the world famous Royal Winnipeg Ballet. The excellent partnership forged between the public and the private sectors has made it possible for this first-rate dance company to move into a state of the art facility. While the RWB may be our most renowned cultural organization, it is only one of many accomplished artistic groups in our province. It has often been said that Winnipeg boasts a richer and broader cultural life than any city of comparable size in the world, and our good fortune should never be taken for granted. We, in the Liberal Party, will not sit quietly by if this Government reduces its commitment to our province's cultural growth.

May I say that the former Government did rather better in this regard than in many other areas of public policy. Mistakes were made and opportunities were lost. We must pay more attention to developing cultural opportunities outside the City of Winnipeg; we also, with all their rhetoric, that Government neglected grass-root incentives in small towns and villages of Manitoba. So too did it overlook the potential created by huge windfall profits generated by the gambling habits of Manitobans. Lottery revenues are now used to finance the ongoing operations of cultural and sporting

organizations. This policy is contrary to the original purpose established for gaming monies, namely to fund capital initiatives and one-time projects.

I hope the Honourable Minister of Culture, Recreation and Heritage (Mrs. Mitchelson) will have a look at some of the innovative ideas which are originating from this side of the House and the Liberal Party, including the concept of establishing endowment funds which could be matched by contributions from the private sector so that Manitobans may enjoy a more secure funding base for its cultural and sporting life.

Mr. Speaker, Members may be interested to know that I spent five years playing the oboe in the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. Now if that is not a first in politics in Manitoba, I would like to hear about it. It is often said that an oboe is an ill wind that nobody blows good. I hope Honourable Members will find other ways of describing my own performance in this House.

Fort Rouge may best be known for the Osborne Village—I will have a chance to deal with the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) later in my remarks. It is here where small businesses contribute so much to community life. These risk-taking entrepreneurs are the backbone of our economy. We often pay lip service to the small business sector and then proceed to drown proprietors in red tape and bureaucratic baffle-gab. Let me say that the Liberal Party believes in free enterprise, and we will support initiatives to remove unnecessary obstacles to growth and development. The Osborne Village is well served by active and effective community groups which add so much to neighbourhood life. During this year's Canada Day celebrations, the constituency was alive with excitement. Raft races down the river, games for the children, live music for everyone are only a sample of the two-day festival organized and managed by residents and shop owners.

Fort Rouge includes all of downtown Winnipeg. Living downtown has not been in vogue for decades but at last some progress is being made. I might add that there is a local issue brewing right now which relates to the temporary closure of Assiniboine Avenue just behind this very building. I will not go into detail because I have already discussed the matter with the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Driedger). I am confident he will take the necessary steps to ensure that residents and businesspeople will be widely consulted before any permanent position or proposals are in place.

I suppose, in a way, I am the MLA who represents the Legislature, for this building too is in the Fort Rouge constituency. When my friend and colleague, the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), and I were in Ottawa some weeks back, Members of Parliament told us that this Legislature was the finest in the country. I agree, Mr. Speaker. Not only is the building itself architecturally splendid but so is the history and tradition of what has transpired within its walls.

Manitoba has always been a linchpin of Confederation. The turmoil of 1870 which led to the creation of Manitoba as a province exposed the raw nerves of our nationhood which are still with us today. The co-existence between English and French-speaking Canadians, the right to educate children in

denominational schools, and the treatment of our Native people were and remain imposing challenges.

I would like to address some issues raised in the Speech from the Throne. In a general way, I can toss one compliment across the floor. This speech is better written than the dreadful examples offered by the former Government. My colleague, the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), made reference in her excellent speech to some university graduates who have trouble communicating effectively. The former NDP Government had problems with the English language, at least when it came to composing Throne Speeches. Thankfully, this Government's first attempt is a little better.

* (1550)

Speeches of this kind are known for their vagueness and their generalities, and this one is no different. We have no sense of priority. Is it to cut the deficit? Is it to reduce taxes, or is to maintain social programs? This Government intends to do everything and presumably at the same time. Ministers have chosen to hide behind the upcoming Budget when asked pointed questions by Members from this side of the House. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) had better be a magician, Mr. Speaker, because the expectations raised in the Throne Speech will not be forgotten by people, who are cynical of politicians dragging rabbits from a hat.

But more specifically, the Government has promised to make Crown corporations more accountable. It has decided to order Crown corporations, such as the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, to seek approval for rate increases from the Public Utilities Board. Now that is a good thing, Mr. Speaker, but we do not yet know who has the final say. Is it the PUB or is it the Government?

Since my Leader assigned to me the responsibility for MPIC in our caucus, not a single day has gone by without a letter or a phone call complaining about MPIC. It is not the rate structure alone that is irking the public, though the former Government's mishandling of that issue certainly does not help. It is the sense that the corporation has lost sight of the fact that it is there to serve the public. The new Minister will not be able to point his finger at the NDP forever. He will have to accept responsibility and return order and accountability to a Crown corporation which has lost the confidence of the people. He can begin by announcing to this House who has been chosen president. We have waited long enough. Let him end the suspense.

On the General Insurance side, the Minister has yet to determine whether or not that division serves a social purpose unavailable from the private sector. We will be watching closely. We will ask what the cost will be if this Government takes the decision to wind down the General Insurance Division.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make mention of a vital sector within our province which has been virtually ignored by the Throne Speech. Manitoba's universities have been falling behind during the past several years, and the neglect is beginning to show. The physical plants

on our campuses are deteriorating at an alarming rate. Leaky roofs remain unpatched; libraries cannot afford new books; student services are in dreadful shape, and scientific and laboratory equipment are becoming obsolete. Astonishingly, the Throne Speech is silent on the whole question of university financing, and the important post-secondary role which Manitoba plays in a society which relies more and more heavily on exploding knowledge and technology.

There are creative ways of forging partnerships between the public and the private sector to help universities broaden their base of financial support. We see nothing in the Throne Speech about the role of the Universities Grants Commission, and nothing about the necessity of ensuring access to all qualified students.

We hope that the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) is alert to the pending crisis in our post-secondary system. We are anxious to help him sort through the complex problems which demand innovative solutions.

I would like to turn my attention to the 1987 Constitutional Accord. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that this is the most important resolution to be introduced in this Legislature in my lifetime. The nation's Constitution is its basic law. Institutions are shaped and national objectives are defined. Constitutions are living instruments. They evolve over time as nations develop and progress. The Meech Lake Accord, which this Government intends to present before us, represents a radical change in the way we define ourselves as a nation, and it deserves the closest scrutiny from every Member of this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, let me first make a comment on the way this Accord came to pass. I do not want to question motive here. I believe that the Prime Minister's objective of gaining Quebec's signature on the Constitution was sincere and well-intentioned. There is not a single Member of this Legislature who disagrees with that noble purpose. What cannot be denied is this. This agreement was reached in the middle of the night by 11 exhausted men without consultation with advisors and without consultation with the public. During the course of that fateful night, the Prime Minister of Canada bargained away a vision of this country that goes back to Sir John A. Macdonald.

We are not talking about a Liberal vision or a Trudeau vision or a plank in a Party's electoral platform. We are talking about a Canada governed by a strong central Government assuring minimum standards of public service from coast to coast, a Canada with strong provinces which reflect the diversity of a huge land mass which stretches, as my Leader said, from sea to sea. What happened at Meech Lake and then at the Langevin Block was that the Prime Minister of Canada gave everything Quebec wanted and then some, and then gave it to all the other provinces too—some deal, when one side gives the other everything it asks for. We know who was speaking for Ontario at that meeting. We know who was speaking for Saskatchewan. We know who was speaking for Alberta, but who was speaking for Canada?

I am not going to get into describing all of the Accord's weaknesses in this speech. There will be plenty

of time for that at the public hearings and in this House. But I am going to review some of the faults which are of particular concern to Manitobans.

The first and most serious is the amending formula which puts this country in a constitutional strait-jacket from which it can never escape. All 10 provinces must agree with the Parliament of Canada before a long list of constitutional amendments can be made. Included in this list are the powers and method of selecting Senators. Now we are not all of the same mind in this House about the future of the Senate. Some of us want to see it elected. Others, like my friends in the New Democratic Party, want to see it abolished. Still others want it substantially reformed, but who among us wants it to stay the way it is, an antiquated Chamber with a full range of legislative powers but without the electoral authority to use any of them effectively.

There is a movement in western Canada that is gathering strength. It is a movement to make the Senate elected, equal and effective. Where was Grant Devine when the chance for Senate reform was tossed out of the window at the Langevin Block? And where was Don Getty when he had his historic opportunity for Senate reform? Where was Bill Vander Zalm? Where was Howard Pawley, who wants to abolish the place?

