

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 1, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): I would like to table the Annual Report for 1987-88 for Agriculture.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister for Housing): I would like to table the Annual Report 1987-88 for Urban Affairs.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the loge to my left where we have with us today the Honourable Red Pedersen, Speaker of the Northwest Territories; also we have with us today Lloyd Muller, Deputy Speaker for Saskatchewan; and we also have with us today, in the loge to my right, M. Remy Poulin, MNA de Chauveau; and Mme. Christiane Pelchat, MNA de Vachon.

On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

Also with us this afternoon in the gallery, from the Murdoch MacKay School, we have thirty Grade 9 students under the direction of Mrs. Nancy Trush. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak).

Also with us, from the St. Pierre School, twenty Grade 5 students under the direction of Mrs. Catellier. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger).

From the Morden Collegiate, we have thirty-five Grade 11 students under the direction of Mr. Ron Peters. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

From the Minitonas Intermediate School, we have twenty-seven Grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Jersak. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Swan River (Mr. Burrell).

From the Shoal Lake School, we have twenty-five Grades 8 to 12 students, under the direction of Mr. Taylor. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay).

On behalf of all Honourable Members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Anti-Racism Programs Funding

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

M. President, Mr. Speaker, First Nation magazine has produced a one-half hour investigative report on the Aiyawin Housing Corporation apartment block located at 11 Arden Avenue in St. Vital. The picture painted of the lives of the people, and particularly the children who live in the complex, is not a pretty one. The children who are Natives, according to this report, are subjected to verbal racism on a frequent basis. Fist fights, emotional trauma and community breakdown have affected many.

My question is to the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson). Will the Minister tell the House how many dollars of her multicultural mandate are specifically targeted for programs to counteract racism?

* (1335)

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): I will have to take the specifics of that question as notice and report back to the House, but I do want to indicate that we, as Government, do not tolerate or do not want to see any racism in the Province of Manitoba or indeed in our country of Canada.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Carstairs: I thank the Minister for that answer.

Initiatives

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Can the Minister tell the House today if there are any specific programs of an educational nature authorized and run by her department specifically approaching the issue of racism and how to rid it from our Manitoba community?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): I do know that there are programs throughout Government and there are grants available to ensure and to educate all throughout the province. With the knowledge and understanding and knowing about each other's cultures, we can then work towards a more harmonious relationship among all groups in our province, whether they be new Canadians or those Canadians who have been here, second, third and fourth generation, or the Native community, all communities. We are working towards and we will be developing a multicultural policy and it certainly will be addressing that issue.

Mrs. Carstairs: I was looking for a specific program initiative, but I will go to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach).

Human Rights Education Compulsory Curriculum

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Can the Minister of Education tell the House today how many children are actually receiving, in the Province of Manitoba, human rights education in that it was a piloted program several years ago, and when will this component of social studies become a compulsory part of our education system?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): I think that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) should know that to ask for specifics right now is somewhat unusual, but I would be very pleased to provide for the Leader of the Opposition that information at another time. I will take that question as notice, on the specifics.

I might say, in a general sense, that we are providing an education in this province which does reflect the many cultural groups that we have in our province so that in fact there is a good awareness of the makeup of this province so that Manitobans, in general, can then learn to respect and love one another as they should. Mr. Speaker, that is an important part of education and I would be happy to give the Leader of the Opposition a list of the kinds of programs that are being offered in our education system in this province, together with all the in-servicing that is going on, on this very issue.

Rafferty-Alameda Dam Project Environmental Impact Study

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a new question to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings), all through the last Session the Government rejected our calls for a comprehensive environmental study in Manitoba, for Manitobans, on the impact of the Rafferty-Alameda dam. It finally took a federal court to prove the Government was wrong and as a result the then Ministers of Natural Resources and Environment finally completely reversed their position and realized the need for the environmental study.

Mr. Speaker, we have learned today that there is not to be a full-scale public environmental review, but rather a summary of all of the studies that have been done before, many of which were flawed, many of which did not impact on Manitoba. Can the Minister tell us today what interaction his Government officials have had, his staff with the staff of the federal Department of the Environment in the preparation of the study that is to be released tomorrow?

* (1340)

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) leaves the impression this is the end of the road in terms of reviews and examination of the Rafferty-Alameda project. We have said consistently we will not stop short of a complete environmental assessment.

The fact that we today have an announcement in the paper—I presume that is what the Member is referring to—that a summary of the shortened version of the review that Ottawa is presently doing in no way indicates there will not be a complete environmental assessment. That is what we intend to work towards.

Mrs. Carstairs: I can only assume, therefore, there has been no interaction between his Government officials and the federal department upon which this study is to be released tomorrow.

Environmental Hearing Process

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Can the Minister tell us what he has been informed by his federal counterparts will be the process after the public hearing has taken place in these information sessions, in which everyone is limited to a five-minute oral presentation? What will be the process after that so that Manitobans can have real input?

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): We intend to fully and strongly put forward the case regarding the need for complete environmental information regarding this process. The department has been, on a consistent basis, involved with the federal department on this issue. We will be, as Manitobans on behalf of Manitobans, putting forward our case to the federal Government, along and as well as all of the work that has been done behind the scenes as well as in the public forum.

Environmental Impact Study

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition, with a final supplementary question.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with a final supplementary, if there is lots of work taking place behind scenes, will the Minister tell us today what specific meetings have taken place? What specific information has been provided from Manitoba? Is Manitoba having any input into this study tomorrow and, if it is not, will he demand that study not be released until we do it?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) does not appreciate the process that has been embarked upon, and this is only the first part of leading towards a complete federal environmental impact study. This is the initial analysis of the information that has been made available and is being used as a basis for discussion up to this point. We have always maintained that the protection of the quality and the quantity and the interests of Manitobans is of a highest priority. The only way that is going to be assured, it seems to me, is under a complete federal environmental impact study.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Special Needs Children Funding—Private Schools

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): My question is to the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach). Since this Government was elected to office, it has proceeded to increase the spending of taxpayers' dollars on private schools by some \$10 million. Yesterday, in a question to the Minister, I asked why the Minister had allowed a retroactive payment to private schools for special needs funding which is, in effect, double payment to private schools.

My question is, why did the Minister choose to provide and has chosen to provide this additional \$10 million to private schools at a time when no additional funding is being provided to meet the needs of special needs students in the public school system? Can he explain to the 13,000 teachers why this is his priority?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Once again, the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) has his information incorrect and is presenting to the House some inaccurate information.

With regard to funding, Mr. Speaker, I think this Government can stand by its record in terms of how it supports the public school system and the independent school system and the university and post-secondary school system in this province. I do not believe we need to take a second seat to anybody with regard to the way we fund our school system. The children of Manitoba, whether they are attending independent schools or whether they are attending the public school system, require education.

Those special needs students require the special attention they deserve. Their parents are taxpayers, they are members of this province. They must be afforded the opportunity and the access to educational programming that we can afford. Mr. Speaker, for that reason, we have decided to extend the special needs funding to the independent schools as well as to the public school system.

Mr. Storie: Perhaps we created a two-tier system, one for the rich and one for the poor. What assurances can he give this House, the people of Manitoba, that the money he will provide, additional money to special needs to the private school system was actually being used for that purpose? Can the Minister indicate why money targeted for special needs funding . . . your needs of special needs . . . did he use to reduce the deficit of private institutions being used for teacher pay bonuses rather than actually for the needs of special needs students?

* (1345)

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, the funding that was allowed to the independent schools for special needs is done on the same basis that it is allowed to the public school system. The school, whether it is an independent school or public school, will have to be accountable for the

way that it spends its money. We, as the department, will ensure that the money is channelled towards programming for those students who are in need.

When the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) talks about a system for the rich and a system for the poor, Mr. Speaker, if we do not support those students whose parents have chosen to send them to independent schools, then in reality we are creating that kind of a system. By supporting the special needs students who are attending independent schools, we are creating the ability for students whose parents perhaps cannot afford to send them there, to be able to send those students to the school of their choice.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the tuition at the school which is mentioned in this letter is some \$11,000, and that is not affordable by average standards.

Laureate Academy Funds Disbursement

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): My question is also to the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach). Can the Minister explain why this letter sent by the Laureate Academy to parents of students attending that institution says unequivocally that it is going to use the additional money supplied by this Minister to reduce its deficit? Can the Minister explain that? I will table the letter.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the department does not take responsibility for a letter that has been sent by an independent school to the parents whose children attend that school. We have just recently become aware of that situation. I can tell the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) that my department is investigating that matter, and certainly I can get back to the Member at a later time when we have more information on that matter.

Private Schools Funding Audit Request

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon, with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, in the Minister's haste, I have no faith that this Minister will, in any way, conduct an investigation, an audit of the circumstances surrounding this and several other similar incidences. Therefore, I am tabling a letter I have sent to the Provincial Auditor asking him to involve himself in this matter.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister. Will he ask his department to provide every assistance to the Provincial Auditor to account for the hundreds of thousands of dollars, in fact, the millions of dollars that have gone to support private schools in this province, that millions of dollars of increase that have been allowed by this Minister. Will he ask his department to co-operate?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): It has been a known fact that the Member

for Flin Flon has been against the support for independent schools even when he was Minister of Education. His own Government acknowledged the fact that independent schools should be supported because under his administration the independent schools were being supported. However, the support that was going to them was so meaningless that many of those independent schools were at the verge of closing down because they could not afford to continue.

We believe in choices. This Government believes that the independent schools provide a quality of education that is certainly second to none. We intend to offer Manitobans the choices that they deserve.

* (1350)

Bill C-22 Challenge Manitoba Society of Seniors

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Today, I filed in the Clerk's Office a petition signed by more than 3,300 Manitobans representing 87 communities from every corner of this province, Mr. Speaker. What they are doing is urging the Government of Manitoba to intervene in the Manitoba Society of Seniors' court challenge to Bill C-22, which is the federal drug patent law.

The Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) has taken the position the Manitoba Society of Seniors is fully capable of making its own arguments. My question is to the Minister responsible for Seniors. Will he today make his position clearer on whether or not he supports the thousands of Manitobans who are going to be adversely affected by increased drug prices, or is he on the side of multinational drug companies?

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Seniors): I want to make it very clear this Government, the Province of Manitoba, are very solidly on the side of every senior in the Province of Manitoba. Let me make it very clear as well that it is my responsibility to work with my colleague, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), to all those individuals who have seniors' responsibilities, that in any way there are difficulties in those seniors looking after the purchase of drugs, looking after any of their essential needs, that we will ensure that they are looked after. That is our commitment.

Thirdly, I do not believe that there is one senior in this province who does not want to have the kind of research, the kind of development that would help the prevention of cancer, help the Alzheimer's disease, that they want that kind of research, that they want to continue on to many more years. I think we have to be very broad in our vision as to how we totally support the seniors of this country.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question to the same Minister, it was that Party that voted against the NDP resolution, against Bill C-22, and today the Minister reconfirms that he is on the side of the drug companies and not the seniors. Why will this Minister not support the court challenge of the Manitoba Society

of Seniors to make sure that drug prices are kept low in this country, as they have been for the last number of decades?

Mr. Downey: I am surprised that the Liberal Critic—well, maybe I am not surprised—does not understand a little better the operations of Government. His Leader said they are ready to govern.

I would think, Mr. Speaker, that he should pay attention to the input of all the Members of caucus, of all the members of the Seniors Society and consult with them. Because he sent a petition to all the people of the seniors' homes, I think he did the irresponsible thing and excited and scared the seniors of this province instead of doing the responsible thing.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Carr: Rarely have I heard the seniors of Manitoba insulted as they just have been by this Minister.

Bill C-22 Impact on Seniors

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): My supplementary question is to the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Connery) and may I, by way of passing, congratulate him on his new appointment.

Has the Minister analyzed the impact of this insidious legislation, supported by this Government and fought by the Manitoba Society of Seniors, to determine what impact higher drug prices as a result of that Bill will have, particularly on seniors and the disabled in this province?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, our department, through the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, is continuously working with all people of Manitoba to ensure they are treated fairly. We have with us the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), who are working very closely in their departments to ensure that the seniors are well looked after. They are being well looked after by this Government.

Red River Community College Regional Centres

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Manitobans are being shafted by the Government of Canada. The people of Portage la Prairie are being shafted by the Tory twin Government of Manitoba, not merely by the lack of meaningful negotiations with the federal Government for the retention of the Canadian Forces Base at Portage but now it appears certain that the Red River Community College Regional Centre is to be significantly downsized. This decision seems to be in total opposition to the Throne Speech promise of more decentralization. Should the base close, there will be an added demand for re-education of many individuals in the town and surrounding area.

Will the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) tell the House exactly what plans are in store for the Regional Centre of Red River Community College at Portage?

* (1355)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): I would be happy to respond to that question, Mr. Speaker. Let me indicate that once again the Liberal computer has slipped because the information is incorrect again. As it happens, there is vacant space available in many of the schools in Portage. For that reason we have decided, as a Government, that it is more wise to utilize the space in the school system rather than rent expensive floor space in another part of town. For that reason, we have shifted the use of space from the Regional Centre in Portage to the school system. This will allow us to enhance the programming that is going to be delivered to the people of the Portage area.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Harold Edwards School Status

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek, with a supplementary question.

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Can the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) tell us if he has been in consultation with the Portage la Prairie School Division or the Canadian Forces Base, Portage la Prairie, regarding the future of the Harold Edwards School located in Southport?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, we are concerned about the impact that the exodus of many people may potentially have on the community of Portage. We are prepared to do whatever it is we can to ensure that people in that area can get retrained properly who are within our jurisdiction. Therefore, as a department, we are prepared to do whatever it is we can to ensure that the people of the Portage area not only have an appropriate education system but certainly that those people who need the retraining are going to have those opportunities.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Educational Facilities Capital Projects

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek, with a final supplementary.

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Last week, I asked this Minister for a prioritized list of capital projects from the Public Schools Finance Board. Today we hear of two separate capital expenditures from the \$27.6 million. Will the Minister today table the prioritized list from the Public Schools Finance Board instead of having this piecemeal type of news information? Can we have a tabled list?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): With regard to the question, on June 5 when

the Budget is tabled, the Member opposite will have a complete picture with regard to the capital projects that are going to be embarked on in this province by the Department of Education with regard to facilities. At that time, she will have a clear understanding of where the projects are and which ones are going to be embarked on.

Tender Process Unfair Hiring Practices

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I took a question as notice from the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) when he asked a question about a tender that was let or a contract that was signed by my department in Brandon. He tried to leave the wrong impression with the question that was raised. I want to indicate it has been and it is a standard practice when leasing new accommodations to enter into a contract with the landlord to undertake the leasehold improvement. In those instances where the landlord does not have construction forces to undertake the renovations, the landlord may authorize the lessee to use their own forces. It is not a standard practice to tender leasehold improvements. In the case in Brandon, Manitoba Government Services entered into a contract with Thomas Mall Real Estate Management as part of the rental agreement.