I would like to remind Members opposite that it was the Liberal Party of Canada, guided by its Manitoba delegation, which passed a resolution calling for an elected Senate at its policy convention held in the fall of 1986. We, on the Liberal side of this House, intend to present positive and specific proposals for Senate reform in this Legislature.

M. le président, nous sommes d'accord avec ceux qui ont longuement fait ressortir l'importance qu'il y avait à amener le Québec à revêtir la toge constitutionnelle canadienne. N'oublions pas que ce sont les Libéraux qui ont su faire reconnaître la nécessité du bilinguisme bien avant qu'il ait été généralement accepté dans l'Ouest. Nous avons été les premiers à recommander que le Québec prenne la place qui lui revient au sein de la Confédération. Il n'y a aucun doute, M. le président, que nous avons dû payer pour cela sur le plan politique. Nul ne peut donc aujourd'hui accuser les Libéraux de l'Ouest de ne pas vouloir comprendre ou apprécier à leur juste valeur les aspirations des Québécois.

(Translation)

Mr. Speaker, we are in agreement with those who have said so much about the importance of bringing Quebec into Canada's constitutional fold. Let us not forget that it was the Liberals who sold the policy of bilingualism before it was accepted by most Westerners. We were on the front lines advocating Quebec's rightful place in Confederation. And make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker, we paid a political price for it. So no one today can accuse western Liberals of refusing to understand or appreciate the aspirations of the Quebecois at their true worth.

Liberals on this side of the House do not have to take any lectures from Members on those side of the House on bilingualism or a vision of a united Canada.

The clause in the Meech Lake Accord that establishes Quebec as a distinct society leads us down a slippery slope. Distinct enough to legislate policy which treats the anglophone minority as second-class citizens? Distinct enough to place in jeopardy rights guaranteed by the Charter? Distinct enough to take us down the road which may lead to a separate Quebec? I do not want to find out.

Manitoba will become the focus of national attention when Members of this House deal with the 1987 Constitutional Accord. We must not allow ourselves to be partisan on this issue. We have a historic responsibility to do what we believe is right for Manitoba and for Canada. Our Party is not interested in gaining political advantage on this issue, though we are convinced that public opinion in this province is squarely opposed to the Accord.

Already, and now I hope the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) will perk up and begin to listen, before Manitobans have had the chance to make formal presentations to a committee of this House, the coalition of forces lining up against this Accord is impressive. Women are worried that their Charter of Rights will be undermined. Native people are uneasy about their own constitutional status. The ethnic leaders lament the scant attention paid to our multicultural mosaic. Rural municipalities are upset. Those who believe in a strong central government are fearful that this Accord will promote a patchwork, a kind of hodgepodge in social programs across Canada. The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce is appalled at the amending formula, and believes that our opportunity for Senate reform has been squandered.

Let me remind our friends in the New Democratic Party, a leading group of their own supporters, including a former Party president, a former Cabinet Minister, a sitting city councillor and an array of other notables have denounced this Accord in the strongest possible terms. In fact, Andy Anstett, presumably speaking on behalf of the NDP caucus, tore the Accord to shreds while debating this Throne Speech on a local radio station.

So when the Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) rises in his place and says it is we who are out of step with public opinion, I say no, Mr. Speaker, it is he, and Members of his Party who are out of step with the people and they may live to regret it. And let me say that this ground swell of public opinion is by no means confined to the Province of Manitoba. We have received supporting letters and phone calls from every region of this country from concerned Canadians who say, do not give up this fight.

* (1600)

We will not give up this fight, no matter what the Member from Arthur (Mr. Downey), with his arms waving in the wind, would have us do. We in this Party take our advice from our consciences and from the people who elected us. They will judge, not the Member from Arthur, whether or not our actions reflect the will of the people.

We are interested in joining forces with all Parties in this House, to strengthen the Accord, to prove it

and send it back to Parliament and the other provinces, a better document than the one presented to us.

We were pleased that the Throne Speech made reference to the importance of multilateral trade as we develop our export markets internationally. Liberals have always supported liberalized trade, and it was Liberal Governments in Ottawa that succeeded so well in reducing tariffed areas across the 49th Parallel. But the Mulroney-Reagan trade deal encompasses much more than trade. It will strengthen north-south economic links at the same time that our political institutions are losing their power to maintain the historic east-west partnership, which is the history of Canada.

The combination of the Mulroney-Reagan trade deal and the Meech Lake Accord offer a kind of double jeopardy, a mutually reinforcing strategy that threatens the very essence of Canada, as a strong and independent nation.

I think it would be worthwhile to reflect for a moment on the judgment Manitobans gave to all Members of this House on the 26th of April. Those who sit to the left of us in this House were dealt a severe blow. Why? Because they lost touch with the people. This, from a political Party which prides itself on representing ordinary Manitobans. Well, ordinary Manitobans had a different idea, in large measure because people realized that they were paying more and they were getting less. We could see our health care system begin to slip, while our pay cheques got smaller and smaller.

The last interview I conducted with a journalist before the NDP Government fell was with the former Minister of Finance. I asked him what I thought was a simple, but revealing question. I am glad that the Member from Churchill (Mr. Cowan) will hear this. What is the middle class in Manitoba in 1988, I asked the then Minister of Finance. His answer, incredibly, was that people earning \$20,000 or \$25,000 a year were the middle class in Manitoba.

So then, who are the rich? Those who earn \$40,000 or \$45,000 a year? I was very sorry that the Government fell on that day because I was unable to publish that article. The middle class in this province, the real middle class has been taxed to the breaking point by the NDP Government.

But my own interpretation of the election result is that it was not Autopac rates that -(Interjection)- My own interpretation of the election result is that it was not Autopac rates that defeated the NDP, although that certainly did not help them, but it was a mini tax revolt by Manitobans. Those who sit on the other side, or should I say, those who sit on our right, they lost a speed seat, in spite of the fact that Manitobans were so anxious to toss the New Democrats out. I think they lost ground because the people were reluctant to replace one ideology with another. That is why the Liberal Party did so well.

I am looking forward to working with all Members of this House to provide the best possible service to the people of Manitoba. It is not an easy task. After only 10 days in this House, I can see the vast array of complex issues that confront us. The Honourable

Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) told me that this House was a humbling place. I agree with him, and I am honoured to sit in this Chamber, and I look forward to the challenges which lie ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I welcome this opportunity to address the Legislature and respond to the Throne Speech. May I begin by, first of all, congratulating you as Speaker of the House for being chosen to this very high and distinguished office. I know you will do a very credible job as I have known you for the last two years because you came into the House at the same time I did. We participated in many debates and you are certainly a very credible debater. More importantly, I think you are a gentleman who can resolve many situations which need resolving. So I congratulate you on your appointment, as I know you will be very unbiased in the decisions and the proceedings of this House.

In addition, I would also like to congratulate my Premier, Mr. Gary Filmon, for being elected to lead the province in a very credible way. I am very honoured to have him lead our Party and lead this Government, and I know that he will provide the kind of government for our province that we very much need.

I would also like to welcome the new colleagues who have joined us on this side of the House for the first time. Certainly we have a lot of calibre, a lot of quality in the people who have been elected to serve Manitobans from some of the constituencies where some of our Members have retired.

I would also like to welcome Members of the Opposition who are here for the first time representing many of the ridings across the province, and mainly in the city, I might say. But nevertheless, I hope that their experience in the House is going to be a very fruitful one and I look forward to working with them to ensure that Manitobans get the kind of government that Manitobans deserve, that we proceed through Legislation in the House in a very credible way, in a way which would give Manitobans the kind of government that they need and have not had for such a long time.

I also welcome back those Members of the third Party, the New Democratic Party, who have been re-elected. It is my hope that they too will have the interest of Manitobans at heart in all their debates and dealings in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I represent a constituency that is from the western side of the province and, I might add, a constituency that will soon be extinct if we proceed with the proposed boundary changes. I guess I will go down in history as being the last Member for Roblin-Russell. Nevertheless, it is an important part of this province. It is an agricultural area, an area which depends on agriculture for its livelihood, but it is blessed with many other resources.

It is blessed with the potential resource of potash. We heard much talk about potash in the last couple of years or the last number of years, but we have not had any substantive work go into the development of

that project. Hopefully, during the term of this Government, we can proceed towards the realization of a very important resource and the development of that resource within our province.

My constituency, Mr. Speaker, is also blessed with a natural resource, and that is forestry, a resource which provides much employment, a resource which is very important to that area because we do not have large industries in the western part of the province. Anybody who has travelled through that area knows full well that it is also an area which has been endowed with that beautiful part of the country in terms of the Assiniboine Valley. Tourism is becoming very popular in that area and it is also the area which has one of the best sport fishing areas, not only in the province, but in North America.

For those Members in this House, I invite them to come to visit our area to enjoy some of the tourism activities that we have, and I know this Government will move towards the development of those natural resources and those tourism areas which are so important to the viability of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I am very honoured to have been chosen to carry a portfolio in this Government, and it is not only an honour but it carries with it a large responsibility. It is my hope to carry out this responsibility in a very credible fashion. I do not intend to do it shooting from the hip, or the lip as has been said, but I intend to carry my responsibility out in consultation with people who have an interest in education, who are knowledgeable in education and whose children are affected by the decisions that are made with regard to education.

I welcome Members from the Opposition. I welcome Members from the New Democratic Party to join me in my office at any time when they have a concern or if they have a desire to talk about an issue that may affect education. My doors are open. All it takes is for that Member to contact the secretaries in the office and certainly an appointment will be set up. There will be a priority given to those people to come in and talk to me, because I think education is very important and it requires the attention of a Minister who is really open and wants to do credit to the people and to the students of this province.

Education is an important element in our society. It is important because it is the future of this province. It is tied very closely though to the way that our province progresses economically and socially because it is the tax dollars that pay for education. If we have a strong economy in this province, we know that we can afford the social programs and the programs for education that are so badly needed.

There are many critical issues in education that have to be addressed. We have heard from the critic of the Opposition Party about some of the issues that they feel need to be addressed, and some of the issues that we have identified, both in the Throne Speech and through the election campaign, are very similar. Therefore, I am looking for the support of the Members opposite for some of the programs that we are bringing in. I was very happy to see that we did have a positive

response from Members opposite when the announcement was made on the assistance to the School of Dentistry and also with the tax remittance program.

I might add that with regard to those programs there was consultation that went along with the decision that was made. It was not a decision that was made just on the basis of this Government. It was made in consultation with people from the universities, people from the communities at large. People were consulted who had authority over such things as our schools and our municipalities and our municipal Government, so I have to tell you that in any decisions that are made we are going to attempt to involve as many people as we can who are affected by the decisions that we make. In addition, we are going to keep in mind that the decisions that are made are made in the best interests of the people who are affected and the public at large. We are not going to be making decisions in isolation.

In the Throne Speech, I think some of the key areas that were identified have to be acted on. We read about literacy as being an important issue and it is an important issue, not only in this province but in this country. It is an issue that has to be addressed. People cannot continue to progress economically and socially if their illiteracy is prevalent and is part of their lives. We have to get these people into educational institutions where we can drop the illiteracy rate. To do that, we have to identify where the problems are, exactly what the problems are, how we are going to address them, and then we have to get at the task of addressing the problems.

* (1610)

For this reason, a task force has been announced to be able to identify those areas that have to be addressed. We can go at it in a kind of shotgun approach but then we know that the results will not be effective. Therefore, in order to address the problem in an appropriate fashion, we have to identify the problems where the most severe areas of the problems are, where they exist, and then attack those problems in a progressive and in an effective way. Again in this area, I am looking for support from the Opposition and from the critic responsible for Education in terms of the approach that we are going to take.

We heard from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Party (Mr. Carr) today about post-secondary education and about the state of our universities. I have to tell you that we do have very strong concerns about what is happening at our universities. Our universities are very important. They have to meet the needs of society. They have to meet the needs of the students who attend our universities. It is not enough just to say that we have three universities in our province and everything is a go. Are our universities, first of all, addressing the needs of our society? Are we turning out people from our universities who can go out and be contributors to society, gain meaningful employment and continue enriching their lives?

We have three very good universities in Manitoba. We are not going to tear down anything that has been

built over the past. We know that facilities are lacking. We know that equipment is somewhat archaic in many instances and needs to be replaced. We have identified all those problems. I think the universities have done that for us very well.

We know we have limited resources as well so all of these things, although we would like to fix them overnight, cannot be done overnight. It takes time. It takes a positive approach but one whereby you are making some progress. We intend to do that. We intend to do that in cooperation and consultation with the universities.

We intend to enhance the quality of education in the province at the post-secondary level. Universities are just one part of post-secondary education. I think we have another large segment of post-secondary education in this province which is very important as well, and that is the community college area which I have to say is changing. It is changing because there needs to be a change in the way that we approach training in this province and in this country.

We have the federal Government involved in terms of the dollars that are given to job training and to creating a climate whereby people who are going to community colleges are going to be able to take programs that are effective, that can lead them to meaningful jobs after they graduate. Therefore, community colleges are very, very important. We have seen the development of satellite colleges through—and I might identify the Dauphin Parkland regional campus at Dauphin which is a very important institution in that area. That is the Parkland area, an area that is far away from a large centre, an area which needs a service like the Parkland campus. We intend to build on that concept and to ensure that there are services available to the people of the rural area. I think that is a very important element.

We have seen problems in our community colleges, but again we cannot address those problems immediately. We, first of all, have to identify specifically where the problems are and why they exist and then we have to attack each problem one at a time so that meaningful solutions can result, so that we do not get caught in the kind of quick-fix situation that does not work over the long period of time. There are areas of concern in the community colleges, areas that have to be addressed.

A public school system is very, very important because that is the area that sets the foundation for all of education. Here we have to put a lot of energy and effort into not only talking about the educational finances but we have to talk about curriculum, curriculum development, program development. We have to talk about whether programs are effective, and I am looking forward to the report of the High School Review of which I have received a very rough draft of at this point in time. I look forward to reviewing that and then being able to act on the recommendations that are brought down through that high school review. I think it is an important document that needs to be assessed.

* (1620)

With this, Mr. Speaker, I can only say that we know that there are lots of problems in education. I do not call them problems, I call them challenges. I think that many good things have happened in education to this point. We have to build on what is there now. We have to work cooperatively with school boards, we have to work cooperatively with the teachers' associations and all people who are involved. We have to ensure that there is access to information for parents in education because that is very important. We also have to ensure that students in Manitoba have an opportunity to get an education regardless of whether it is through the public school system or the private school system because both types of systems are very credible.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my comments and hope for some cooperation. I look forward to working in a cooperative manner with all Members of this House. Thank you very much.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I am delighted to have an opportunity to address the Throne Speech and in so doing to begin with congratulations to you, Sir, on your elevation to the high office you now hold. You have served your constituents well. You have served the people of Manitoba well. You have been someone who, I think, has been characterized in his efforts in this Chamber as one who was able to get along with people of all political stripes, who, although not apolitical, was certainly somebody who saw the merits and the wisdom of the arguments of people on all sides of the House and acted in that sort of impartial manner, giving credit where credit is due. You are indeed, Sir, I believe, an effective and capable person and well suited to the responsibilities you now hold.

I want to congratulate the Mover (Mr. Praznik) and the Seconder (Mr. Gilleshammer) of the Throne Speech, both newcomers in this House, both of whom acquitted themselves very, very well in their first contributions to this House and the debates in this House. I know that we can expect a great deal more of them in the future. I congratulate them on the effort they put forward.

Indeed, I congratulate all those newcomers in the Legislature for the accomplishments that they have attained in being here in this Legislature. I might say that as long as I sit in this Legislature, and I hope it is for a long time to come, I must say I enjoy the ambiance, I enjoy the atmosphere, I sit up and look around at the heritage and the history of this place. I have said many times as I have greeted school children that I hearken back to my first visit to this Legislature as a school child in about grade 5 and the awe that I felt for this place because of the importance that it is to the history of our province. And it has not changed and it does not change. Every day that I walk into this Chamber, I feel that same awe and that same sense of responsibility and history. So I hope that they enjoy it as much as I do. I wish them long and productive careers, in some cases not too long, but long and productive careers in this Chamber and the opportunity to fulfill many of their desires and many of the goals that they set out for themselves.

I particularly congratulate the women who have been elected and re-elected to this Chamber and note that

there are now, I believe, nine women in the Legislature. That I think is an all-time record for this Assembly. I might say it is a harbinger of things to come. It is not high enough as my colleague has just reminded me, my colleague from Gladstone (Mrs. Oleson), that there will be greater and greater numbers and that is as it should be.

Mr. Speaker, on July 21, the Lieutenant-Governor presented the plans and the programs of our Government to this House and to the people of Manitoba. He spoke about the future both in economic as well as in social terms. He described the path that if followed would enhance the quality of life for all Manitobans and we intend to follow that path.