* (1400)

Ladco Land Development Deal Proposals

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme).

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

Mr. Cowan: In my question, I want to make it very clear that I do not believe that the approximately \$10,000 that Ladco and members of the Borger family and the Borlund Construction Company gave to the Conservatives in 1986 in any way influenced their decision to enter into a land deal with Ladco on the south St. Boniface property.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): What a sleazeball!

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, from his seat, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) says, what a sleazeball.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Churchill, on a point of order.

Mr. Cowan: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Firstly, I do not know to whom he was referring, either his own colleagues or to Members on this side, but that term certainly is provocative and one that would tend to

engage one in debate in this House, and I think you would find, under most circumstances, to be unparliamentary. I think it does very little to add to the tone of the House, especially when a Member is trying to deal with a sensitive area without casting aspersions. I would ask that you ask the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to withdraw those remarks so that we can put this debate back on a higher plane, where it was before he entered into it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Minister of Health. Order, please. Honourable Members cannot expect the Chair to rule whether or not the remarks quoted by the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) were said. Unfortunately, we did not hear them. I will leave it up to the Honourable Minister of Health.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, with all apologies to my honourable friend, the Member for Churchill, I apologize for referring to him in such derogatory terms.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Minister of Health. Will the Honourable Member for Churchill kindly put his question?

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that because I honestly do not believe that money influenced the Government. I do not believe that the \$7,000 that the members of that same family and that company gave to the Conservative candidates in \$1,000 and \$2,000 donations during the last election influenced the Government.

I do not believe, but I tell you the belief is being sorely tested by information that my caucus staff gave to me today that shows that the same group of PC donors contributed nearly \$22,000 to the Conservatives in 1988. That belief is also being sorely tested by the fact that the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) will not provide us with information that we have requested of him until next week.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). Given this new information and given the fact that one does not want to cast aspersions, can he immediately make public the information on the proposals that he has in his possession that gave the Government the confidence to enter into the land deal with Ladco?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to maybe ask the Member whether he received a letter from my office staff this morning, and I am lining up a meeting which at the very earliest time was June 6, which is 8 a.m. next Tuesday. The Liberal Critic has accepted that meeting, and his office responded to my office that it might not be a suitable time for him, and I suggested some other time. It does not have to be a meeting with the Liberal Critic myself to go over and provide the information to the staff.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to maybe question the Member on whether he provided the information to all the critics on his Meadow West program that he got

involved in several years ago. Also, I would like the Member to tell this House how much room in that particular area or that development was provided for low-rental housing. I would like to also ask—

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), with a supplementary question.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that we had notified the Minister that, No. 1, we do not believe that he has been present at a meeting where we go over the proposals; No. 2, we want, not the information shared in a private meeting, but we want the information made public.

Will the Minister now, given this latest information and given the fact that it is becoming more and more difficult to defend the integrity of the Government if they continue to refuse to provide that information publicly, not ask questions of other Members in this House, but come clean with the information on the Ladco deal and provide the full proposals, all the background information in a public way immediately to Opposition Critics and to the media?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that Member will not get to the agreement. He will see by the agreement that the Peat Marwick study said the joint venture should be in this particular area. Also the Institute of Urban Studies had recommended in a report, the Winnipeg University, 1987 report. He will also see that we have not shifted our focus away under the \$10 million that will go into housing from this particular proposal. Unlike the Member, his Leader, April 8, 1988, "Doer targets health care," he mentions—and I would like to just read that part of the information

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Concordia, on a point of order.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has made a statement. I did promise senior rehabilitative housing for seniors so they could stay in their own home through some of the land bank, and I have no apologies for putting money into seniors' housing

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

The Honourable Member for Churchill, with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Cowan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This whole situation is becoming stranger and stranger, and curiouser and curiouser. As the Minister says, he has an agreement of which he is very proud, but he refuses to make it public.

I will ask the Minister point blank, why is it that he feels it is necessary to keep this agreement under wraps until June 6? Why is it he will not make the agreement, the proposal calls, the announcements of the proposal and all the working papers available to the public through the Opposition Critics and through the media immediately? What is he trying to hide until June 6?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, the agreement was made public right after we signed it.

Red Meat Forum Recommendations

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Practically every day since this Session opened we have had another committee or another forum, another advisory council or another unit announced. Now that we have seen the formalization of the coalition yesterday, perhaps this will change, but we have to assume that it may go on much the same. I am disappointed to see that this process has permeated the Department of Agriculture.

I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture what initiatives will the Red Meat Forum be taking to revitalize and re-establish what was once a very vital and strong meat industry here in Manitoba. When can we expect to hear something on that?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): As the Member was told when I spoke on my Speech from the Throne, the Red Meat Forum was formed because of a recommendation from the MAST Committee, of which the Member is very familiar. It is a group of people in the university, Government and industry who will sit down and analyze what is needed for the general industry in this province.

I can assure the Member that the reason for bringing together producers and processors and university people and Government people is to analyze the complex situation that we are in with packers and slaughter houses leaving this province and try to find some method that we can revitalize that industry. They will bring forward recommendations as they see fit when they are ready to do it.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry, with a supplementary question.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Mr. Speaker, that was the type of answer I expected. A committee is struck in order to provide more time to procrastinate, and so obviously the Minister, while the Government has been sitting there for six-and-a-half years in Opposition, is not ready to roll.

* (1410)

Agricultural Advisory Committee Crow Rate Review

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): The next question relates to the Agricultural Advisory Committee that was struck just a few days ago. The main purpose of that was to come up with a made-in-Manitoba recommendation as far as the method of payment of the Crow rate benefit was concerned. When can we expect a made-in-Manitoba recommendation? We are already a long way behind the other provinces, or are we going to do what Mazankowski wants us to do again?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): I would like to inform the Member that there has been a lot of speculation about "there might be a method of payment change made," but we have not yet received

any proposal from the federal Government on the nature of that method of payment change. We are positioning ourselves to be ready to respond to the proposal when it is presented to the province, and we cannot respond to a proposal that we have not seen yet. We are getting ready, and I can tell we are as ready as any province in western Canada and more ready than some.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Well, it looks like once again we will be reacting to what somebody else plans for us.

Sustainable Development Unit Agricultural Representative

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): On April 16, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) announced the formation of a sustainable development unit and that unit is made up of six senior bureaucrats, all from the Government. I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), why is there not a member from the Department of Agriculture on that sustainable unit program, and does this indicate the priority that agriculture is given by this Government when it comes to sustainable development?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am on the Centre for Sustainable Development and I represent agriculture. We have gone a long way towards helping to sustain agriculture, through the drought relief programs of last year to the soil conservation initiatives that are in this year, through the land and water strategy going in right now. I would ask the Member to pay attention to what is going on.

Child Care Training

Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). As the Minister is aware, last week, the Child Care Task Force Report was delivered to this Government. It was established by this Government, and he should be aware of the recommendations. In it, it includes a recommendation for a degree program at our universities generally for child care. Now, that has been recognized as important, given the importance of ongoing recognition for day care workers and for better care for children and for helping us address the special needs of children in the Province of Manitoba.

Can the Minister of Education inform the House if he will take steps to inform the University of Manitoba that the establishment of such a degree program is a Government priority?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): This Government has recognized that we do need more spaces for training with regard to the child care programs, and certainly that is one of the recommendations that came out of the report. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you and the Honourable Member that in due time we will be announcing the types of programs that we are prepared to embark on in terms of providing more child care training within this province. The Universities Grants Commission at the present time is in consultation with the University of Manitoba with regard to that very issue.

Universities Grants Commission Child Care Training Approval

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): A supplementary to the same Minister, while the Minister and his colleagues are studying this matter, time is running out and in fact has run out. I will table a letter in the House today, Mr. Speaker. It is from the Manitoba Child Care Association to the Minister himself, indicating that the Universities Grants Commission has just made a decision pertaining to a \$120,000 degree program for child care at the University of Manitoba.

I would like to ask the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), given that this program for \$120,000—it has been in place, it has had students already enrolled, it is advertising for teachers. Will he now make it clear to the University of Manitoba this is a Government priority and will he ensure that this program proceeds?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, it is only normal that we allow the Universities Grants Commission to consult with the University of Manitoba. That way, it is not a Minister who forces the university to do something or not do something. The universities are autonomous bodies. I was talking to members of the Universities Grants Commission just yesterday with regard to this very topic. I will be very happy to look at that letter the Member refers to and then perhaps respond to her at a later time.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that this Minister is not on top of the issues. The university has made a decision and we are about to see a very important program go down the tubes.

Child Care Training

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): I would ask the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), if this Government puts children first and believes in developing our human resources of this province, if he will recognize the fact that if children are going to receive the best care and day care workers are going to receive the best training and thereby recognition and salaries and status, will he now today give some assurances to the House he will indicate to the Universities Grants Commission and to the University of Manitoba that a degree program in child care is an absolute priority for this Government?

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I guess the Member has asked that question now three times in a different way perhaps. Certainly I have to again tell the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), it is not just a degree program that will provide better care for children in this province. In fact we need additional programs at our community colleges to ensure that the training for those programs goes on, and that we put as many people out into the

work force who have the competency to be able to care for children and have the skills to be able to do that. So our priorities are to make sure we have trained people who are ready to go into the field and fill those positions that are vacant and are there for them.

Gold Mine—Shoal Lake Correspondence Tabled

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I apologize for not using the opportunity when I had the floor earlier. I would like to table copies of my correspondence with the Honourable Lucien Bouchard regarding Shoal Lake, dated May 10.

Mr. Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern, and Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could have leave of the House to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Downey: I thank the Honourable Members for leave to make an important statement.

Mr. Speaker, as Minister responsible for Seniors, it gives me great pride and pleasure to take this opportunity to inform all Members of this House that the month of June has been designated Seniors' Month.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Downey: It is in recognition of their lifetime contributions to the economic, social and cultural life of this province. It is a time when all of us can pay special tribute to the people whose determination and vision have helped to shape this province and indeed this country into what it is today.

We must never forget the seniors of this province have lived through many great changes, including two world wars and a great depression, a fact which proves they are real survivors. I believe we must increase the awareness of problems and issues facing Manitoba seniors. As well, we realize that there is a need for policies and practices that will promote dignity, equality and independence. That is why we have established special recognition of the seniors through the directorate. Its purpose will be to represent the views of seniors to the provincial Government by identifying their needs, problems and aspirations.

We are confident the directorate will encourage the active participation of seniors in the mainstream of life and can provide assistance when difficulties arrive. Mr. Speaker, the majority of Manitobans will spend one-third of their life as a senior. It is our objective to make it the best portion of their life.

I would also ask that each and every Manitoban, in some way, move to ensure that every senior in our

province has just a little more pleasure out of life. I now invite all Members of the Assembly and the province to join with us in recognizing the contributions of those special Manitobans during the celebrations of Seniors' Day, June 23, at the Manitoba Legislature. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

* (1420)

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Thank you very much for anticipating my every word, Mr. Speaker. I am delighted to hear that the month of June has been designated Seniors' Month, and we on this side of the House of course will participate with great pleasure in any events which might be scheduled for the 23rd of June.

We, just this very week, are in possession of demographic material which shows us that the seniors community is growing in Manitoba faster than any other. The issues which affect Manitoba Seniors have become more important and affect more people now than they ever have, and it runs across the whole spectrum of public policy. We realize how important it is that seniors be brought into the consultation process as Government looks for ways of accommodating the needs of an expanding seniors population.

So for those of us on this side of the House, we welcome today's announcement, and the Minister can count on us for co-operation as the events unfold between now and the end of this month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I would like to have leave to make a non-political statement. I would like to join with all Members in this Chamber in appreciation of the contribution of seniors to the Province of Manitoba and to Canada, and the ongoing contribution of seniors to our quality of life and the values that we hold so dear in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear that we are going to have another Seniors' Day in the Province of Manitoba. I believe that it is a beautiful day to have a Seniors' Day in the province. We were quite disappointed last year that we did not have a Seniors' Day where seniors came here. I hope this year we will have that again because it is truly a non-partisan event.

We look forward to our non-partisan accordion player, Len Evans, leading with all other Members a singsong with the seniors of our province in their building, their Legislative Building. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, may I please make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Selkirk have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mrs. Charles: Mr. Speaker, as you are certainly well aware, today we are celebrating the Manitoba Speaker's Forum on the Status of Disabled Persons. I and my Party would like to congratulate you on your efforts taken to make this a most worthy celebration of the abilities of these people. I congratulate you on your efforts, all your staff and the volunteers who have made this day so worthwhile.

I would like to speak on behalf of the needs of the disabled people in our province and indeed in Canada. I think every family unfortunately, from time to time, will experience the problems that we do have in life where, from time to time, we have disabled people enter our families, enter our friendships and enter our neighbourhoods.

I, myself, my own family, have found over the last few years that we now have three people in wheelchairs in my family. What would have seemed like a devastating effect years ago, I now accept as a reality and understand that these people are only disabled in the fact that they cannot walk, but not disabled in their abilities to be human beings. I, myself, as a teenager suffered severe depression and understand how disabling mental illness can be. I understand, as well, it is not a death sentence, that you can get better. We have to support all those who are disabled in whatever causes, whatever aims they have. Some cannot see; some cannot hear. We have combinations of many disabilities but, beyond and behind every disabled person, is a heart and is a soul. That indeed is what we are here to represent in this province.

I would ask each Member today to help celebrate Disabled Persons Day in this Legislature by attending the forums in Room 254 and listening to what the people have to say. I appreciate having the ability to stand here today as a healthy person, both mentally and physically. I wish that ability on everyone since it is not possible that we, who are able, will be able to face all the problems of life through the eyes of those who are disabled, so that one day we may be able to say to them, we understand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): I too would like to congratulate you on the forum.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Minister have leave? (Agreed)

Mrs. Oleson: I too would like to congratulate you on the forum that is taking place today, and how pleased I am that my department is able to assist in organization and financially with that particular forum.

I concur with the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) who talks about how we should focus our attentions on those with disabilities and how difficult it is for them to fully take part in society. I appreciate this more and more since I have become Minister of this department and have met with so many groups and listened to the concerns they have with access to buildings, access to material in print form and so forth, and how many of them would prefer really to have us focus on their abilities and have that as the focus of attention.

I concur with the Member for Selkirk that this is a worthwhile endeavour to have a forum of this nature

so that people can get together and explain to us more fully some of the things that are of concern to them and how we can, as a Government, help them to take part fully in society.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate being granted leave by this Assembly to add to the voice of my colleagues, the New Democratic Party, to those of the Liberals and Conservatives who have spoken in congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, on initiating the Speaker's Forum for the handicapped and disabled in the Province of Manitoba. I think that it too is an excellent initiative, one that perhaps is long overdue in our province.