He noted that governments cannot meet all the demands placed upon it. Government cannot be all things to all people, despite the assertions, the naive assertions, of some of the new Members on the Opposition side. He did put forward goals which could be realistically achieved, given the hard work and sensible decisions that must be made by all of us in this House.

The Lieutenant-Governor noted that we must develop and grow if we are to compete in larger economic communities. It is not enough to focus our attention solely within our own borders. We cannot and we will not isolate ourselves from the rest of Canada or from our neighbours to the south or from our economic allies overseas.

Government can only do so much. The real challenge, in fact, our very future is in the hands of the workers and the employers, the small businesses and the large corporations, and especially in the hands of well-educated, well-prepared young people. It is the people, not the government, who create the wealth in our society. Therefore our responsibility, the responsibility of all of us in this House, is to provide a positive, hopeful environment in which their potential can be realized. We must and we will remove disincentives to their growth and their prosperity.

We must ask ourselves will this change take place overnight and, of course, the answer is no. We do not have a magic wand that will reverse the trends of the past six-and-a-half years. Manitobans have become skeptical of the short-term fix, as they should be. We have presented measures which will address the immediate problems that we face, but we recognize that only long-term solutions, well-conceived and managed efficiently will be successful in preparing Manitobans to meet the challenges of the future. Long-term plans cannot be developed overnight, nor should they be implemented by this Government or any other Government without full and comprehensive consultation and public examination, the kinds of things that were raised in the early question periods by Members of the Opposition. Why can you not do something immediately overnight to solve the problems in our riverways? I mean, you have just been in Government and this happened last night, why do you not do something about it?

What about the Remand Centre? All of us, of course, are concerned about the tragedy that occurred in the

Remand Centre, but for the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) to stand up and say that we ought to solve that problem overnight does not make sense. He does not know the reality of the fact that there has been years and years and years of neglect and that we are setting about to seek long-term solutions and to create the long-term solutions to these problems that have been developed over the past six-and-a-half years. We will act and we will act quickly, but there is a certain limitation to human ability to react to situations that happen.

Our plans for the future will be developed in partnership with the people and the communities of Manitoba. Those plans will be based on experience and common sense. We will not allow ideology or fixed philosophies to limit Manitoba's potential. Political gamesmanship will not be the order of the day. Manitobans are not interested in who scores the most political points or whose sarcastic comment is the most witty. Too much depends on our decisions. Too many people are affected. That is what the deliberations in this House are all about—people. They have placed their trust in us to do our best for them so that they can raise their families and build their futures. That is what we are committed to do, to do our best for them. We have not forgotten the simple truth. We have also not forgotten those who, for whatever reason, need our help and our support in other ways. Our elderly have paid their dues. They have contributed to our society and they continue to do so. Their standard of living must not be eroded by wasteful government spending.

* (1630)

Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that I was shocked and I was appalled at the circus that was put on in the Question Period today about the increase in our deductible in the Pharmacare Program in this province. Those very people who were putting on that circus, the New Democrats of this Legislature, are the people who have caused the problems in our health care system with respect to the financial viability and stability of our Pharmacare system in Manitoba. They are the very people who chose to address those problems in exactly the same way. Those people when they were in Government put through increases in the deductible in Pharmacare. My colleague, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), has amply demonstrated that.

What did they do in 1986? I might say that the callousness, the hypocrisy of that decision has got to be apparent to everybody in this province. They announced the increase in the Pharmacare deductible, of course, when? Right after the election in 1986. They withheld any movement on increasing the Pharmacare deductible until right after the election. Within less than a month they came out with the announcement, and what was the announcement? The announcement was that they were changing the deductible for people under 65 years of age from \$100 to \$125 over a period of that year, in a two-step phase beginning on June 1 and then concluding on January 1 of '87. That two-phase increase during that year, 1986, was a 25 percent increase in the deductible. But they also increased the deductible for seniors at that time, again in a two-

phased increase, and it went from \$50 to \$75; a 50 percent increase in the deductible.

I want to know, did they do an analysis of what effect that would have on the income, the standard of living of the seniors, when they made that 50 percent increase in the deductible. Did they? I want to know that because we do not have any evidence of that. There is no information on the files of the Government, and I heard nothing about any analysis of how that would affect the standard of living or the quality of life of the seniors. Did they consult with seniors before they increased their Pharmacare deductible by 50 percent?

I recall vividly that the seniors said no, they had not and the seniors expressed their concern at that time. So here we are putting through a much lower percentage increase in the deductible for Pharmacare that will result in an increased cost to the seniors on their Pharmacare of \$8 per year. They are the ones who are trying to make a sensational public issue for the six o'clock news as a result of their antics in this Legislature today. You want to talk about hypocrisy. You want to talk about not doing a service to the people of Manitoba. That is the reason why they are so discredited. That is the reason why they were turfed out of office ungloriously and that is why the people of Manitoba will not again for a long, long time have a New Democratic Government in this province.

I might say that when we talked about the needs and the concerns of seniors—I might say that many of our Members and many of our Ministers have met with groups of seniors—I, for example, believe in the month of February, late January or early February, met with a group of seniors. They talked about the effects of the decisions that were made by the New Democratic administration, the callous, heartless decisions that were made by the New Democratic administration even during the past year, not just in increase in their Pharmacare deductible that was about a year-and-a-half earlier but the things that they had done to them that really seriously eroded their standard of living and their quality of life.

They told us about the effect of the 2 percent tax on net income. Now that eroded their incomes and their ability to survive. They talked about what had happened as a result of the New Democrats' wild spending spree over the past six-and-a-half years, having to have a 40 percent increase in the sales tax, from 5 percent to 7 percent. That is what they talked about.

They talked about the payroll tax which they all said of course does not affect anybody, any of the consumers, but the fact is it ultimately gets passed along by all of the people who employ people in this province and provide goods and services. They had to increase the cost of their goods and services. The seniors on fixed income, of course, had to pay their share of that tax increase.

They talked about their concerns about the fact that Manitoba Hydro's rates last year had increased 9.5 percent, well above the inflation rate as a result of development decisions made by this administration, well above the inflation, and that eroded their standard of living.

They talked about the fact that their telephone rates last year went up 11 percent and that too eroded their standard of living. That was as a result of decisions, terrible, terrible decisions made by the New Democrats to invest money in Saudi Arabia, to pour it out on the sands of Saudi Arabia, as the former Member for St. Vital said.

That was a concern for them, on and on and on, and then of course Autopac this year. The effect of the huge increase in Autopac rates had resulted in all too many seniors deciding not to drive automobiles in this province. What about the percentage increase, as my colleague says, from 24 percent to 109 percent in Autopac rates? Those were the kinds of increases that they put through, and the hypocrisy of them saying today that this was a decision that was going to have a major impact.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it will have an impact and we regret that impact has to take place as a result of the position that we were put in by the previous administration's actions. But bear in mind that increase is 13 percent of the Pharmacare deductible compared to a 50 increase just two years ago by this New Democratic rump group and their hypocrisy here in Manitoba.

Our infirm must receive the finest medical care possible. There again the seniors have a right to ask questions about what was going on under the previous administration because, not only were they permanently closing beds in our major hospitals in Manitoba but as well—and we found this out when we became Government and I am not certain that this was ever part of a public statement—they had put a freeze on the construction of personal care homes beds in Manitoba.

I do not think they ever said that publicly. I do not recall it and I tell you, when we went through the Estimates review process in the Treasury Board, we were told by the Department of Health that, when they asked the question are we going to be able to lift the freeze on the construction of personal care, we said what freeze. What freeze, because that New Democratic Party in Government said that they were going to do all these things for seniors and all their commitments to seniors, and they froze the construction of personal care homes in this province.

That is what seniors are concerned about. They are concerned about having hospital beds when they are ill, having personal care beds so that they do not have to wait on stretchers in hospital hallways. And these people, the rump group of Manitoba, are now the ones who are bleating away, saying that it is something we are doing that is causing the problem in health care in Manitoba.

* (1640)

Well, Mr. Speaker, they got what they deserved and they will get more whenever there is another election called in Manitoba because Manitobans want no more of that kind of management in government.

Our disadvantaged must be helped, directly and indirectly. They deserve opportunities. They deserve a

chance to share in our prosperity. No one in this House will disagree with those self-evident truths. We will only disagree about the best methods to achieve those goals. I share this with the Opposition because I have said over and over again, when speaking to groups of students about politics and about government, that I have served with people of all political stripes.

I served with Joe Zuken who was an avowed Communist. I have served with Liberals and New Democrats, Progressive Conservatives. I have talked politics with people of other stripes, the smaller groups who call themselves political Parties, people who set themselves up and make the sacrifices to run for public life. Whether they be at the school board or city council or here in this Legislature or in Ottawa, they all come here with a desire to serve the people who elect them, to create better opportunities in the future, to solve the problems of the people that they represent.

The only differences, of course, are in the solutions, whether or not we agree on the priorities and the methods of solving those problems. We will disagree. We will have honest disagreements. But I say to you, I do not question your motives in terms of what you want to achieve. I may question your motives in terms of how you want to achieve it and I will say so, but I do not question your motives. I know that you are here to achieve the greatest good for the people that you represent and so am I. So let us put that on the table and recognize that our disagreements will be honest, over how best to achieve those solutions.

Let there be no mistake, absolutely no confusion. We believe that social programs are best provided when the economic scene is dynamic and healthy.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Filmon: Before the Members opposite shake their heads and mutter about typical Conservative philosophy, let me say that it is only common sense. It is known to everyone who has paid a mortgage, who has balanced a food budget or wondered where their money has gone at the end of a month. That is why senior citizens will not be patronized.

One of the things that, when I last spoke to a group of seniors, they said to me afterwards was that they had been spoken to by politicians in other Parties. They said, we do not want to be patronized and told that we deserve the best because we have done all these things for Manitoba, that we are the pioneers, we have laid the foundation, all of those wonderful words that you heard spoken by New Democrats. Yes indeed, to a certain extent, that is true but they do not want to be talked down to. They said, do not tell us that you are giving us all of these special programs and these handouts. We want to pay our way. We want you to stop taking money away from us. That is when they listed all of those ways in which the New Democrats had taken money away from them. They said, if they had only left a little bit more with us, we would not have to be in a position of needing grants. We would not have to be in a position of needing special treatment. That is exactly what they said.

There is no free lunch. There is no free ride. We in Government must pay our way, just as every citizen

must. If we forget that simple truth, we will be compounding the problems of the past and increasing our inability to face the challenges of the future. Higher taxes, higher debt and reduced services is the legacy left to us by the last six years of mismanagement by the NDP, the "reign of error" that Manitoba went through over that past six-and-a-half years.

This Government will act to return responsibility to our public finances. This Government will act to return accountability to our Crown corporations. This Government will live within its means, not just because it was our promise to the people of Manitoba in the election but because it is our commitment to generations to come.

Some people feel that we have been too ambitious. It seems to me I have heard that somewhere before. They said that we were too ambitious in this Throne Speech, that our Government has undertaken too onerous a load.- (Interjection)- The Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) said that the day of the Throne Speech. The next day and the day after, she said we had not done enough, that there was not enough in the Throne Speech and we left out this and we did not say this and we did not say that. So be it, so be it! I think that all of those comments are a sad legacy of the six-and-a-half years of empty rhetoric that we got in NDP Throne Speeches, year after year after year, and then six-and-a-half years of NDP failed commitments. Too many Manitobans have become disenchanted with the Government and lost faith in the political process. Manitobans, too many of them have come to expect second best from their Government.

So have we set a high standard? I do not believe so. I say we have only taken the first step on a long journey to restore public confidence. It is time that we once again look to the words of the Throne Speech and reflect those words into action in government.

The Throne Speech calls for accountability, and our Government will present to this House legislation to bring our major Crown corporations before the Public Utilities Board. The Throne Speech calls for responsibility, and our Government will introduce amendments to strengthen conflict-of-interest law. The Throne Speech calls for openness, and our Government will proclaim The Freedom of Information Act on September 30. Our Government does not offer empty rhetoric. Our Government will deliver on its commitments and ensure that its words are matched by actions. Through this Throne Speech, our Government has laid out a plan of action designed to build a stronger economy and a more efficient and effective government. It will provide the services that Manitobans need and deserve.

This province has been built by immigrants, people who took a chance and left the security of a place and a society with which they were familiar. Our families came to Canada for freedom and for opportunity. They did not come to Manitoba to be taken care of. They came for the chance to take care of themselves. We see many in this Chamber today, and I am delighted at that, first generation, second generation, people of immigrant families who came here, who fled oppressive regimes, who fled lack of opportunity, lack of freedom, who came here for democracy and opportunity.

I tell you, I remember listening to my father, listening to the elderly people in the family talk about the fear that they had, the oppression that they had in eastern Europe. I remember listening to another generation person who is my age talk about when she came over, just a matter of about a decade ago, from Romania. It happened to be the home country of my father. She felt an affinity to me, moved in across the street, we became friends. Her father was the Leader of the Opposition in modern Romania over the past couple of decades. What happened to him? He spent most of his adult life in prison. That is what they do with Leaders of the Opposition there. I am not suggesting that here.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker, part of the freedom that we enjoy is the opportunity to do for ourselves the things that we can. The more that you ask government to get involved in doing things for you, in regulating your life or providing for you by grants, by programs, by all those things, the more you give up your freedom to the state, to the government. I tell you that people coming from foreign countries who do not have freedom recognize that. That is why they do not ask us, by and large, for these handouts. They know that, when you get something given to you, there is a price tag to it. That price tag is dependence, and that dependence erodes your freedom.

All of us in this House will agree that the best social program is a job. Yet this province has a tax on jobs, a tax on opportunity, a tax that penalizes individuals and enterprises for making a contribution to this province by creating a job that did not exist before. I believe that the payroll tax is an outrage, Mr. Speaker. Manitobans believe that the payroll tax is an outrage. Our Government is going to get rid of that tax and we are going to begin now in this Session.

Small business is the main generator of new jobs in this province. When we look to the future, it is important to remember that half the jobs that will exist 15 years from now have not yet been created. It is vital that small businesses receive the encouragement and support they need to prosper and grow. Our Government is determined to create an economic climate that will encourage small business to create new jobs for Manitobans. The phased removal of payroll tax is yet another step towards the achievement of that goal.

The reform of the Workers Compensation Board is another. Last week, the Minister responsible or the Workers Compensation Board (Mr. Connery) appointed a special appeal board to assist in clearing up the backlog on appeals. It is a first step in a long overdue reform of a system that has been plagued by troubles ever since the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) took it over, and took his own political view of what ought to happen with that Workers Compensation Board and set it on a road to disaster that it has not recovered from and will take a lot of effort and work to help it to recover from.

It is plagued with troubles and this action that my Minister is taking recognizes the priority that must be

given to the needs of workers while the financial difficulties to the board are addressed. This move will allow the permanent board more time to prepare new policies and procedures for the compensation system as a whole, in addition to improving service to workers. Initiatives like the special appeal board reflect our Government's commitment to a balanced approach to labour and business relations.

Labour relations are not a zero-sum game. In fact, we cannot allow them to become a zero-sum game. There will be no revolution in labour legislation under this administration. We will make certain selective moves because we believe they are important. One of them is to eliminate final offer selection, because final offer selection is a zero-sum process. Two sides submit offers. One is accepted; the other loses. No relationship can prosper when one partner gains at the other's expense. Government legislation must provide an environment which encourages employers and employees to work together in a spirit of partnership. Final offer selection strikes at the very heart of good labour relations by imposing a settlement while grievances and complaints remain unresolved.

Government also has a key role to play in developing the infrastructure sorely needed for further economic growth. Our highways have literally been buckling under the years of neglect and heavy use. Our Government recognizes the need, particularly in rural and northern Manitoba, to provide additional improvements and increased maintenance for our province's roads. Our Government is committed to investing in more than concrete and blacktop.

Trade is growing in importance as an element in our economy. Increased research and development is essential to the protection of our current position and the development of new opportunities for economic growth. We will restructure the operations of the Manitoba Research Council to coordinate its efforts more closely with the needs of Manitoba universities and industries. We will work together to harmonize the research efforts in Manitoba to remain competitive in the international marketplace.

The Throne Speech includes many other measures which will assist in strengthening our economy. It includes many measures that will ensure Manitobans' tax dollars are spent wisely, but it is important to remember that our economic priorities are simply a means to an end. The Government of Manitoba exists to provide services to people. Manitobans not only have a strong tradition of self-reliance, they share a sense of compassion and a spirit of community. Our Government is committed to providing services to Manitobans which reflect their changing needs.

* (1650)

Demographic realities and trends are having a recognizable impact on the health care delivery system. I spoke earlier about the seniors. The percentage of Manitoba's population who are 65 years of age and older increased by 8 percent between 1979 and 1984. By the year 2001, one in five Manitobans will be over 65. That is why we have a seniors' Minister, someone

who is responsible to coordinate the efforts of Government. I see that the Members for Concordia (Mr. Doer) and Churchill (Mr. Cowan) are smiling at that and I invite them to read my comments in Hansard whereby I talked about the responsibility that we have toward seniors.