I believe all of us can grow from the experience of participating in that forum here at the Legislature. Hopefully, it will go some distance to remove some of the stigmas and the misperceptions that are attached to handicapped people and people with disabilities. I think that it is important for all of us to take that seriously and to move from this forum into action that will ensure that something productive and concrete comes out of this forum, that it is not just a discussion but that action follows. I think you, Mr. Speaker, would agree that is so important.

The most important thing in that action, of course, is to continue to involve handicapped and disabled people in the decisions that affect them, as opposed to people in the various roles in authority making decisions on their behalf in what they feel is their best interest. They have to be part of it and they want to be full partners. I think that is the key to future decisions that are made.

I want to just say that I would urge the Government to move quickly on the initiatives that have been taken in the past on determining the status of handicapped access, for example, in Government buildings. A major study was started in 1987. There is an opportunity now to move forward on that to ensure these buildings are handicapped accessible. I hope that the Government will move quickly in that area.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate you on your initiatives and join our best wishes for the success of that forum.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank all Honourable Members. I have a statement for the House and I believe it is going to be passed around right now.

As Members know, the Manitoba Legislative Internship Program has been in operation since 1985. Each year, a total of six interns are chosen for the program. This year, two interns will be assigned to each of the three caucuses. Their term of employment is 12 months. During their term, interns perform a variety of

research and other tasks for private Members, as distinct from Ministers. They participate in a series of academic seminars on the political process in Manitoba and are required to prepare an in-depth research paper on some aspect of the legislative process.

Successful applicants for the program are chosen on the basis of their academic achievement and potential; personal qualities such as maturity, responsibility, judgment, tact and discretion; and a demonstrated interest in the legislative process.

My purpose today is to announce the names of the six young people who have been selected to serve as Manitoba's 1989-90 legislative interns. They will begin their assignments in September.

- Working with the Government caucus will be:

Ms. Shelly Gillert of the University of Manitoba; and Mr. Dennis Rogers of the University of Manitoba

- Working with the caucus of the Official Opposition will be:

Ms. Judy White of the University of Manitoba; and Ms. Shirley Forsyth of the Brandon University

- Working with the caucus of the Second Opposition Party will be:

Mr. Brett Eckstein of the University of Manitoba
Ms. Hillary Grammer of the University of Winnipeg.

Brief biographies of these newly appointed interns and an information paper on the program are attached to my statement, copies of which are being distributed to all Members.

I know that you will join me in welcoming the new interns when they take up their appointments.

ORDERS OF THE DAY THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz), for an address to his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in reply to his speech at the opening of the Session, the Honourable Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson).

* (1430)

Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me pleasure to -(Interjection)- I wear one, just do not call me one.

It gives me pleasure to be able to make a few remarks in response to the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, I would like to join previous speakers in complimenting you on your position and your performance over the past year. It has been a pleasure to know you and I think you have carried out your job with tact, diplomacy, responsibility and graciousness. I think your task is analogous to that of the Stanley Cup referees who must gently but firmly apply the rules, but let the players pretty well define the game and come in when it is necessary to protect particularly dangerous situations.

(The Acting Speaker, Mr. Neil Gaudry, in the Chair.)

In particular, in this respect I am reminded of the line by Don Benham in one of his recent columns a few weeks ago when he referred to this upcoming Session as one that would entail a great deal of sparring and feigning and the odd left jab and an occasional knee to the groin, so we look forward to you watching that there are not too many knees, Mr. Acting Speaker.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

I would also like to congratulate my colleague, the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) on his appointment to the post of Deputy Speaker. I am sure he will carry it out very capably and with graciousness again.

Further, I would like to congratulate the new Members of the Cabinet, the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) as Minister of Natural Resources, the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond) as Minister of Labour. They will be a welcome addition to the Cabinet on the opposite side, and I am sure they will carry out their duties capably and responsibly.

As well, I would like to congratulate the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) for his appointment as the House Leader for the Second Opposition Party. I am sure he will grow in the job and fill it capably. I think it was a particularly gracious and responsible action on the part of the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) having announced that this, the 34th Legislature, will be his last—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Once again, I would like to remind Honourable Members, those wishing to carry on private conversations can do so outside the Chamber. Members wishing to carry on private conversations can do so outside the Chamber.

The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) and the Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose), order, please. Is this thing live or what? The Honourable Member for St. Vital and the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs, for the third time, if you wish to carry on a private conversation, do so outside the Chamber.

Mr. Patterson: As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) having announced that this, the 34th Legislature, will be his last one, it was most courteous and thoughtful, both for the new House Leader (Mr. Ashton) and for his Party, for him to step down and give the new House Leader the opportunity to grow in the job and also have available his own capable and wise counsel.

Further, I would like to also congratulate the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) on her appointment to the post of Deputy Leader of the Second Opposition Party.

This is the first anniversary of coming into this House for most of us on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. I think it is time for a little looking back and reflecting

on what the experience has been over the past year. On the afternoon of April 27, 1988, a majority of the 20 of us who met for our first caucus meeting—and with the 20 of us meeting at our first caucus meeting—I think it is fair to say that the majority of us were considerably surprised to be there.

The Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings), a few days ago, on May 25 and I quote, said that “when we were elected to this House, we were given both an honour and a responsibility.” That is a very apt statement with which I agree heartedly and it is a great privilege to be in this House. Next month, I will reach the biblical three score and 10.

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): You do not look that old.

Mr. Patterson: Thirty-nine and holding, the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) says. I must say that last year, 1988, has been the absolute high point of my life.

(The Acting Speaker, Mr. Parker Burrell, in the Chair.)

Mr. Patterson: I make no apologies for saying that I and many of my colleagues a year ago were greenhorns. There is nothing wrong with that. It is not a negative term. Greenhorns bring maybe not a great deal of experience but the opportunity to learn. It has been very interesting for me during the past year. I think it is also one way that we learn. It has been interesting for me to just sit and observe and listen to the old pros of whom there are several in the House. I do not feel the intellectual inferior of any of Members of the House, my peers here, but obviously I do admit to having to learn a considerable amount about the political “smarts” so to speak.

Just to mention a few, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), the former House Leader, although we have some philosophical and political differences, he is an individual whose skills, whose knowledge of the Rules of the House, his use of the Rules of the House, are very capable and very impressive. In particular, I admire his great and skillful command and use of the English language.

With respect to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), Mr. Speaker, the Premier is far from being a wimp, as has been alleged in the past. He is an intelligent and capable individual. He represents our province and his high office very well and graciously on public occasions such as the farewell concert of Kazuhiro Koizumi, the departing conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, a week or so ago, and in the House, in his very gracious and eloquent tribute to the late Derek Bedson, a week ago or so.

However, the Premier tarnishes his image by stooping too often in the House to very low and personal attacks on the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). We might say it is particularly unstatesmanlike or unPremier-like behaviour. It is just not fitting of the high office.

Some years ago, Mr. Speaker, a friend who, although not a politician or a civil servant but one who has had

a long connection with and knowledge of Government in Manitoba, made this statement in a conversation that Sterling Lyon was Duff Roblin's hatchet man. Premier Roblin who did give, we must admit, reasonably good Government to Manitoba for 10 years was statesmanlike and stayed above the fray. I might say to the Premier that probably he should take a leaf from the now Senator Roblin's book and follow a similar strategy. He has many colleagues on his own benches who are particularly ready, willing and very able to take on such a task as was delegated at one time to the now member of the Bench.

* (1440)

During the past week or so, there has been a good bit of discussion from Members on the opposite side and also from the other Opposition Party about the Official Opposition, a great deal of empty rhetoric, much of it devoid of substance, a lot of motherhood type of statements, ideological buzzwords and so on, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

At first, I would like to discuss this word "power." Power has been used by many of our Honourable Members as though it is a dirty word. Now just what is wrong with power? You know the Opposition—I am sorry, the Members on the opposite side and occasionally the media have talked about my Leader, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), and her grab for power, power hungry and so on.

The Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) on May 24 referred to the Liberals' lust for power. Many years ago, I read somewhere in the media a statement by a prominent politician and a statesmanlike politician, I believe, but I cannot remember exactly who, but this politician said that politics is a struggle for power. Now I think we all realize that without power one cannot act, one cannot accomplish things. So I would put forth a hypothesis that a Leader is not much of a Leader if he or she has no desire for power. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) a little more than a year ago did not have power and wanted it. Now he has it. The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) does not have it, did not think a little over a year ago there was much chance of attaining it in the short term but certainly had her goals set on it in the medium or longer term, and also wants power. I would suggest that the Leader of the Second Opposition Party (Mr. Doer) also wants power.

So I would put forth if the Premier (Mr. Filmon) does not want to hold power or retain power, if the Leader of my Party (Mrs. Carstairs) does not want to attain power, they should both be summarily dismissed from their jobs. I would also put forth or admit I want power. I would say that every one of the other 56 of the Honourable Members, my colleagues, want power. I stand to be corrected but I think that is a reasonable assertion. The point with power of course is that, when one has it, it should be used wisely and compassionately.

Now with the Second Opposition Party, this particular Party is very good with the rhetoric. They have a very self-righteous and messianic approach to things. They had power and they were very surprised and shocked when they lost it. I would suggest they now are scared

witless of the many, many years before they have any chance of attaining power again. Therefore, they rant and rave about power and the desire for it on the part of others as though it is some dysfunctional type of attitude.

The Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) a day or two ago ranted and raved about opportunism and the lust for power of the Liberals. She was using opportunism in a negative sense of course. However, I think we would all agree that opportunity is something to be grasped. You know the old saying, opportunity knocks but once, and so on. It is part of the struggle, part of the game that as individuals or as groups or a Party that one must grasp the opportunities when they are there. The other Opposition Party gets all caught up in a religious fervour, a great deal of rhetoric, and seems to try to get across the point that only it can look after "the ordinary people." They think they have to do it all.

I think the Second Opposition Party should realize, firstly, that the word "profit" is not a dirty word. Our socioeconomic system here in Canada, in Manitoba and all the provinces is what has been called a mixed free enterprise or a modified capitalistic system. This system is perfectly capable of meeting the needs of all, whether they are entrepreneurs, managers, workers or whatever. We have essentially a basic free enterprise system, but unfettered free enterprise, unfettered capitalism has its downside. That is what the state is here to take care of and to modify. There is a role for the state in certain areas, but the state does not have to look after everything from cradle to grave, as the other Opposition Party would have it.

Now, in some of these attacks on our caucus, the Member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) a few days ago, on May 25 said, there is a time for politics and a time to do what is right. What a strange statement that is, Mr. Acting Speaker, coming from a politician and a Member of the front benches. Politics, I would put forth, is an honourable profession. Many have said that there is no higher calling than public service. We have many examples in Canada, both federally and provincially, of Members of all Parties who have served very selflessly in the interests of our country in general and our citizens. So why does the Member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae), I ask, make some distinction between politics and what is right?

Here is where we get into their rhetoric and motherhood statements, Mr. Acting Speaker. This word "right," what does it mean? I would suggest that for those of us who are Christians, the only definition of what is right, let us say, is the Ten Commandments. Beyond that, what we call right and wrong is how we as individuals define it or as groups, collectivities or organizations of some sort. In many of our daily affairs, what is right and what is wrong is a matter of our own values, our own perceptual screens and so on.

* (1450)

Therefore, when the Member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) says there is a time for politics and a time to do what is right, his definition of right is merely what

he or what his Party thinks should be done at any particular time. Of course, in a majority situation, they would hold power and be able to do it. I think the Member for Brandon West does his fellow politicians in all Houses and at all levels a disservice to somehow imply that in exercising the process of politics, that it is unethical and not right.

To mention some other attacks on our particular caucus, the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) on May 28 talked about management ability, entrepreneurial ability, the ability to meet a payroll. You know, the old business buzzword, for someone who is not in business, "Oh, he or she, who has never had a payroll, does not know what life is all about." Well, let me set a few things straight, Mr. Acting Speaker. Is that the right word, Acting, Deputy? -(Interjection)- It is Acting, yes.

First, I will just speak for myself, Mr. Acting Speaker. Although I came to this House from a late career in academia, I have had 22 years of working in the private sector. Fifteen years of that was working for a small store on the south side of Portage between Donald and Hargrave, for some 15 years, as I say. At that time or during part of that time, I was responsible for running a million dollar operation, when some of my honourable colleagues were in knee pants, if I might say. Our Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) is an entrepreneur in the hospitality, the hotel business. I am just mentioning, I am not running down everybody, but I just want to get some things on the record.

Our Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) has had many years of management with one of the best-run corporations in Canada, Canada Packers, and has also had executive responsibility for a major marketing board; our Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), the office manager for a local and well-known construction company; our Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), who has had a business career in computer consulting and sales; our Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans), born and brought up on a farm, has had his own small farm. As well, that same Member has been the head of a major department at the University of Manitoba with a multimillion dollar budget. Our Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) and our Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) have had management careers, management experience in Government.

We have city councillors. We have school board members who have some familiarity and expertise with the political process at that particular level, as have some of our Members opposite. We have Members from the professions of law and medicine, those who have taught in our school system, at the universities.

With all this, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would put forth and I feel very strongly that we have a great deal of strength in our diversity. The prospect of being thrust into power does not daunt me nor, I would say, any of us at all.

Let me just point out a little bit of history. If we go back a few years, in fact three decades to the year 1958, when the Roblin administration very unexpectedly found itself -(Interjection)- yes, I will not dispute that.

However, the Roblin administration very unexpectedly found itself thrust into power with a minority

Government. I recall at the time they only had one lawyer in the caucus, a young chap by the name of Lyon, at the age—I forget exactly—30 to 32, thereabouts. There was a great hullabaloo among the legal profession, Mr. Acting Speaker. Heavens, what are we going to do for an Attorney General? There has never been an Attorney General without a Q.C. You must have a Q.C. to be an Attorney General. That mold was broken by the Roblin administration.

An Honourable Member: We proved that wrong.

Mr. Patterson: Yes, that is right, you did and, along with that, many other greenhorns.

Let us carry on then to the year 1969 when the now Second Opposition Party found itself thrust into power with a minority Government and a great many greenhorns. Let me point out that in both these cases the rookies, the greenhorns, by far outnumbered those who had been in the House before, although admittedly neither Party was as quite far down the tube, we might say, as our Party has been for the past several years.

Nevertheless, these Parties, these administrations came in and managed to govern, so I would just like to point out then that we have no particular fear of being thrust into power and no qualms about our ability to cope and to govern wisely and well. The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), again a few days ago, referred to "power brokers," I think, in relation to both the Members opposite and to this particular caucus—

Mr. Connery: Looking to his right.