We will be establishing a seniors secretariat and our Government will present a White Paper on elder abuse that had been promised for years in Throne Speeches under the New Democratic administration. Our aging population, of course, also presents a tremendous challenge to the health care system. We will provide better coordination of health services to seniors while working in partnership with health care providers to start now to prepare our health care system for those challenges in future.

Changes in our social structures and traditional relationships are continuing the trend to increased incidents of mental disorders, and drug and alcohol dependence, with a consequent rise in the demand for treatment facilities and programs of care. The Throne Speech outlines three initiatives designed to improve programs to address chemical and substance abuse.

The Throne Speech also indicates our commitment to provide leadership in mental health services. We will be presenting plans and programs to improve the range of services at the hospital and community levels, increase the number in geographic distribution of psychiatrists and to eliminate fragmentation in the delivery of service.

Diseases such as AIDS will have an increasing impact on hospitals in terms of consuming resources and requiring improved risk management and infection control programs. The Minister of Health has recently announced that more resources and initiatives are being committed to education to let people know about the need to practise safer sex, awareness and prevention as cornerstones to fight the spread of AIDS. He made that announcement and that commitment and he has met with the groups on AIDS, and you know what their response was? What did they say was spent last year by the former New Democratic administration? It was not enough and they are glad that somebody on this side was taking notice of the concern and was actively pursuing solutions to their problems.

The challenges of health care present themselves in the form of new and increasing demands, increases in long-term chronic illnesses, orientation to high cost care, development of an experimentation with new technologies, uneven distribution of our resources, the serious need to address the need for practitioners in rural Manitoba, the need for innovation and a vision for the future.

Our commitment is to ensure that health care money should be spent on people, not on bureaucracy, so we are evaluating the overlap, the duplication of services in specialization in many areas in Winnipeg, throughout the province, providing a clearer role delineation and focus for health care service providers.

We are going to develop recommendations to assist hospitals in moving towards integrated health care

delivery systems, to more effectively utilize physician involvement by increasing emphasis on the use of the professional health care management teams. The great advances that are taking place in medical technology will continue to place heavy demands on us all, but particularly they will place demands on our teaching hospitals which are associated with costly technology development and experimental application of new technology.

A major component of our commitment is the development of a health care advisory network. This organization will ensure that health care providers are given the opportunity to work with Government as we prepare to deal with those major health care concerns. The advisory network's mandate is to develop concrete workable action plans which build on the objectives that have evolved from within the health care system over time. Those objectives include extended preventative or health promotion services, improved services in rural and northern Manitoba, enhanced services to high need or target groups such as elderly, Natives, disabled, and women, development of cost-effective alternatives to high cost institutional services. The advisory network's mandate covers all areas of health services.

We will be asking that several priority concerns be addressed. There has been a notable absence of effective consultation with rural and northern health service providers and a lack of effective means for improving services in these regions. That is why we have the problems of not enough doctors in rural Manitoba.

So we will ask the advisory network to evaluate and recommend options for integrated northern health care policy, to address the problems associated with the fragmentation of social service delivery in the North, and we have to develop an emphasis on wellness programs and preventative medicine as a natural extension of the health care system's concern for meeting the total needs of its patients and its communities.

The announcement that was made today about "Stroke Month," the recognizing of the tremendous negative effect that strokes have on people in Manitoba, just as people from the Heart Foundation have developed all sorts of information that tell us unequivocally that the major problems that we deal with in health care, today, are self-inflicted. They have to do with smoking, alcohol, chemical abuse and obesity. They have to do with lack of exercise or proper diet. All these things that can be controlled and addressed by individuals, if only they understand the importance of these things. We can change the entire direction of the health of our society by emphasizing these areas, and working on these areas.

We have already announced an industrial health promotion program in cooperation with labour, and private sector employers on a pilot basis with emphasis on prevention illness in the workplace. Because as important as fixing up the problems of the Workers Compensation Board is to make sure that it is financially stable, it is even more important that we address the problems of illness and accident in the workplace. That

is the challenge, the overriding challenge that we have to face and we will face. We will ask the advisory network to evaluate and recommend on a range of alternative health care initiatives and strategies designed to bring about the desired mix of health care services in a fiscally responsible manner.

Our health strategy will be we will build upon a renewed relationship between the providers of health care in Manitoba and the provincial Government. Working together, we can develop the innovative solutions that we need to meet the on-going challenges of social, demographic and technological change. Health care services will receive the priority that they deserve and that they have been lacking for quite some time.

The Throne Speech also addresses a broad range of additional services. I stated earlier that a well-educated work force is crucial if Manitoba is to grow and prosper in the years to come. We have taken immediate action to address the threat to the faculty of dentistry accreditation. We have put the infusion in of additional services. Well, the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) is giving me a sign that he does not think that is a very big deal. Well, the fact of the matter is, it is important that when a problem occurs that we address that problem. We need to address that problem, as we do all of our problems in post-secondary education.

We have addressed threats before when we were in Government, to accreditation in engineering, in 1980, by providing additional support there. I can tell you that the engineering faculty is continuing now, on a growth program and on expansion of facilities there. I was at a sod turning the day of the Throne Speech, July 21, for the new high level structures lab. It is one of many improvements that are taking place through the research and teaching components in that faculty.

We have reaffirmed our commitment to the research community. We have reaffirmed our commitment to independent schools in Manitoba. Most importantly, we have set out our commitment to work with those who are involved in all aspects of the education system, to listen to their views and to respond to their concern.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) demonstrated the benefits of this fresh approach through the resolution of the dispute on the remittance of education tax. Because he took the effort along with several of his colleagues to listen to the groups affected, because he took the effort and our Government took the effort to seek out a consensus, all Manitobans will be better served. That is the approach that we intend to use to address one of the most pressing issues facing education today, illiteracy. In this information age, the inability to read or write at even a basic level is a fundamental barrier to individual development and prosperity. We are committed to make a thorough and extensive investigation of the problem so that full and complete policy responses can be prepared. We must ensure that Manitobans are equipped with the basic skills they require to live full and complete lives.

* (1700)

A lack of education is only one of the many social needs that must be addressed and will be addressed by this Government. The abuse of vulnerable Manitobans is an increasing and frightening phenomenon. It is a problem so unacceptable to the vast majority of Manitobans that for many years governments failed to devote the resources required. Our Government is committed to take action to provide the support and the assistance the victims of family of violence need. We are providing assistance and support to Osborne House. We have committed additional support to the Child Protection Centre. I said earlier we are committed to the White Paper on Elder Abuse and will bring it to the attention of the House in the not too distant future.

We are also committed to a series of programs that will encourage the participation of more Manitobans in the active workforce. We will be enhancing the single parent job access program. We will be expanding our employability enhancement programs. Most importantly, we will be working to establish a more flexible and expanded day care system to meet the needs of all Manitobans.

Over the last few weeks the Members opposite have tried to turn the issue of child care into a political football. I think that is a sad commentary on the sincerity and the commitment of Members on that side of the House. Those games do not serve our children well and they do not serve Manitobans well. Child care is too important a topic to play political games with. This Government is committed to providing more spaces for our children and the Government is committed to providing better training for the workers. This Government is committed to meeting the child care needs of both rural and urban Manitobans. We will not limit the options available to Manitobans through the strict application of ideological doctrines. We believe that we have to address the problems that are left to us in the child care system of accessibility because there are many areas of the province that do not have adequate resources in child care because of their location—rural Manitoba, remote areas.

We need more in the way of workplace based child care to address those needs in the workplace. For shift workers, for special needs workers, we need more of those things. That kind of flexibility was not addressed by the previous administration. Despite, and I will say, the strides that they made and the improvements they made and the positive directions that they took, they were narrow in their focus. We need more flexibility. We have to get away from that narrowness of focus—flexibility to ensure that people can put their children in day care in private centres or in their own neighbourhoods where it may be more appropriate than trucking them half way across town because there happens to be a non-profit day care centre over there with a space, and there is not one within miles of them anywhere else in their community area. We need more flexibility. Again, a narrowness of focus by the former administration did not provide for that. We are committed to ensure that it remains the highest possible quality that we can achieve in this province of ours in Manitoba. We will set those standards and ensure that they remain high quality standards. We will enforce those standards, Mr. Speaker.

Justice is a fundamental right of all Manitobans, yet the justice system of our province has been buffeted by controversy and is starved for adequate resources. The Attorney-General has mounted a major reform of the administration of justice in this province. The measures outlined in the Throne Speech will be implemented with the same speed and effectiveness that he displayed when he took immediate action to address the problems of the Lands Titles Office and the Ticketgate affair. I see the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) chuckling, but I am not sure that I should take the time to quote for him the comments that he made when he was the president of the Manitoba Government Employees' Association. He took issue with the Government of Manitoba for wiping out some 230 positions in Manitoba. Do you know where four of those positions were in 1984 when he took issue with them? The Land Titles Office. Four positions were wiped out in the Land Titles office in Manitoba. He is chuckling at the fact that we have had to add significant resources and people to try and solve a problem that has been building since 1984 because of the action of his former Government.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to take action to put a priority on policing in this province. We have already made a commitment I believe to Reston, to restore its police in Reston. We have already said we will not carry through with the cutbacks that were in the defeated NDP Budget on further policing in this province. Further policing cutbacks have been halted because we believe that it is important to protect the citizens of our communities.

The Throne Speech notes that this drought has been a forceful reminder of the fundamental role that environment plays in each and every one of our lives. Our water, our land, our forests and our fresh air are a precious part of our heritage. Moreover, they constitute the basis for our livelihoods in many cases. I will get back to the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) with his chuckle about our water. I will read some more quotes about irresponsible Liberal policies on water.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Manitoba recognizes the importance, this Government recognizes the importance of our natural environment to the health and well-being of Manitobans and to both short and long-term economic prosperity for our province. We have to be looking at the future.

I can recall back in 1981, my colleague for Lakeside, who is an active farmer, was reading an article about the Greenhouse Effect and about the climatological changes that were predicted for North America. He said that he believed that was true. I do not think that anybody who has gone through the last number of years in our province can doubt that there are serious and long-term changes taking place in our climate. I have to believe that if it is not the Greenhouse Effect, it is some major change that is taking place in our environment, because I was just reading some information that was developed by one of our groups in Manitoba who are working on environmental protection. They said that four of the hottest years on record in this century have occurred in the last decade; four of them in the last decade. Of course you know

that we have had the hottest June on record this year, and that we have continued throughout July to set record high temperatures throughout our province, that it has been one of the driest years since the Dirty Thirties, and on and on and on.

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): It started on April 26.

Mr. Filmon: The Member for St. Norbert says that it started on the 26th of April, and that is typical of his attitude toward problems and serious issues in this House.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mark Minenko, in the Chair.)

We will have his sense of humour here to be a reminder of the irresponsibility that he represents on that side of the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are committed and we are in the forefront here in Manitoba, both nationally and internationally, of the concept of sustainable economic development, the kind of development that ensures that we use our resources and the environment in a way that does not damage our future prospects for development for future generations.

This concept that was put forward by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 has been endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly, the leader of the Economic Summit Nations and Canada's own First Ministers. Manitoba will be among the first jurisdictions in Canada to have in place a round table on environment and economy, an advisory body that will assist my Government in the preparation of a sustainable development strategy for Manitoba. A key part of this strategy will be close examination of the business opportunities for Manitoba in a new and growing economic sector focused on the environment.

The Government has also emphasized to the federal Government that Manitoba would be an ideal location for a Canadian centre for sustainable development, given this province's leadership in environmental protection.

* (1710)

Our Government recognizes the responsibility that we have to encourage positive growth. We understand that in a minority Government we must work cooperatively with the Members opposite, but sometimes we wonder if the Members of the Opposition recognize the role that they must play if we are to make this minority work.

There appears to be a conflict between what the Opposition says and what they do. On the one hand, they piously demand integrity and then they indulge in less than admirable behaviour, somewhat akin to: "Don't do as I do, but do as I say." What are their priorities? We have established ours. Let us know what theirs are, because every day they seem to change.

Fearmongering is first on their list of priorities. That is something that we have heard, a distasteful tactic. We saw them do it during the election campaign. The

Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) and the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), engaged in it during the election campaign. They sent out, a day or two before the election campaign, literature to their constituents with a headline that said: "Manitoba loses another multibillion aerospace contract." Now is that honesty? Is that integrity? -(Interjection)- I know that in my area, they were sending out literature that said that the Tories were opposed to rent controls. Well, they knew full well that we were on the record as saying that rent controls were here to stay in Manitoba.

That is the kind of fearmongering tactics they, the Liberal Party, used when they were running for government. They used it door to door. I used to think that the New Democrats were the worst people in terms of falsehoods, outright lies, but now I know that the Liberals can match them lie for lie, falsehood for falsehood.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

I read earlier today the headline from the paper on April 26, a little too late to help of course because they had already made their impact by the literature that was being sent out to their constituencies, and the Leader of the Opposition had made her allegation on television during the televised debate suggesting that the contract had been awarded, that somebody had gone out to talk to the Prime Minister about it, and all these things had happened. Then the headline was on April 26: "Grits admit guessing on Air Canada. 'Unproven allegations were included in Liberal campaign literature distributed yesterday,' admits Party President Morris Kaufmann. 'We do not have some information. We are guessing.'"

That is their commitment to integrity and honesty. The Leader of the Opposition let all of those unproven allegations take place. She was a part of them. She made some of them herself. This is an individual who said she wanted to change the operation of this Legislature, to restore integrity to politics, restore decorum.

Talking about decorum, we know about her visit to Nova Scotia where she went to Nova Scotia to lecture the people there about her version of politics. She went and said about John Buchanan, the Premier of Nova Scotia, that he ought not to try to distance himself from the scandals that were taking place. She said that he was involved with those scandals. That is quite an allegation to make.

Then she said to the Leader of the New Democratic Party, "As for gutless Alexa (phonetic), the Leader of the New Democratic Party." That is what she said publicly. I heard it on the CBC.

Mr. Speaker, that is the way to engage in better decorum in politics, is it not? To go to another province where you are not a resident, you are not a part of their politics and to engage in that kind of name-calling, that is bringing back decorum to politics. I will not have any of that, I will tell you.

Both Opposition Parties, of course, have adopted this fearmongering tactic as a way to try and attack the Free Trade Agreement. First, they come up with

the allegation that the Free Trade Agreement is going to allow the Americans to take away our drinking water, that we will have no control over that happening.

Then they say that the Free Trade Agreement is going to allow the Americans to take away our blood. We are going to move in American blood banks and they will take away our blood. The next thing they are going to say is that the Free Trade Agreement will allow them to take away our first-born babies—right? Is that the next one?

Come on, let us get serious here. The fearmongering is absolute nonsense. I have read the analyses. I have read the briefings. I have read every single issue and I will tell you this. I would rather read the analyses and the briefings and the summaries and the issues developments of our staff, and understand them, than to be like the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) who has read it and does not understand it. He does not understand it. His foolish tactics, his fearmongering is not going to impress anybody. They are just going to grease the skids of his Party on their downhill slide in Manitoba.

I recognize that the responsibility of the Opposition is to keep the Government on their toes. I accept that and I welcome responsible debate, but this is not responsible debate that we have been engaging in. We need to have legitimate criticism. We need to have constructive suggestions. That is how Manitoba can best be served by its Opposition, especially in a minority House. The NDP are just as guilty as the Liberals of raising fears and promoting hysteria.

We know about their action with respect to the material that was delivered to Flin Flon. But did they take a responsible approach? Did they go, when they had that information, directly to the Minister and say we are very concerned about this. Here is an issue. We want you dealing with it. Phone him in the morning, get his department to review it, put on a stop-work or whatever. No. What did they do? They waited until Question Period and then they informed the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery) of their great concern about this. Their great concern was to get publicity, to make a splash, to hit the six o'clock news. That is what their great concern was, Mr. Speaker.

In fact, the Mayor of Flin Flon was so aghast at this tactic that they used that startled the citizens of Flin Flon with the allegations -(Interjection)- They made the allegations that the Mayor of Flin Flon said that this was akin to a person who goes on an airplane and yells, hijack. He said that is the kind of tactic this was.

But the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) has a history of this kind of dishonesty. He has a history of dealing with that.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, the statement that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) makes is not true, and to say it is also against the rules of this House.

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon) to withdraw that statement about the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

Mr. Filmon: I will say that the Member for Flin Flon is less than honest and has been demonstrated to be such, and it . . .

Mr. Speaker: On the same point, would the Honourable First Minister please withdraw that statement about the Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Filmon: All right, Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw that—

Mr. Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Filmon: —because it is unparliamentary. Let me read something about the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) that will let the Members opposite, the new Members, judge his honesty. This took place on Friday, February 12, in this Legislature.