Mr. Patterson: Yes, looking to his right, the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) says. That is right, that is correct.

The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), referring again in a negative sense to businesspeople, power brokers and so on, the Member for Flin Flon should also realize that unions likewise are also power brokers and wield considerable power and influence within his own particular Party.

Now if I might mention a few things about the Throne Speech more specifically, first of all, in my own particular critic responsibility in the Workers Compensation Board, first let me thank and compliment the Minister, the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery), for his kind invitation to the Opposition Critics a few weeks ago to have a tour of the Workers Compensation Board because many changes have been taking place there over the past several months. I do not know why it was left open more or less at our convenience, but the Second Opposition Party for some reason felt they could or would not attend. I did, along with my aide. It was a very useful and educational tour, and I would like to thank the Minister for it.

However, I must go back and mention what was brought up by our House Leader, the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) yesterday, the problems at the Workers Compensation Board. I will again reiterate, as the Member for Osborne did, that the mess at the Workers Compensation Board is one that this

Government inherited from the previous NDP administration, so we are not laying the blame for the situation in any way at the door of the governing Party at present. However, it is their task of course to see that the mess is cleaned up and the problems are addressed. I do acknowledge that steps are being taken and there is some progress in that particular direction.

However, again I cannot repeat too strongly, as the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) said, that the most numerous calls, the most numerous cause of complaint for the calls that all of our Members get from constituents is about Workers Compensation cases, possibly a few of which might not have much merit but most do.

* (1500)

The delays in the disposal or the making of decisions or the appeals on many of the Workers Compensation Board cases are just not acceptable. They create an intolerable hardship on the Compensation Board clients who are affected by it, great financial hardship in meeting day-to-day costs of living, rental or mortgage payments and so on and so on.

While we must acknowledge that steps have been and are being taken to alleviate and correct this situation, I must point out to the Minister we will be monitoring this very closely. If significant progress is not made within the fairly short term, we will have to call the Government and the Minister to account because it has been slightly over a year now since it has been their responsibility.

In connection with this, the King Commission Report, the investigation into the Workers Compensation Board and its system names some 178 recommendations. By far, the vast majority of these were unanimous recommendations on the part of the board. Very few were majority recommendations with either the labour or the management representative dissenting. Frankly, I think one would be hard put to find any just cause for this or any Government not to implement at least unanimous recommendations of the board. We will be monitoring that very closely, Mr. Acting Speaker, in the coming weeks and months, just the progress that is being made and changes at the Workers Compensation Board.

Now, in this Throne Speech, I will just touch on a few things. Supposedly, we now have a stronger economy under this new administration of slightly over a year. However, we should be aware of, and point out, that Manitoba has been hit with some major plant closings during the past year, many of which might be the results or be attributable to the policies of the federal Tories in Ottawa and the free trade deal. I know we have the loss of 89 jobs at Ogilvie; 180 at Westcott; 37 at Marr's of Brandon, actual plant closings; and the announced closings of the Toro Company at Steinbach with 28 jobs; Molson's, I do not know the exact count but some significant number of jobs; Marks and Spencer, 45 jobs. Retail sales, private investment, housing starts are down, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The matter of the Health Department, we have the long-awaited reconstruction of the Municipal Hospitals

postponed again. The matter of our Lotteries, we have the announced opening of a casino before the report on the needs assessment of Lotteries. We are supposed to have great relations with the federal Tories in Ottawa. The Premier can pick up the phone at any time and call his friend, Brian. Those seem to have deteriorated. We have seen little progress in affirmative action in the Civil Service, in Government. The Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) a few days ago, in addressing the Speech, talked about thin gruel in relation to this side of the House. I would suggest he take a good look at the Throne Speech, and he might find that it is well applicable to that speech.

Finally, Mr. Acting Speaker, let me close on a positive note. I would like to thank the Member for Emerson (Mr. Albert Driedger), the Minister of Highways and Transportation, for cleaning up the front of this building. I had suggested to him way back last summer that this is a grand and beautiful building and it simply is terrible, or it was terrible, to be down on the mall and look up towards here and see a row of parked cars right along the top of the steps leading up to the main entrance. I suggested to him that should be a very strict 24-hour no-parking zone, that cars should not be allowed to clutter up the appearance of this grand building. So I compliment the Minister for the action that he did take, and there are permanent signs at either side at the top of the steps, "no parking at any time," temporary ones also put there during the day.

However, I would like to just point out for the record and mention to the Minister that on Monday night when I came back for the eight o'clock sitting, lo and behold there were three cars parked there. I asked the security people, how come these cars were there? Oh, well, we take down the temporary no parking signs at, I forget what time, seven o'clock or thereabouts. I said, well, what are these cars? Two of them were couriers and one was a Member whose parking spot had been occupied by someone else.

I would suggest to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger), through you, Mr. Acting Speaker, that particular area be a 24-hour-a-day absolutely no parking zone or no just cause for a Member or any couriers to be there. In fact, it should be a tow-away zone. We should have some pride in this building, particularly in view of the fact that just a few days ago it was designated as a heritage building.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, for the opportunity to make these few remarks. For the few brief reasons that I have stated, I will find that I will not be able to support the motion to approve this particular Speech from the Throne. Thank you.

* (1510)

Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis (St. Johns): Mr. Acting Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak on the main motion pertaining to the Speech from the Throne. Let me carry on from some of the points I had a chance to make briefly yesterday.

I concluded my remarks yesterday just prior to the vote on what I called an irresponsible motion of non-

confidence by the Liberal Party with a statement about what I believed described our motives for being here, by and large, certainly my reasons for entering a crazy life of politics to begin with. I believe the motives that really are at the root of all our thinking but not necessarily all of our actions. I talked a bit about political courage being the necessary ingredient in our being here, not political opportunism.

I was sincere yesterday in my feelings about what is so apparent to me here in this Legislature, that there is a great deal of political opportunism, political games and power plays occurring but very little political courage, very little remembrance of why we enter politics to begin with, at least most of us, very little indication about feelings of the anger, pain, love and hate that I mentioned yesterday, particularly the pain at seeing homeless in our streets, poverty in our communities, health hazards in our workplaces and daily threats to our environment and peace on this earth. I believe that is a criteria that must guide all of our actions but it also must be that characteristic by which we judge the Speech from the Throne.

There is a second criteria that is clearly related to that characteristic which I call political courage—they are clearly related points—and that is what we are doing as legislators to affect future generations in this province. What are we doing for the children of Manitoba? How are we worrying about the future of our human resources? I want to use another quote, a quotation from a Nobel Prize-winning poet by the name of Gabriella Mistral, with a few changes just to make it more gender neutral. I am sure my friends in the Conservative Caucus will appreciate that point.

Gabriella Mistral writes, "We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the foundation of life. Many things we need can wait. The child cannot, and right now is the time her bones are being formed, his blood is being made, her senses are being developed. To him, we cannot answer tomorrow. Her name is today."

I think if we stop for a moment and remember that priority, we can leave aside some of the political games, some of the personal attacks and some of that power grab and lust for power that I referred to yesterday. I think if we do that, we can find a way to co-operate and try to respond to the needs of Manitobans as we know them today, and thereby ensure a much better future for future generations.

When we take that second criterion, the question of whether or not we are responding to the needs of future generations, whether we are worrying about the priorities of our children here in society today, then I believe this Speech from the Throne fails, but equally, Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe that the response from the Liberal Opposition in this Legislature fails.

Just today, there was clear and stark evidence from the benches of the Conservative Government that children are not a priority of this Government, that pain at seeing poverty, homelessness and deprivation among the children of this province is not a worry of Members of this Government. We have seen it on a simple matter of ensuring that a child care program at the University

of Manitoba proceeds. We have seen it with respect to the much broader issue of child care. This Government had heard from expert after expert, had heard from child care worker after child care worker, had heard from parent after parent—

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Working family after working family.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: —and as my colleague, the Member for Churchill said, working family after working family, about the priorities of families with respect to child care.

They did not believe those recommendations. They did not believe what was really required was a continuation of a non-profit quality system of ensuring further spaces to respond to those long waiting lists of the thousands of children who are left in precarious unlicensed situations. They did not believe that it was absolutely critical to further the educational opportunities and training opportunities for our child care professional workers here in the Province of Manitoba. They did not believe that it was important to stand up to the Government of Canada and ensure that was a priority at that level.

What did they do, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They set up their own task force, they ignored all the existing studies, they ignored all the advice, they ignored its own advisory body, the Manitoba Child Care Association, and they decided to set up a task force. Yet that task force produced exactly the same recommendations, by and large, that they had been hearing, that we had been hearing year after year after year. They still do not believe the urgent priorities with respect to children of this province. They still do not believe that what is required is a commitment to ongoing resources and ongoing training opportunities for children and child care workers in this province.

It would have been a simple matter on the part of this Government to begin to take the steps necessary to show its commitment to the children of this province by beginning with a project, a modest project of \$120,000 for the University of Manitoba degree program in child care.

An Honourable Member: They could have done that.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: He has chosen not to, to this date.

It could have said, we recognize the incredible contribution that child care workers make to the human resources of this province, and said, we will set forth a course of action that will put you on a solid basis of remuneration and recognition. They have chosen not to. They have instead chosen to fall back on their ideological rhetoric, their blinkered approach to this whole area and, time after time, again dismissed this whole topic, dismissed the children of our province by suggesting that we are not worrying enough about profit, we are not worrying enough about private companies in this regard, we are not worrying enough about flexibility in a profit sector of our economy. Time after time, they have rejected policies and reasoned approaches to the child care field because of this preoccupation with the free marketplace.

I hope that through this kind of situation that we have now, this minority Government and with some co-operation from Members to my right, Members of the Liberal Party, we will be able to work together to try to move this Government in the right direction.

* (1520)

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, I said I always hold out that hope. I always hold out the hope that is possible. The evidence to date suggests that it is not. I pointed yesterday to some clear examples where Members of the Liberal Party, who say they are ready to govern, who say they have policies, who say they have a program, are prepared to take exactly the same line and sing exactly the same tune as Members across, the Members of the Conservative Government.

They want us to join with them in defeating this Government when, on a basic issue, on a critically important issue like child care, like the future of children in this province, the Members of the Liberal Party are not prepared to stand up and say, quality day care is our priority, non-profit day care must receive Government funds, and reject their silly notions of making profit off the backs of children.

You heard it again today, the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson). I thought I was hearing a broken record that I had been hearing for the last year from Members of the Conservative Government. What did he say, Mr. Acting Speaker? He said he wanted to teach the NDP another lesson in saying "profit is not a dirty word." We heard that time and time again from the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) and all of her other colleagues. All they have ever said in this debate is "profit is not a dirty word."

Where is the policy of Members of the Liberal Party? Where is the policy of Members of the Conservative Government when it comes to the quality of life for children in this province? What are they prepared to do? What is their platform? What is their program? They want us to join with them and possibly cause an election, when we do not even know where they stand on a critical issue like this. Let us hear it. They could have had the decency to come forward before the opening of this Legislature, of this Session, and say, this is our program, this is what we believe when it comes to child care. This is how we will address the long waiting lists of parents and children trying to get into day care centres. This is how we will address precarious unlicensed conditions of our children. This is how we will deal with child abuse. This is how we will deal with the incredible burden on working parents trying to combine family and work responsibilities.

But, Mr. Acting Speaker, you look at their platform, the platform released on May 15 prior to the opening of the Legislative Session, entitled "Carstairs Unveils Liberal Agenda." Well, do you see the word "children" in this release anywhere? Do you see the word "family policy" anywhere? Do you see anything reflecting the priorities of the day with respect to the responsibilities and the burdens that working families and working parents have to face these days? No, there is not a word about the difficulties facing working families today.

There is not a mention of the crisis in our child care system brought on by Members of the Conservative Government. There is not a word about physical abuse facing children, about sexual abuse facing children. There is not a word about the special needs. There is not a word about any single matter touching on the lives, in a direct way, of children and families in our economies.

Instead, we get a few trite, broad generalizations. For example, when it comes to the environment, something that is inextricably linked with priorities pertaining to children, what is the main thrust of the Liberal Party? The main thrust of the Liberal program will be better compliance with existing legislation.

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): We are not the Government yet. Wait.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: The Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) says we are not the Government yet. The Member for St. Norbert would like Members of the New Democratic Party, who always operate on the basis of principle, would like Members of the New Democratic Party and would like the voters, the people of Manitoba—(Interjection)—The Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) has suggested that the Members of this Party, the New Democratic Party, and the people of Manitoba should put faith in a Party that is politically bankrupt, has shown no sign—

Mr. Angus: Mr. Acting Speaker, on a point of order. The Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) is putting words in my mouth. I suggested that she speak against the Throne Speech and vote against the Government and let the people decide who should govern this province by bringing them down. Thank you.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I do not want to engage in an exchange of this sort with the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), but I am sure that the record will show what he has said, and it will in fact show that he has admitted that the Liberal Party has no platform right now, has no policies right now, has no intention of dealing right now with the difficult issues facing children and families in this province. He has made my point. He has said, wait until the election, when all the evidence around us suggests on every count that matters to working families, to ordinary people right across this province, they are exactly the same as Members of the Conservative Government. They are as right wing and ideological and self-serving as Members of the Conservative Party.

I have heard a lot of guffawing from Members of the Conservative Party during my remarks about the Liberal Opposition. However, let us keep in mind that I certainly, and most of my colleagues, all of my colleagues, I believe, do not like the Speech from the Throne. We do not like the Speech from the Throne for reasons that have been mentioned time and time again. That Speech from the Throne has no vision. That Speech from the Throne does not resonate with respect to past actions of the Conservative Government and with excellent expectations of the people of Manitoba.

So let there be no misunderstanding here in this Chamber. The Members of the Conservative Party are

no more free of guilt when it comes to irresponsible action in responding to the needs and priorities of Manitobans—tweedledee and tweedledum in the clearest sense.

I have mentioned the Liberal Opposition did not care to reference the urgent priorities of families and children in their so-called agenda upon which we were supposed to feel some empathy and some understanding and join with them and defeat a do-nothing, timid, cautious Conservative Government.

One of the most glaring statements in that feeble, do-nothing press release by the Liberal Opposition is that the Liberals will be calling for a provincial strategy for dealing with the Free Trade Agreement and a worker retraining program. It is hard for all of us to understand how that statement shows any understanding and sensitivity about the urgent economic problems facing Manitoba today. It sends us nothing but a message of hypocrisy on the part of the Liberal Opposition. It sends us nothing but a confusing signal about their understanding of the Free Trade Agreement and makes us wonder whether or not they have full understanding of the impact of that Free Trade Agreement, and makes us wonder whether or not their opposition to the Free Trade Agreement was based on political opportunism or political courage.