* (1720)

When the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) asked the question of the then Minister of Energy, who was the Member for Flin Flon, he asked him what was the total cost? How many hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent in the attempt to acquire Inter-City Gas by this NDP Government? At that time, the answer was—Mr. Speaker, I will be delighted to give the Member the exact figure including invoices that we have not yet received. The exact figure for the cost of acquisition, the exercise that we went through to assure that as we proceeded we were doing so in a prudent and reasonable fashion, that we conducted that necessary due diligence before getting involved, the figure is \$589,000.00.

Mr. Speaker, there was information available at the time that suggested it was much more than that so the Member for Lakeside repeated the question. Mr. Storie, at that time the Member for Flin Flon, said "Read my lips." He repeated \$589,000 and suggested that the Member for Lakeside did not know what he was talking about.

We have tabled in the House evidence that that takeover cost at this point in time \$1.23 million, that he already had invoices in his hands for \$861,000 at the time he answered that question and that he knew about at least \$300,000 of additional expenses at that time. So much for the honesty of the Member for Flin Flon. Manitobans massively rejected the NDP in the last election and they still have not learned their lesson.

Let us get on to some of the things that the Liberal Party has been doing. Let us get on to the credibility of the Liberal Party opposite. I am amazed at every day in this House how they seem to be going back on some of the things that they said. How about some of the contradictions? People tell me that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is a very definite person and that is exactly right. She is definite each time she takes a position on an issue even though it is a different position. She is very definite about it.

I can recall that during the election campaign she started out saying they would eliminate the payroll tax

and then she moved a little later to say that they would phase it out over three years. Then she said well, I did not say which three years. Finally, she ended up saying a few days after the election campaign when the Dominion Bond Rating Service said that we had a serious debt problem in Manitoba, she said my advice to the Premier would be to go slow on eliminating the payroll tax because he should not rush into it too quickly, we have to eliminate the debt first. So she went from saying eliminate it completely, to phasing it out, to saying do not move on it because the debt is too important to us. Those are contradictions.

Then she says, she does not play games. She began a day or so after the election by saying that she would give us an opportunity, a chance to show what we could do in Government. She said that. Then within days, she was starting her daily routine of threatening to bring us down; well, if they do not do this I am going to bring them down, if they do not do that I am going to bring them down. I was in Parksville two-and-a-half weeks after we were sworn in and I made a statement about the support of our Government for free trade, and she says if he says that one more time, I am going to bring down the Government. This is a real responsible Opposition. This is consistency.

What about Meech Lake? What has she done with Meech Lake? She says to begin with Meech Lake is dead. We are going to defeat Meech Lake. Then she says well, we are going to amend Meech Lake; we are not just going to defeat it, we are going to amend Meech Lake. Now, of course, we have a contradiction appearing. We have a contradiction with her Deputy Leader (Mr. Carr) of all people. Here is an interview that was taped, that took place on Canada AM on, I believe it was the 22nd of July. At that point, the Deputy Leader was asked by Norm Perry, "But your own leader, Mr. Carr, said that Meech Lake is dead not too long ago." Does that mean she now thinks it is only slightly wounded? Here is what the response was of the Deputy Leader, well, she said that the Accord unamended is dead, and she was speaking from her point of view as the Liberal Leader. Our caucus has been very clear from Day One that we think there are many ways to improve the Accord. Well, the Leader certainly was not very clear. She said it was dead, and they were going to defeat it.

How about changes in position on the Free Trade Agreement? How many questions have they been asking in this House on the Free Trade Agreement? They have been asking a lot, right? Here is an article that was in the March 10 newspaper of this year in which she was quoted as saying—this is the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs). " 'As well,' she said, 'the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement is not a provincial matter, and should continue to be handled only at the federal level,—only at the federal level—while funding for community services should be budgeted at the local level so agencies can make the best use of the money.' "

She is saying that it should only be a federal issue, but now her Members are asking questions day after day, and they have got a resolution that they are going to support of the New Democrats and now it is a

provincial issue and they are bringing in all this legislation. Talk about changing positions, talk about being absolutely firm and committed to your principles. It is like this. The Leader of the Opposition has a set of principles and, if you do not like those, she has got another set of principles that she will offer you tomorrow. That is the kind of leadership we are getting.

I will not go through the kinds of things that we have been seeing in this House in the first couple of weeks, the questions from Members opposite about ManOil. Why are we getting out of ManOil, says the critic. Well, your Leader said that we ought to get out of ManOil. That was what she said during the election campaign.

The fact of the matter is—you missed the first part of the speech, to the Leader of the New Democrats (Mr. Doer). Read it in Hansard.

Talk about commitment, here are these people, the New Democratic Party, they put forward a motion for an emergency debate on Churchill. This is a big emergency. They are so committed to it that a quarter of their caucus were not even there for the vote. That is their kind of commitment, that is their integrity. That is the kind of word that you can believe from the New Democratic Party.

But the Liberals, day after day after day, they suggest that we spend more and more and more money. What do they say? They said that we should eliminate party lines. They said that we ought to eliminate long-distance charges for communities, provide funding for in-vitro fertilization, allow producers to retroactively enter the crop insurance program, emergency funding for additional police on the Red River, additional funding for the Churchill Development Fund Board, funding for rail line development up to Churchill. All of these things, they say, day after day after day. The cash register toll is increasing.

These are the same people whose Leader said that the most important priority, after the Dominion Bond Rating Service came out lowering our bond rating, she said that reducing the deficit was the most important priority and, day after day after day, they say we ought to be spending more and more money on these things.

What about studying? The Leader of the Opposition said all we do is study, study, study, and she took great exception to the fact that we are studying the health care system in Manitoba. But we have a copy of her campaign promises, in which she said that she would appoint a royal commission to study the health care system in Manitoba. That was her commitment. Then she takes exception to the fact that we are appointing a Health Care Advisory Network to study health care in Manitoba. There are so many inconsistencies, I am sorry that I did not take longer to go through this.

* (1730)

The fact of the matter is we have many important things to look at in Manitoba. We are all here to serve the people of Manitoba. The Opposition has an obligation to support good legislation and sensible direction. They cannot be small-minded. They cannot resort to petty political haggling. It must have a loftier

agenda and a higher goal than it has revealed so far. I caution the Opposition and point out that the day-to-day game playing and fearmongering is harmful to all Manitobans, and ultimately the people of Manitoba will recognize that fact.

The public did not seek a negative force on April 26. It sought positive change. My Government is prepared, eager and willing to provide that positive change. We make no apologies for listening to Manitobans and moving forward in a measured, thoughtful way. In doing so, we will not have another MTX. We will not have a Workers Compensation Board in chaos. We will listen to our citizens, we will listen to Members opposite, and then we will decide.

Over the years, I have articulated our vision for Manitoba. I have spoken to small groups and to large audiences about what we want for our children and for our citizens. I have referred to the heritage that we have, built on hard work and perseverance from our forebears, which has created a Manitoba with a multicultural diversity of which we all can be proud. Our unique position within Canada as the keystone province is not only of symbolic significance, but it is of real concrete meaning as well for everyone in this province.

This Government is dedicated to enhancing that position, to improving the quality of life of our citizens so that all might prosper. That is the goal of our Progressive Conservative Party in Manitoba, and that is the goal of our Government.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am therefore proud to support this Throne Speech, and the excellent foundation that it builds for us to achieve those goals. Thank you very much.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. In accordance with Rule 35.(4), I am interrupting proceedings to put the question on the Motion to the House.

The question before the House is the proposed Motion of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), for an answer to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, in answer to his speech at the opening of the Session. Do you wish the Motion read? (Agreed)

That an Humble Address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor as follows:

Nous, fidèles et loyaux sujets de Sa Majesté, formant l'Assemblée législative du Manitoba, vous remercions bien humblement du discours que vous avez eu la magnanimité de prononcer devant nous lors de l'ouverture de la présente session.

(Translation)

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in Session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address us at the opening of the present Session.

MOTION presented and carried.

MESSAGES

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): I have a message from His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. Speaker: I have been informed of proposed Bill No. 7, which will provide interim authority to make expenditures from the Consolidated Fund retroactive to April 1, 1988, pending approval of The Appropriation Act, 1988.

Bill No. 7 will abate spending authority provided by four Special Warrants issued in 1988-89 fiscal year, pursuant to Orders-in-Council. It will also provide a portion of commitment authority and borrowing authority required for the 1988-89 fiscal year.

I recommend Bill No. 7 to the House.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), that the said message be referred to the Committee of Supply.

MOTION presented and carried.

Mr. Manness: I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), that this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried.

Mr. Manness: I move, seconded by the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), that this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).