I say that on the basis of a great deal of evidence that has been presented to us on a regular basis. We only have to look at the opposition of Members of the Liberal Party to something as critical and as important to the impact that the Free Trade Agreement will have on Canadian society as plant closure. What did Liberal Opposition Members do when it came to presentations by Members of the New Democratic Party on substantive resolutions to the issues of workers facing plant closure? They indicated solid opposition to attempts to bring forward, to work together to co-operate on legislation that would protect workers in the face of plant closure.

* (1530)

It is hard to accept statements about retraining in the face of the Free Trade Agreement. It is hard to accept their opposition to the Free Trade Agreement when they are not prepared to act on one of the most blatant outgrowths of the Free Trade Agreement, on one of the most obvious outgrowths of the Free Trade Agreement, and that is of plants closing right across this country because of that very dangerous pact.

I would hope we would all recognize that we are facing a very serious economic problem here in the Province of Manitoba. The statistics have been repeated time and time again. It has been mentioned, and I hope the Members of the Conservative Government have been listening and have been trying to reconcile the fact that Manitoba has the highest unemployment rate since the recession. I hope it has meant something to Members of the Conservative Government when it is pointed out that the unemployment rate in Winnipeg is just one-half a percentage point lower than the rate in St. John's, Newfoundland. I can tell you that the unemployed people in St. Johns, Winnipeg, my

constituency, are devastated to hear the response of this Government when faced with an unemployment rate of proportions equal to that of St. John's, Newfoundland. There is no one in the New Democratic Party who is prepared to accept unemployment rates of any magnitude.

Mr. Connery: We do not want to see one individual unemployed who wants a job.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: The Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) has pointed out, quite correctly, that Members of the New Democratic Party do not want to see one person unemployed in this province, if I heard him correctly.

Mr. Connery: The Member for St. Johns clearly heard me say that the Government and I think all Members of the Legislature, I would add to that, do not want to see any unemployed, but she turns it around and says that I said the NDP do not want to see any unemployed. I hope they do not but it was all Members, but this Government also that does not want to see unemployed people. I wish the Member would be honest and factual in her deliberations and her speech.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I would like the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) to know that I honestly thought I heard him say that we were concerned about anyone being unemployed in this country. Perhaps I thought I heard him say that because it is generally accepted policy on the part of Members of his counterpart, the Conservative Government in Ottawa, that a certain level of unemployment is acceptable.

Let us keep in mind that today, on this very day that the Throne Speech of the Government of Manitoba will be voted on is the day when the Conservative Government in Ottawa has decided to table its legislation cutting back on unemployment insurance, changing very drastically the principles upon which our unemployment insurance system has been based, and putting hundreds and thousands and millions of Canadians in precarious situations, in difficult economic situations because of that kind of right-wing policy.

So it should come as no surprise that we in the New Democratic Party make the assumption because there is nothing to counter that assumption, make the assumption that Members of the Conservative Government and indeed Members of the Liberal Party, based on what they have not said around the unemployment crisis we are facing today, and based on what their counterparts in Ottawa have done when in Government and I made reference to that yesterday. It is clear both Parties generally accept a certain level of unemployment and believe it is healthy for our economy.

It has historically been the case that Members of the New Democratic Party do not believe it is acceptable to have any level of unemployment. That is why this current situation, where St. Johns, Winnipeg is facing just about the same unemployment rate as St. John's, Newfoundland is of such concern to Members in the New Democratic Party and why we expected the Throne

Speech to deal with those issues, to deal with that crisis, to come forward with an industrial strategy, to come forward with an economic plan, to come forward with a job strategy, but it did not.

The Liberal Party has been no more responsible in its response to that kind of economic crisis we are facing in Manitoba. There is nothing in its agenda for action. If they say this is not their plan for dealing with the current problems Manitobans face, there has been nothing further in the Leader of the Opposition's (Mrs. Carstairs) speech. There has been no more detail revealed in any one of the Members of the Liberal Opposition's speeches. There has been no platform presented dealing with this most critical issue facing Manitobans. There are other examples of the kind of economic crisis we are all facing.

It is no secret that the gap between the lowest and the highest paid workers in Manitoba, in this country, is increasing as a result of Tory policies and Tory approaches. We cannot ignore the fact there are thousands of Manitobans living below the poverty level and, to put a precise figure on it in Canada, some four million people living below the poverty level. We cannot ignore the human results of those statistics, the feelings of unfairness in parts of this province, the feelings that visible minority Canadians and Manitobans must have in the midst of rising incidents of racism, the terrible circumstances facing homeless men and women sleeping in bus shelters, the crisis of aboriginal Manitobans finding themselves in a very difficult economic situation and a deepening housing crisis. It is hard to reconcile all of that and all of those feelings with what is happening around us of late.

With the support of this Conservative Government for elitist policies when it comes to housing, for support for luxury condominiums to satisfy the desires of the rich, all at a time when Manitobans at growing numbers are finding themselves in horrible housing conditions, at a time when the housing needs of aboriginal Manitobans are so great, at a time when record numbers of Canadian children go to school without breakfast.

The noise coming from the Conservative benches suggests there is some embarrassment at recent developments pertaining to their housing policy, if one can give it such a name. My colleague, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) and the Housing Critic for the New Democratic Party (Mr. Cowan), is no doubt quite correct when he says that this is a housing policy, a Conservative housing policy, because it is expected. It has been demonstrated by recent developments that this Government, the Conservatives, pander to the needs of the rich and support elitist housing policies, that have not been able to come forward with a single concrete proposal dealing with the homelessness of Inner City residents, dealing with -(Interjection)-

* (1540)

Mr. Acting Speaker, on a point of order, the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) is reflecting on Members in this House. He is reflecting on my behaviour and my attitudes by asking the question, how much

does this Member, meaning me, contribute to charities, contribute to causes, I believe the words were. Now, I would think that no Member of this House should reflect on anyone's commitment to the economic and social and, may I add, spiritual needs and life in this province. For the last couple of days we have heard, no doubt out of embarrassment of their own actions, they have commented on other Members' individual personal behaviour. I do not think there is a place for that kind of comment in this Chamber. I would ask the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) to withdraw that comment just as his colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), withdrew his comments the other day when he did reflect on the spirituality of Members on this side of the House.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I did rise on a point of order and I will make my request once more. My point of order is that the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) chose to make comments reflecting on an individual in this Chamber and made comments pertaining to my commitment -(Interjection)- He said I do not have a point of order. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker, I regret that it is possible to get away with those kind of comments in this Chamber. I think it is appalling that Members, like the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) have the gall to stand up and question other individuals' active participation in Manitoba society. I think it is a horrific statement on what is acceptable in this Chamber. I would have hoped that the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) would have had the decency to immediately stand up and withdraw those comments.

I can understand why those comments are emerging from that side of the House. I can understand the embarrassment that they are feeling when presented in very clear detail the kind of economic decline that we are seeing in this province and the kind of horrific living conditions that many citizens of this province find themselves living in. I believe that they are embarrassed by their lack of action in response to those changing circumstances in our society.

For Members of the New Democratic Party, it is unconscionable that a minority can bask in unheard-of luxury, the kind of luxury that has been contributed to by the College Green proposal and the Ladco proposal, while increasing numbers of Canadians are struggling for basic survival and basic dignity. In our view, Mr. Acting Speaker, in the minds of Members of the New Democratic Party, it is unconscionable that kind of elitist policy can be taking place, while hospitals and schools are in decline and not receiving the resources they need to meet the long waiting lists, patients in need of heart surgery, or to respond to the special needs of children in our public education system and to juxtapose that kind of policy that sees no money going towards the special needs of children in our public school system while millions are redirected to private-for-profit schools, only to see that money used not for special needs of children, not to address the difficult situations that children find themselves in, but instead to reduce the deficits of private-for-profit schools. In our view, that is totally unacceptable and intolerable.

It is unconscionable, in our view, that going into the 21st Century that thousands of Manitobans should be

living in poverty. It need not be. The question that clearly must be asked today is why? Why does this kind of discrepancy exist in our society? Why do these inequities persist? Why do we see this kind of poverty in the midst of luxury? I think the question can only be answered if we go back to what I said earlier and try to analyze where this Government is coming from, where the federal Conservative Government is coming from and try to analyze their motives in the context of that ideological blindness, that kind of fixation on a free marketplace, to try to remember that conservatism believes that the best role for Government is really no role at all.

There are days, many more days of late, when one wonders if this is not the same philosophy of the Liberal Party as well. It is a philosophy where decisions made in the private sector, in the minds of Conservatives and perhaps Liberals but where decisions made in the private should not only dictate what prices and commodities should be, but should also have the ability to influence what priorities of our society as a whole should be.

I talked yesterday about both the Liberals and Conservatives in terms of an orgy of infatuation with political Party. Today I think it is important to recognize what we are also facing, certainly from Conservatives in this Chamber but possibly from both Conservatives and Liberals, an orgy of marketplace infatuation.

What happens with that kind of infatuation, in that kind of single mindedness, in that kind of blinkered mentality, is the unemployed get lost, the people needing day cares get lost, the poor get lost. The Throne Speech may attempt to camouflage some of that right-wing ideological perspective. It tries to hide some of those tendencies by throwing in a smattering of so-called progressive terminology but a smattering of progressive terminology like—and I do not know how many times it is in the Speech from the Throne but the words do not match the reality—and that is equal opportunities, self-help with respect to communities, family services and the list goes on.

All of those, the usage of those words and those concepts will not hide the fact that it is this Government, this Conservative Government that in one year has managed to erode our non-profit quality child care system, stalled a very good program and solid program of progress being made towards pay equity in all sectors of our economy, has cut back money to the unemployed self-help centre, has cut back a million dollar fund to help single parents on welfare dealing with the needs of their children as they enter the start of a school year. It is a Government which has decided to cut back any money to the Labour Education Centre. It has disenfranchised churches from its capital spending under the Manitoba Community Places Program. It has frozen all action on affirmative action and, as I just said, put millions of dollars into luxury condominiums through land deals while hundreds and thousands go homeless in our province.

All the rhetoric and generalizations in the Throne Speech will not hide the Government's blatant disregard for that fact, and it will not hide the Government's blatant disregard of the democratic process. Just like

his counterpart in Ottawa, Brian Mulroney, the Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Filmon) does not see Government as having a legislative activist role in society, even when they are elected by a majority of ordinary people.

* (1550)

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Let me begin, Mr. Acting Speaker, to send my best wishes to the Speaker of this House who has demonstrated over the last number of months his ability to remain calm under pressure, to keep the level of decorum in this House at least at a tolerable level and, because of his affable nature, he enjoys the respect of, I am sure, every Member in this Chamber. I am delighted to add my voice to the chorus of congratulation which greets the Speaker as he takes on his responsibilities.

To the Deputy Speaker, my colleague, the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski), let me say that a finer choice could not have been made. He is a man of great charm, gentility, intelligence and sensitivity, and I am sure that he will grace the position which he now holds.

May I also say that we congratulate the appointments of the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) and the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond) to the Treasury benches, and may I add that we on this side of the House were surprised that it did not happen a little sooner.

After all, the Member for Lakeside is the dean of this Legislature, has held a number of various portfolios in Cabinets that stretch back to the era of Duff Roblin, and it was certainly our view all along that he belongs not only on the Treasury benches, Mr. Acting Speaker, but in the front row, next to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), where his guidance and experience can help this Government, so often afloat and unsure of its moorings.

To the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond), we also applauded that appointment and could not understand why she was not appointed to the Cabinet earlier. Perhaps in both cases, internal Conservative politics were at work. We on this side of the House, Mr. Acting Speaker, have no way of verifying that. All we can do is welcome them to the Treasury benches and wish them well in their responsibilities.

To the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), who is now the House Leader for the Second Opposition Party, we wish him well, he has big boots to fill. The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has been the House Leader for a number of years and his wily understanding of the Rules and Procedures of this House are a model for all those who seek to come to great understanding of our Rules and our Procedures.

We have been listening for the last number of days to a barrage of speeches by Members of the New Democratic Party and you would think, to read them in Hansard or to listen to them, that we were the Government. Their guns have been trained squarely upon us. We are not the Government. We respected the decision of the people of Manitoba in April of 1988, and we will respect the judgment of the people when they are asked to go to the polls again. I will have a

few more comments to make about the unprincipled, unprecedented rhetoric coming from the NDP Caucus later in my remarks.

I remember eight or nine months ago when I had the opportunity to make some comments on the first Speech from the Throne. The position that our Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) took and that our caucus took was that this Government deserved a chance to govern, that Throne Speeches were of a general nature and we would give them a year to see how they would govern. That Throne Speech was full of banalities, many promises which have subsequently been broken, but as a responsible Opposition, Mr. Acting Speaker, the position we took was the people of Manitoba have spoken and the Tories have a right to govern. We have been watching them govern for a year now and it is time to take stock.

Maybe the best question to ask is, are we better off today than we were a year ago when this Government took power? Let us look at some very basic indicators to make some kind of judgment on whether or not Manitobans and our province are better off today than they were in April of 1988.

First of all, the economy, the unemployment figure for the Province of Manitoba is at the highest level it has been in years and for the first time since 1966 is higher than the Canadian national average. This is an economy which is diversified, that is not dependent on one commodity, on one industry but has mining and forestry and the service industry and agriculture and a large metropolitan area, manufacturing.

With all of the diversification of economic mix we have in this province, there is no excuse for this province to have an unemployment rate which exceeds the national average. There is no excuse for the City of Winnipeg to have an unemployment rate marginally below the City of St. John's, Newfoundland, with its chronic unemployment problems. Are the people of Manitoba better off today than they were a year ago? No.

How about jobs which have been lost? Plant closures: Canada Packers, 90; Ogilvie Oats, 89; Wescott, 180; Marr's in Brandon, 37; Toro in Steinbach, 28; Marks and Spencer, right here in downtown Winnipeg, 45, and this from a Government which promised a better economic climate for business. If the economic climate is so conducive for growth of business in this economy, in this province, why are there plant closures? Why is our unemployment rate as high as it has been in years? This Government has not delivered on its campaign promise or on its promise in the last Throne Speech to create jobs in Manitoba. They will be held accountable by the people of Manitoba.

There is no co-ordinated strategy to retrain workers or to upgrade their skills. Instead, we have a transfer of responsibility, a kind of a bureaucratic shuffle from the Ministry of Economic Security to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) who is already, we might add, overburdened by a very heavy workload. So now he has more to do. It is his job to make sure that people who are out of work are retrained, that their skills are developed and upgraded. If any indication of the last

12 months is to be our guide, we have every reason to be concerned.

Retail sales are down and are slumping badly, the worst of any province in the country, this from a Government that was going to stimulate consumer spending, this from a Government that was going to supply the necessary confidence to give the small businesspeople in this province some reason to rejoice in their prospects. They are not rejoicing in their prospects. We are in the worst retail sales slump in a long time.

Housing starts are down. What would those in the building construction industry say about their prospects looking forward? Are they better off today than they were a year ago?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs, and Native Affairs): Ladco is. Ladco is better off, Jim. The rest of them may not be.

Mr. Carr: If the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) wants to engage in a conversation about developers, we can save that for a little further on in the speech.

Average weekly wages are down. What better indicator to general economic performance than the weekly wage that Manitobans are earning. It is down. Are wage earners of Manitoba better off today than they were a year ago? No, they are not. Now, get this from a Government that promised to create an environment within which business would flourish. Bankruptcies are up. Not only are they up, personal bankruptcies are up so that we are now ranked 8th in the country. Corporate bankruptcies are up so that we now rank 10th in the country. The last time I counted, there were only 10 provinces. We will deal with the Yukon and Northwest Territories later on.

* (1600)

The Social Planning Council, in its report of the last couple of days, reminds us that we have a problem in integrating newcomers to our city and our province. There has been a growth of 70 percent of urban Natives living in Winnipeg between 1981 and 1986. The unemployment rate in that community is dreadfully high. It is unacceptably high and we are looking for a vision and a plan of action from this Government to solve that problem. We have not seen it yet.

Worst of all, people are leaving the province. Manitoba has fewer people today than it had a year ago when this Tory Government took office, the first time since 1981, Mr. Acting Speaker. Bankruptcies are up; unemployment is up; retail sales are down; housing starts are down; people are leaving this province. What a fine record from this group in this Government across the way, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Let us deal with the health care industry. The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) says, if only he would have spoken yesterday afternoon.

An Honourable Member: They keep the best for last.

Mr. Carr: The Member for Churchill will have to consult his conscience about what happened yesterday

afternoon, Mr. Acting Speaker. He may have an hour and a-half to change his mind.

The Health Advisory Committee was set up. It took till November before it was appointed. It did not meet until January and there has been no initiative announced since. That is this Government's record in the health care field. There are crises in our acute care hospitals. The neonatal unit in Thompson, the obstetrics unit in St. Boniface, psychiatry at Seven Oaks, and throughout the province there is a shortage of psychiatrists. Are the families of those patients better off today than they were a year ago? No.

Waiting lists for major surgery, a year ago, it took four months of waiting before you would be ready to undergo major cardiac surgery. Today it is nine months. Are those patients and those families better off today than they were a year ago? No, Mr. Acting Speaker.

How about the attitude of this Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) when he confronts those with whom he should be in partnership to create a better health care industry and health care for our citizens? What did he do when he was faced with the desperate situation at Klinik? He confronted those volunteers and staff who run that very important and deserving health institution in this city. Did he offer compromise? Did he look for a solution to their problem? No, he confronted them.

How about the situation in the Municipal Hospitals? These patients have been waiting for years for a facility that treated them in a humane way and gave them an environment with which they could live their difficult lives in dignity. Has this Government done one single thing to improve the lot of those patients in the Municipal Hospitals? No—more broken promises.

An Honourable Member: Made it worse.

Mr. Carr: Nurses marched on the steps of this Legislature complaining about working conditions and complaining about their own situation in the health care system in this province. What did the Minister of Health do? He confronted them. Did he treat them as partners, as professionals? No. He treated them as adversaries, as the enemy, and said, do not confront us. That is not the way to deal with this Government. Well, nurses, are they better off today than they were a year ago in this province? No, I do not think so.

So, by every objective criteria, our health care system is in worse shape today than it was when this Government took power.

Now, let us look at federal-provincial relations. This Government was elected with great fanfare, that this First Minister could pick up the phone any time and get a hold of his buddy, the Prime Minister, and they would sing together. Well, they are not singing the same tune, Mr. Acting Speaker, they are not singing at all.

Now, let us look at the results of this new era of federal-provincial relations ushered in by these Torie twins, the Bobbsey twins of Torydom, the twins are in Ottawa and here. Well, let us look.

The Port of Churchill, now what kind of action have we gotten out of the federal Government on the Port

of Churchill? No grain shipments this year announced by the federal Minister in the House of Commons informing the people of Manitoba. What kind of relationship does this Government have with the Government of Canada when we do not even get the courtesy of—well, the Minister of Government Services and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) who is responsible for the Port of Churchill makes a signal which Hansard cannot pick up, Mr. Acting Speaker, but he is indicating that the relationship is not very good. I agree with him, the relationship is terrible. None of the arguments that he has made—and I give him credit for all the sincerity in the world—has made a whit of difference because he speaks to those who will not listen.

How about the Sustainable Development Centre? We have heard it announced twice now. We heard the Prime Minister in a rhetorical flourish at the United Nations, which said Winnipeg would become the home of a centre of international excellence in the field of sustainable development. We then had the announcement made once again in the federal Throne Speech, but where is the money? Is it going to be a \$5 million centre, \$20 million, \$100 million?

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Try a couple of thousand.

Mr. Carr: My colleague from Fort Garry says, try a couple of thousand dollars. We might even be content to get started with a couple of thousand dollars. My colleague from Fort Garry also pointed out, in his very excellent speech in response to this Throne document, that Maurice Strong, a very distinguished Manitoban, said that this Sustainable Development Centre may be nothing but a switchboard, a switchboard with no real substance or role to play. So again, we have the promise of a federal Prime Minister and the inability to follow up in this Government to make sure that those promises are delivered. There is no evidence yet.

How about the Laboratory Centre for Disease Control? Have we heard anything about this very important international centre in the last six months, Mr. Acting Speaker? I do not think so. Is there any evidence that we are moving closer to a realization of that very important campaign promise? No. It is getting dimmer every day as time moves on and those who made the promises feel they do not have to deliver on their commitment. The people of Manitoba will decide.

Now, how about the Centre for Aging and Rehabilitation Product Design, Another \$23 million project that was announced with fanfare, pomp and ceremony by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst), with the federal Minister of Health? They were there. They said the Western Diversification Office was going to put up \$9.6 million, the Province of Manitoba was going to provide operating money of \$9.6 million, and \$4.7 million was going to come from the sale of publications. That is an awful lot of money. Mr. Acting Speaker, you know, one time I was in the magazine business and I know how many subscriptions one has to sell to make \$4.7 million, but I can tell you this, there is no movement on bringing that international centre to Winnipeg either.

Yet another federal-provincial initiative, which is nothing more to date, and we will give the Government all the credit in the world when the announcements are made. No board of directors has yet been announced, 500 jobs were promised in the private sector, but we do not have any evidence at all.

How about the Western Diversification Office? Manitoba is not receiving its fair share of Western Diversification money. As a matter of fact, the last time we had figures on the subject, it was something like 8 percent. Eight percent of the total was going to the Province of Manitoba. Is this the special relationship that the First Minister of this Province (Mr. Filmon) has with the Prime Minister of Canada? If that is the special relationship, I think we can well live without it for that kind of special treatment. In the last Budget, Michael Wilson tells us there will be \$40 million cut from the Western Diversification Office at the same time they are increasing the staff complement by 113.— (Interjection)— Yes, that was the leaky Budget. So Manitoba's share has been less than what we have every right believe.

* (1610)

Where are the earlier agreements? Have they been renegotiated? How many millions of dollars are at stake? Again the special relationship has done nothing. If we look at Mr. Wilson's Budget, we see the way Portage la Prairie was treated and the City of Winnipeg. Are the people of Portage la Prairie better off today than they were a year ago? I do not think so, \$20 million dollars, a \$20 million poison pill administered by the federal Tories to the people of Portage la Prairie.

The economic spinoff is a devastation to that community. Has the First Minister been able to pick up the phone and call his buddy, his Tory twin, Mr. Mulroney. He is getting a busy signal. He cannot get an appointment. His calls are not returned. He cannot make the case so he goes to the Minister of Defence, Mr. McKnight, and says what can you do for the people of Portage la Prairie? The Minister says nothing and the Premier comes back and he says, "Well, I guess maybe we will have to go and talk to the Prime Minister."

You do not go to the person who can say "no," you go to the person who can say "yes." It is the Prime Minister who can say "yes." So much for the special relationship. How about the Kapyong Barracks in Winnipeg transferred to the City of Edmonton at a tremendous economic loss to the City of Winnipeg, in the Premier's own riding, mind you. Just another indication of that special relationship, that of the federal Budget. The Tory Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province are singled out for special treatment by Mr. Wilson. If he cannot make his arguments, then he is not doing his job.

Let me correct myself. It is really in the riding of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), who therefore should take a share of the responsibility for not being able to go and talk to the powers that be in Ottawa to get that dreadful decision reversed. It is with no pride that he claims kinship with this issue.

How about CN Rail? We were told there would be 188 layoffs in the Province of Manitoba. What did the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) tell us? He said that he found out from a vice-president of CN, a Mr. Frank Campbell, that only three or four jobs were to be lost. This telephone call apparently took place some days before the announcement which revealed that 188 jobs would be lost. So much for the special relationship between this Government and Ottawa.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Some say that it is because of our position on Meech Lake that we are being singled out by the federal Tories—

An Honourable Member: . . . Tory position on that—

Mr. Carr: We are going to get to that. We are being somehow punished by the federal Government for our position on the Meech Lake Accord in all of those areas that I have been discussing over the last little while. I do not think so. I do not think any politician in this country is that vindictive, that petty, not even the Prime Minister of Canada who has been accused of even worse things than petty and vindictive. I think it is because Manitoba is so poorly represented in the governing caucus in Ottawa and because this Government has no lines of communication with that Government either.

I would like to take a minute or two to put a few thoughts on the record about the Meech Lake Accord. Let me first say that Manitoba has had an historical role to play in the evolution of our country. The very entry of Manitoba into Confederation in 1870 was a symbol of the tolerance and capacity of our nation to live together, French and English, side by side, where guarantees were made to French-speaking citizens of Manitoba to have rights that they could call their own and were guaranteed in the Constitution through The Manitoba Act. We have a special role to play in the constitutional development of our country. It is an historic role and we continue to play it. We are playing it right now as this Legislature meets.

Our view is that we have a responsibility to express Manitoba's position on the Canadian Constitution, not only how we think that we as Manitobans fit into that Constitution, but also our vision of Canada as a whole. Let me say it was the Leader of this Party (Mrs. Carstairs) who took a principled position which was not politically popular at the time, against a backdrop of three federal Parties in support of the Accord, with a backdrop of 10 provincial Premiers who had signed the document. It was the Leader of the Liberal Party in Manitoba who said no, this is bad for Canada, I will not go along with it. When I hear people accuse the Member for River Heights, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) of political opportunism on the Meech Lake Accord, I get angry because it was not opportune for her to take the principled position she did back in June 1987.

Since then, others have changed their minds and that is fine. We do not criticize politicians for saying, we were wrong, we agree with you, you are right, we

are with you. We were delighted when the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer), who was moving his party inch by inch towards rejection of the Meech Lake Accord as it is currently worded, until one day he lost his slide rule and he went a yard, and we accepted that as a positive step for Canada and for Manitoba. Then there was great satisfaction when the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province determined on the 18th of December that he also believed that the Meech Lake Accord could be improved, and we supported the withdrawal of that Accord through this Legislature.

We did not criticize the Premier (Mr. Filmon). We did not criticize the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) for changing their mind. We welcomed it because when you are on the right side of an issue, you are always looking for allies. We were looking for allies, we welcomed them as allies. We are now hopeful that as a Legislature we can come up with a collective opinion on Manitoba's role in constitution-making and we welcome that.

To sum up federal-provincial relations, they have been poor. They were poor under the NDP and they are dreadful under this Tory Government, in spite of the fact that they have Tory cousins in Ottawa, where no relationship exists to speak of.

Let us talk for a moment about seniors. There were many promises made in the last Throne Speech about seniors. They turned out to be hollow promises. Seniors were going to be informed, they were going to be consulted. The Seniors Directorate was going to coordinate strategy, but that did not happen. I do not blame the Minister responsible for Seniors in the last Legislature. He was appointed to that position by a Premier. He is not expecting these kind words from me but he is going to get them. The former Minister of Seniors did not have the support of his Government. If he would have had the support of his Government, then he would have been a more effective Minister than he turned out to be. He was a rooky Minister. He did his best. He is a sincere man, he is an honest man. It is not his fault. It is the fault of the person who appointed him there.

* (1620)

We wish the new Minister well. He has very important responsibilities and we will support the positive initiatives he takes. He is off to a shaky start though. They forgot to put him on the Human Services Committee of Cabinet. Oh no, what an oversight! The Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) is not on the Human Services Committee of Cabinet. We think that it is no doubt an oversight and will be corrected in short order.

Elder abuse paper, the elder abuse paper was expected in October of 1988. It is late, and now it is later, and the promise is for some time in 1989 or 1990. The Minister should know that this is no laughing matter. The issue of elder abuse is one of the most important issues facing our senior community. It is a difficult problem, it is controversial, it deals with families, but it must be addressed. The delay that we have been

exposed to for a working paper to discuss the issues in this Legislature is long overdue, and the pressure will build on this Minister to produce it.

Home care, seniors' transport, the 55-Plus Program, the whole issue of drug patent legislation, I asked some questions in the House today and was not given a very satisfactory answer by the Minister—going to have to move along here, Mr. Speaker.

Urban Affairs, we are looking to changes in The City of Winnipeg Act. We are looking to some statement from this Government that it has an urban strategy. Did you know that there are 105,000 feet of vacant office and retail space on Portage Avenue in a very narrow downtown area? We cannot attract people to downtown. We had the default on a mortgage by the Portage Place development, the housing component of that development, just this week. The vacancy rate downtown is 15 percent and this project is in trouble. We cannot attract people to live downtown, we cannot attract people to work downtown.

The Forks development, I hope that there are no plans to put housing in the Forks Development. We have housing developments now in south St. Boniface and the Fort Osborne Barracks. It is not a unified, coordinated strategy downtown, and we think it is high time that this Government pushed for a unifying central downtown development corporation so that the left hand will know what the right hand is doing.

There are many social issues which were not addressed by the Throne Speech and which have not been addressed by this Government. There is no mention in the Throne Speech about the homeless. There is no mention in the Throne Speech of a housing strategy. There is no mention in the Throne Speech about the challenges which we face here in the City of Winnipeg for those who are poor, and the underprivileged and unfortunate in our society. The reason that it is not there, Mr. Speaker, is because there is no plan. There is no vision.

I would go on to talk about openness and accountability, and if I had more time I would talk about the CSIS Agreement, I would talk about the behaviour of certain Ministers in committee in the Manfor deal, I would talk about patronage, I would talk about the \$4.5 million of patronage that was released only yesterday, but in the short time that I have left I want to talk about the New Democratic Party.

Yesterday the New Democratic Party voted against a motion. This motion said that this Government has ignored the need for employment opportunities at a time when our unemployment rate is above the national average. The Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) rises at least once a week to talk about Manitoba's unemployment rate. He voted against our resolution which takes this Government to task. He voted against this Party's position on the unemployment rate in Manitoba.

This Government has sold Manfor without adequate concern for the environment, Treaty rights or employment opportunities for our aboriginal peoples and Northerners. This Party voted against that

amendment. They voted against what we have to say about Treaty rights, about aboriginal people and about the environment. This Party voted against aboriginal peoples, against their Treaty rights and against the environment.

The Government has for too long been apologetic for the federal Government. It is, therefore, incapable of achieving fairness and equity for Manitoba and Manitobans. How often do we hear the rhetoric of the New Democratic Party about the Mulroney Tories? That is what we said in our motion. They voted against it. Our motion said that this Government has failed to provide new directives for our health care system. Is that not what the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has been saying all along? Is not that what the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) says at every opportunity? That is what we said. They voted against it—some principle.

The principle is political survival. It is a coalition. When I say that, I think of J. S. Woodsworth and I think of Tommy Douglas and I think of David Lewis. Shame that this Party with a monopoly on virtue, the self-righteous Party, can accuse us of political opportunism and can second-guess what the people of Manitoba might say were an election held today. They assume that we would win.—(Interjection)—The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) says he is afraid we might win. He is afraid the people of Manitoba might vote for us. What does that say about his commitment to democracy? What does that say about his commitment to principle? It is a sham, this rhetoric, this unholy coalition which would send the founders of the social democratic movement in this province and this country rolling over with disgust and shame.

The Member for Churchill in his eloquent, persuasive, penetrating response to this Throne Speech said, and let me quote now so the Member can savour yet again his words, “a bit of a tepid brew of lacklustre excuses for opportunities they have lost and actions they have deferred,” a tepid brew of lacklustre excuses. We gave him an opportunity to say no to this dreadful Throne Speech, a speech that he describes.

The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) says that this speech lacks any concise vision for our health care. It is becoming increasingly obvious that the Department of Health is in a state of suspended animation as the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) stops everything at his desk before any decision is taken. He goes on to say, “that the Minister’s own paranoia which is becoming obvious day after day has brought the Department of Health to the brink of administrative chaos.” This is the same Member, yesterday, who voted against a Liberal motion that said that this Government has failed to provide new directives for our health care system, and then talked to us about principle.

I have enjoyed this opportunity to put a few comments on the record. I hope that in the coming weeks and as the Session moves forward, we will be able to cooperate a little more than we have in the past.

I look at the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) and I think fondly of the co-operation that is currently under way as we seek to strike a consensus on the Meech Lake Accord.

It is odd because we often attack each other’s policies in this Chamber and the rhetoric can become heated and inflamed, and then we will walk over and have a civilized conversation with one another. To the casual observer, it must seem awfully strange that we can be so civilized in one moment and so dreadfully disrespectful of each other in the next. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have enjoyed this opportunity to respond to the Speech from the Throne.

* (1630)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I welcome the opportunity to rise today and speak to the Throne Speech. I can assure you that it is of great pleasure for me to see you back in your accustomed seat as the principal presider over this Chamber. I know that despite the difficulties we give you from time to time you always maintain your equanimity. You always maintain your good sense of fairness and you always bring us back into the order that should prevail in this Legislature. So I welcome you back in your position. We are delighted to have you here.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Filmon: I welcome as well, Mr. Speaker, the appointment of the new Deputy Speaker, a long-time friend of mine, the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski), an individual whom I met some 15 years ago when I first was elected to city council and who served in that body very, very well, always represented well his people. I welcome his ascendancy as Deputy Speaker in this House.

I welcome of course the new Ministers who have joined the Executive Council since the last Session. I look forward to their contributions and their efforts. I know that they have much to offer the people of Manitoba in their new roles.

I welcome the new critics who have been appointed by their respective Leaders in this Chamber, and we know that we look forward to their contributions as well.

I welcome of course the new Deputy Leader of the New Democratic Party (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) and the new House Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Ashton) who has been given some very great expectations by his predecessor. References to Stanley Knowles and other things, I am sure, will give him a great deal to live up to in the forthcoming years.

Before I go into the text of my speech, because I do want to stay very much on the high road in my discussions in this Chamber, I want to take issue with the closing remarks of the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) because I have always said, and I believe it to be true, that there is nothing that will bring a Government down more surely than arrogance.

I have observed over the course of some time in this House how people who come to Government with good intentions eventually over a period of time become arrogant, become disdainful of the people. There is nothing that will bring a Government down more surely

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than that. I tell you that I have never in the past seen an Opposition that has become arrogant to the extent of showing disdain to the people of this province, and within a year of being elected to office.

When you take the words of the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr), which I know parrot the words of his Leader, you know that we have a serious case of arrogance that not only pervades one or two in that caucus but essentially, if you read their speeches over the past week or 10 days, it pervades the entire ranks of the Liberal Opposition because he has the audacity to stand up and say that the New Democrats should let the people decide.

Mr. Speaker, we have a tradition in this province, in this country of going for elections periodically as time comes for that to happen. From time to time, Governments are defeated in the House, and those are not occasions that take place often. Indeed it is a rare occasion that Governments are defeated in the House, and there have to be some very strong overriding reasons.

I do not think that those decisions are ever taken lightly. They come usually almost unexpectedly, but they come because of some tremendous backlash by the people of this province that reflects itself in a decision of the people of this Legislature. So last year, just a year ago, just 13 months ago, we had an election in this province.

That Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) says that means absolutely nothing, that those results and the judgment of the people should be washed aside in favour of his judgment and the judgment of his Leader in caucus—that is exactly what he has just said—and that the New Democrats should become a party to that conspiracy of the Liberal Party of Manitoba, and just willingly accede to their raw lust for power. That is what he has said.

Mr. Speaker, he has accused the New Democrats of not having principle, and I tell you, if that is his principle, then it is not one that is shared by many people in this province. You only have to look at the comments in today's newspaper by his Leader to know that he is reflecting the consistent view of his Leader and his caucus in taking that position. It says, "Carstairs charged the NDP are unwilling to let the electorate decide who should run the province."

The electorate did decide some 13 months ago, and no one here should have the arrogance to say that the people do not know what they are doing when they go to the polls.

Mr. Speaker, I would never accuse the people of that. That is exactly what this Liberal Opposition is doing. If you want to take it just one further step, read a little further in that article in today's newspaper. It says, and I quote, "Carstairs said she suspects 10 out of 10 Manitobans do not want an election now. 'People might not like elections particularly, but at the same time they are an important part of the democratic process.'" Yes, yes, when that time comes in the course of a mandate of a Government that they go for an election, that is when they are an important part of the democratic

process or if the people rise up in arms and demand of their Legislature that the Opposition defeat the Government should they have the numbers.

None of that has occurred. In fact, the Opposition Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) acknowledges that 10 out of 10 Manitobans would probably not want an election. But implicit in that is that she does and therefore she and her colleagues, these 21 people, know better than the people of Manitoba, and that is a very, very, very sad circumstance to which we have come in this province, Mr. Speaker.

For each and every one of us sitting in this Legislature today, Manitoba, I believe, has been a land of opportunity. Each of us has our own story about what this province means to us, the passion that we feel for being Manitobans.

My story is one of being the son and grandson of immigrants, growing up in north Winnipeg, an individual who through the power of education and the opportunities provided by the economic atmosphere and climate that existed in this province when I was growing up was able to achieve some degree of financial success, while at the same time having the opportunity to raise my own children in this wonderful atmosphere of a compassionate, caring province, of a province rich in resources and opportunity. I am very proud of my own children and the opportunities that they have been able to have the advantage of for having grown up in this province.

Mr. Speaker, it has not always been easy. I am sure that each individual in this House could share personal experiences about barriers, biases that continue to blight our community. But by and large, all of us here today have been lucky enough to have had some success with the opportunities that have been provided so richly for us in this province.

But not all Manitobans have been able to avail themselves of the opportunities that we have enjoyed. Our Government, Mr. Speaker, is dedicated to one overriding goal, the creation of opportunities for all Manitobans in every region of our province. We want to ensure that every individual in this province has the opportunity to make the most of their own unique abilities to build a stronger Manitoba for us all.

Today's Forum on the Disabled provides us with one other view of people who need our care, need our concern, need our attention, and I compliment you, Mr. Speaker, for organizing and initiating that forum. They remind us that each individual has their own unique ability that they can contribute towards the growth and development of our province, and we have always got to remember that as we develop public policy. We have always got to remember that the public interest is their interest, not our interest, Mr. Speaker. That is what this Throne Speech is all about. It is about opportunity. It is about safeguarding our future, a task that began the moment that we took office.

* (1640)

One year ago, this Government was sworn into office. We were elected on a straightforward mandate, to

restore the confidence of Manitobans in their province and in their Government. That is not the sort of goal Government achieves on its own. It requires the united efforts of everyone in this province and we are succeeding.

The message is spreading that Manitoba is indeed open again for business, for enterprise, for investment, for opportunity for growth. That is important, Mr. Speaker. It is important if Manitoba is once again to become a place where people want to live and work. It is important if Manitoba is to have a strong economy which will be able to afford, to maintain and enhance essential services so necessary in our caring and compassionate society.

It is important if Manitoba is to prepare and provide a future that will benefit instead of break our children and our grandchildren. The message is being heard, not just in Manitoba, but outside this province as well and opportunities are growing as a result.

We are attracting new business and outside investment in our drive to create more opportunity in Manitoba. For instance, the Minebea Company from Tokyo, Japan, building a swine-breeding commercial production and pork-processing plant for the Interlake region of our province. Minebea has chosen Manitoba as the place it wants to invest \$20 million and create approximately 62 new jobs.

Our Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) has been recently to the Far East on a mission to try and attract people to make them know more about the opportunities for investment in our agricultural community. We have tremendous advantages here in Manitoba. We produce some of the the finest red meats, beef and pork anywhere in the world, Mr. Speaker. Some of those people from the Far East took an interest because they have already been using our products. They have already been importing our products into their countries. Now they want to invest in being a part of the production here in Manitoba.

Canadian Occidental Petroleum, an eastern-based firm, will upgrade technology to the state-of-the-art standards in its Brandon plant. They have chosen Manitoba as a place they want to invest \$50 million on expansion, creating approximately 17 new jobs. Manitoba is indeed on the move and picking up speed as it goes.

We recognize we cannot encourage economic growth at the expense of environmental and social well-being. We are committed to ensuring that future developments are sustainable development, so that as Manitoba begins to grow again, to prosper again, to become strong and proud again, it will do so conscious of the need to proceed in harmony with the environment. The Throne Speech stated, "Manitobans recognize that prosperity will mean little if in achieving it the quality of their environment is sacrificed." That is a powerful statement, Mr. Speaker, and one which is firmly rooted in reality.

People everywhere have too long taken for granted the natural surroundings and elements that sustain us. In the course of the rapid advancement that humanity

has proceeded with over the early part of this century, they frequently overlooked or have been unaware of the consequences of interfering with the environment. It is essential that this trend to development without regard for consequences be reversed and reversed now, Mr. Speaker. It is important that we preserve our world for the sake of our children. We are committed, as outlined in the Throne Speech, to the concept of sustainable development.

I have four children, Mr. Speaker. You have children. We all want them to live in a world where there is pure air, clean water, rich black earth and abundance of wildlife and vegetation. I do not want to be responsible for leaving them a legacy of smog-covered cities and towns and a barren countryside. I do not want the old joke about our rivers running so smoothly because they are so well oiled to become a reality. Neither do I want the purest air in Manitoba to be over ghost towns. The emphasis on ensuring that new development is both economically and environmentally sustainable is critically important in both the short and the long term.

I was disappointed that some of the speakers in the Liberal Caucus chose to belittle sustainable development and the Government's proposals on sustainable development. Mr. Speaker, they said things like the fact that, well, nothing is happening, nothing is happening on it. It is all empty words and rhetoric.

We had a very, very successful conference here just 10 days ago, a conference that attracted more than 500 registrants, people from all over the world. I had an opportunity to speak to many of these visitors, people from South America, people from the Middle East, people from all parts of North America, and to a person they were saying to me what I heard when I spoke to the Canadian Institute of Resources Law in Ottawa just a few weeks ago, and that is that Manitoba is on the leading edge of this concept, that Manitoba is a pioneer, that Manitoba has become an advocate for something that is essential to the future development of this world of ours, Mr. Speaker, and they were complimenting us. They said that they were learning a great deal by the holding of this conference and that they knew if they could convince their jurisdictions and their people this was the way to go, that all of our world in future would be better for it.

Mr. Speaker, it is not a matter of doing as the Liberal Members would have you do, and that is to point and say there is not yet a building that is called the Sustainable Development Centre in Winnipeg, ergo, nothing is happening.

The fact of the matter is it is not just a matter of bricks and mortar, it is a matter of a concept. It is a matter of a whole new approach to life, to development, to future economic opportunity in the world. People have to become educated, aware and knowledgeable about it. They have to learn the principles of the Brundtland Commission's Report, our common future. They have to adopt them as their bible and they have to then be committed to carry on that kind of opportunity for growth and development, the new wave for the future of our world. They cannot just do it by saying, look, you have not got a building and laughing about it and joking about it and saying that means that sustainable development is not going anywhere.

When I talked to the Canadian Institute of Resources Law and told them about some of the initiatives that we had taken, told them of the directions we were going, all of those things, they said, you people are ahead of every other province in the country. That is why the Prime Minister said that Manitoba would have the International Centre for Sustainable Development. That is why the federal Government swept in behind Manitoba's leadership and said, if we were willing to take the lead, they would be a partner and part of that process. I am very disappointed the Liberals would prefer instead to give that kind of criticism for a concept that, I believe, will in fact change our life in future permanently and for the better.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is laughing. She thinks that it is a laughing matter and I do not. I think that in the long run, time will prove that we are right and that it is not a laughing matter, it is a serious matter and that we are on the right track.

A fundamental element of our program to restore opportunity in Manitoba is the removal of barriers and disincentives to growth. It is hard to believe that it was only a year ago that newspapers were filled with headlines about rising debt, increased taxes, Crown corporation scandals. Let us look at some of the headlines that Manitobans read at that time. .

Winnipeg Free Press in an editorial headline of December 6, 1987, it said, large quotes, "The Deficit is Still Too Big." February 27, 1988, another Free Press editorial headline describing NDP economic policies reads, "A Failed Fiscal Strategy." The Globe and Mail on December 23, 1987, ran a headline stating, "Manitoba's Drivers' Rates Rising 20 to 30 percent." Let us look at the Winnipeg Sun on February 4, 1988, headline, "The Real Problem with Autopac is the Politics." Again, on January 24, 1988, the Sun headlined the following line, "Autopac Protest Strikes Nerve," and four days later the nerves that were struck caused the headline in the Sun to read, "Anti-Autopac Rally Attracts 1,500."

Not all the headlines were about Autopac of course. On February 25, 1988, the Winnipeg Free Press highlighted this statement, "WCB Levies to Increase up to 40 percent—Hospital Service Cuts threatened over Compensation Premiums." Prior to that on December 21, 1987, the Free Press editorial headline was, "Paying for MTX Blunders." Contrast this dismal record with what is happening today.

We have emerged from the dark ages of the NDP mismanagement and we are at the dawn of a new era of opportunity.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Filmon: The story of our first year in office has been our success at getting the Government's House in order. It is a story about how the Government for the first time in five years received the unqualified approval from the Provincial Auditor about how we reduced administrative costs within Government; the story about how we reduced administrative costs within

Government through such measures as the consolidation of departments and the reduction of communication staff and expenditures; about how we restored Crown corporation accountability through the passage of new legislation, the appointment of qualified and competent board members in management to our Crown corporations.

* (1650)

Year after year under the previous administration, taxes were raised, services reduced and the debt skyrocketed. In our short time in office, we have already begun to reverse that pattern. Let me share with you some of the approaches that we are taking in Government to meet these challenges.

Our provincial debt had been spiralling out of control. A yearly string of deficits had dramatically increased our debt burden. In six years, interest payments on that debt had increased 400 percent. Of every tax dollar, 14 cents was going to pay for interest costs, \$1.6 million dollars a day, Mr. Speaker. Our Government moved immediately to bring the annual provincial deficit under control. Only by doing so can we begin to slow the troubling escalation of accumulated debt. A key element of our deficit reduction measures has been a debt management strategy that involves some measures such as swapping our foreign denominated debt into North American currencies.

Our exposure to non-North American currencies has now been reduced to about 10 percent of our total debt, down from 22 percent at this point last year. This sort of activity is not high profiling. It is not exciting, but it is good fiscal policy and it has already saved us millions and millions and millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker.

Our third quarter projections suggest that our deficit for the current fiscal year has been reduced well down from the \$334 million in the Budget that we defeated, down from the \$196 million in the Budget that we passed last August in this Chamber. Sound financial management will continue to be a priority of this Government.

As the Throne Speech noted, our Government recognizes the need to continue to improve the fiscal position of our province so that we can provide greater opportunity and enhanced security for all groups in every region of Manitoba. We also recognize that the main engine of growth for our province are the men and women who invest their time, energy and savings in new products, new markets and new ideas. Yet, because of our tax system, individuals face the highest tax rates in the country while corporations are discouraged from creating new jobs. We took an important step towards restoring an economic climate that will foster opportunity and reward initiative by providing much needed tax relief to the citizens of this province.

As of January 1 this year, the exemption level for the payroll tax was tripled. Nearly half the employers who had been paying the payroll tax up to that point were taken off the rolls, Mr. Speaker. Although the Opposition does not like that move, the fact of the matter is we are getting letters from many small

businesses telling us it was an important measure, and they are now creating one and two and more jobs in order to recognize the fact that they are no longer paying that payroll tax. They are putting it back into employing more people in this province.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, only 7 percent of Manitoba employers continue to pay the payroll tax at the full rate. With these reductions, we are sending a clear message. Investment and job creation are welcome in Manitoba. Just ask Kitchen Craft, a well-known quality kitchen manufacturer, it announced plans for a \$2.1 million plant expansion, ultimately resulting in 130 new jobs over the three years; Morphy (phonetic) Wheel Manufacturing, \$1.5 million for its new plant, creating better truck and trailer wheels, and creating 52 new jobs. Go out to Marchand, where Pinewood Pure Springs are expanding, modernizing its bottling operations, spending more than a million dollars establishing a Manitoba export product and creating 13 new jobs, Mr. Speaker.

These are part of Manitoba on the move. The more that the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) wants to keep plugging his doom and gloom, the more success stories I will put forward to him. That is why there are 7,000 more people in full-time employment in this province than were there when we took office.

Last summer's Budget contained other tax measures that sought to emphasize this positive message that we are conveying, Mr. Speaker. We made a commitment that personal income taxes would not be raised during the term of this Government. We did this so that the people would know where they stood when it came to taxation, and we have kept that promise and we intend to keep that promise, as the Throne Speech says.

I contrast that to the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) who, when she was running for Government, said she could not make a promise, a commitment to keep taxes down. In fact, she ridiculed that promise and she said that it was a foolish commitment for me to be making. Now, a year later, she is saying, oh, well, I think they should be reducing taxes, but at that time she said she could make no commitment even to hold the personal taxes level.

When I made that statement, I might say, at the news conference at the opening of the Session, she said that I was a liar. We then said

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Official Opposition): Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition, on a point of order.

Mrs. Carstairs: I have never called the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) a liar and I ask him to apologize.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

Mr. Filmon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will send her over the press clipping just to make sure that she knows what she says, because I think that possibly part of

the problem is that she often does not remember some of the things she said, and that is why we have all of these clippings, to ensure that she does not get out from under these things.

Let me just give her exact quote that she said on April 15, 1988. It said, "Carstairs criticized her opponents' pledge to not raise personal income taxes for four years. 'To make that commitment for four years is sticking your neck out too far.' She said she could not possibly promise to hold personal or corporate taxes at the current rates without knowing what kind of financial shape the province is in."

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter -(Interjection)- Wait a second, we will get the other clippings.

* (1700)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable First Minister.

Mr. Filmon: May I quote directly from the Winnipeg Sun, May 19, 1989? This is the day after the Throne Speech, about the discussion I just quoted. When I quoted that comment at the news conference, she later refuted it. This is what is said in the Winnipeg Sun, and I did not see her ask for a retraction so I assume it has to be true, "Carstairs later denied Filmon's comments. 'If he stops telling lies about me, I'll start telling the truth about him.'"

I tell you, this Leader of the Opposition is soon going to find that people remember and people keep track of all the things that she has said, and she cannot get away indiscriminately with going around and saying things about other people or policies or other things, because they are all here. They are all in black and white and we will keep reminding her and the people of Manitoba about the things that she says.

Mr. Speaker, we also introduced a tax holiday for new small businesses. In their first year of operation, new small businesses will pay no corporate tax on the first \$200,000 of income. In the successive four years, they will pay at a reduced rate. This measure shows the importance we place on entrepreneurship and on the role of small business in creating new employment. We know that there is still room for improvement in Manitoba's tax regime, but some important first steps have been taken toward our goal of opportunities for all Manitobans.

Reducing taxes, getting our deficit under control are only the first steps on the road to a more prosperous and vibrant Manitoba. We live today in an increasingly interdependent and competitive global economy. Government must take the leadership and facilitate efforts of our businesses and our entrepreneurs if we are to make the best use of our people and our resources to create opportunities for Manitobans.

We must also ensure that sustainable development is not just seen as an environmental issue but as an approach to Government that encompasses many of the initiatives that are put forth throughout our administration. Sustainable development is about providing leadership in the development of clean

industry, such as tourism. While tourism is already a significant and important industry today, it will grow to be even more significant in the years to come, provided that we have the strong commitment of Government and industry to make it happen.

When I announced the establishment of our Round Table on Environment and Economy, I pointed out the importance of tourism as a sustainable industry. It builds on our two most important resources, our natural heritage and our people. It is a prime example of a renewable industry which, with proper management, is non-polluting and resource conserving.

Manitoba has a lot to offer when it comes to tourism. We have lakes and beaches, whales, polar bears, many, many sights. When I was away on vacation this year, I met an individual who does a kind of National Geographic type filming of events and places throughout the world. When I told him about places that we had right within this Province of Manitoba, some of the things that were to see like the desert at Carberry, like the harbour at Churchill where there are whales and polar bears, all of the lakes in which there was not only fishing and wildlife and all of those things, Mr. Speaker, he said I would like to come there and do one of my films. They are amazed that one province in one big country such as this can have these fantastic resources.

We should all be revelling in what we have to offer. When I travelled with a group that was promoting Winnipeg as the site of the 1991 Grey Cup in Hamilton, we put on an audio-visual presentation and I had not been responsible for it. The City of Winnipeg put together that audio-visual presentation. I can tell you, the Governors of all the CFL teams were in awe. They were so impressed with the things that Winnipeg and Manitoba have to offer for them.

Mr. Speaker, they just underestimate all the time, and they do so because all too often our people are not promoting Manitoba. All you hear is the gloom and the doom and the negativism from Members opposite, always trying to talk about the bad side of things, the black side of things, always saying that Manitoba is a bad place.

Who have I heard saying over and over again that the Canadian Club in Toronto, at other public events, Manitoba is a have-not province. I have heard that from the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) time after time after time. Mr. Speaker, that is what is wrong, that is what is wrong with the attitude of people around is that they have to listen to that kind of negativism, to that kind of doom and gloom.

We have to get together and say that we have pride in this province. We are working for the same things for the betterment of our people, for the growth of our province, for the opportunities for our youth. That is what we have to work towards and we have got to do it together.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, Hear!

Mr. Filmon: Under our Canada-Manitoba Tourism Agreement, rural facilities and attractions are our target area. There are things like the expansion of the

Inverness Falls Resort, Najalini Lodge, the resort hotel that has recently been announced for Gimli, funding for the Mennonite Heritage Village Museum in Steinbach, the Northern Heritage Centre at The Pas, all sorts of projects of this nature, Mr. Speaker, the Morris Valley Agricultural Society and some of the expansion that they are going to be doing. It is all positive, it is all good and it all draws tourists to this great province of ours. And it is a basis for economic growth, for benefits that will accrue to all of us as citizens of Manitoba.

A major component of our strategy in Tourism will be the new Customer Awareness Program. We have increased funding for tourism marketing by \$1 million a year, to enable Travel Manitoba to take some new and innovative approaches to marketing in 1989, as well as strengthening our traditional marketing activities.

We have increased spending on highway construction last year by \$8 million in the first Budget, so that we could have emphasis on such important things as the twinning of Highway 75, the twinning of the Trans-Canada Highway through the Grand Valley, so that we can expand the good roads and highways that lead to tourist destinations in Manitoba.

We are improving our border image: new updated "Welcome" signage at major Canadian and U.S. crossings, renovated Tourism Information Centres at key locations. We secured the establishment of the United Aspen Air Route from Denver to Grand Forks to our International Airport here in Winnipeg, giving greater opportunities for Americans to come here with more convenient flight schedules, Mr. Speaker. We are very proud of all of these things that we are doing.

What is it resulting in, Mr. Speaker? Let me give you just a few insights into some of the statistics that are available to all Members of this Legislature, what are important to Manitobans, things that are happening in our economic future as a result of all of these initiatives.

Firstly, the Conference Board says that our Gross Provincial Product will grow by some 4 percent this year, 1989, well above the national average. The Investment Dealers' Association of Canada is forecasting a 12.5 percent growth after inflation, of private business investment in Manitoba in 1989. Compare that to a 6.7 percent decline in 1987. All of the economic forecasters are saying that our unemployment rate will continue to decline in Manitoba during 1989. We are the third lowest in Canada in April, compared to the fourth lowest in April of last year. We are indeed moving in the right direction.

Average weekly earnings from Statistics Canada, 1989 to date, a 6.4 percent increase, the No. 1 largest increase in the country in the average weekly earnings. Value in manufacturing shipments, again from Statistics Canada, 1989 to date, 13.9 percent increase, No. 1 ranking in Canada as far as an increase in manufacturing shipments. What did the Investment Dealers' Association say in their report? They said, "High levels of manufacturing and investment this year will be broadly based across the corporate sector. Increased spending reflects needed replacement and investment which has been postponed in recent years.

A more positive outlook for economic and business conditions in the province and expanding opportunities in the U.S. market under the Free Trade Agreement, and some easing of the corporate tax burden in the province." So they recognize it, they recognize the good things that are happening in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I could tell you about many of the tourism success stories. I have many of them here, but I do not have enough time. We are going in other areas, in medical technology and product development, Otto-Bock, world renowned for excellence in medical devices, research development and manufacturer, expanding their Winnipeg facility with a \$4.6 million plant addition, bringing 50 new jobs on stream and enhancing Manitoba's research and development capacity.

In Steinbach, Loewen Windows has launched a \$6.5 million expansion creating 50 new jobs. With the support of the province's Industrial Opportunities Program, Palliser Furniture, already an international leader in the production of fine quality furniture, has announced plans for a \$6.1 million particle board manufacturing facility, new technology and diversification for Manitoba and 200 new and secure jobs over the next five years.- (Interjection)-

* (1710)

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the third Party (Mr. Doer) says that is old news but we never hear it from them. We never hear it from his colleagues or from the Liberal Party because they do not want to talk about the positive things, the good things that are happening in this province of ours.

Boeing Canada is undertaking a 350,000-square foot expansion in Winnipeg to produce parts and new products for commercial aircraft. They have chosen Manitoba as the place where they are going to invest \$31.3 million creating 274 new jobs. That is good news. We continue to have good news stories, decisions on investments that are being made because they know that we have restored confidence in the Government of Manitoba, that we have our economy under control, and that we have a positive outlook towards business development, job creation and expansion in this province.

We are working on the removal of interprovincial trade barriers. I might say, Mr. Speaker, that when we came to Government -(Interjection)- the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) says it is a good idea. It is a good idea and his Government wanted to have such an agreement. I know that they worked on it for six-and-a-half years. We made a commitment to say that this was a priority with us. We talked about it at the Western Premiers' Conference just about a year ago now. We talked about it again in August in Saskatoon at the Premiers' Conference. We knew that we were getting closer and closer.

Not all provinces in this country are yet ready to do it. There are still one or two who are not willing to come to the table and sign that agreement. So what did we do? We brought together the western provinces and we signed an agreement amongst the western provinces to show the leadership, to show the way, to

say that removal of interprovincial trade barriers is important to our manufacturers, to our suppliers and to all Manitoba businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I was astounded to learn that the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) had stated and I quote from her speech that, "It is too late to wake up to the need for better environmental laws." I would hope that nobody in Government anywhere in this world would say that it is too late to recognize the environment is a priority, that we need to pass laws to protect the environment. It is never too late to correct a situation that needs to be changed. What a negative attitude. I cannot believe that.

We face no greater threat to our future hopes for progress than the deterioration of our environment. Manitobans are looking for leadership on this issue, an issue that has become a question of basic survival. Manitobans share a growing concern about the environment with all Canadians and with people around the world. They want to see growth in our economy and new jobs but not at the expense of our natural heritage of clean air, clean water and unspoiled spaces. The World Commission Report of Madam Groharlam Brundtland said it all on that topic. We are committed to it and it is part of all of the decision-making that we will take while we are in Government.

We have also of course set out concrete measures to clean up our land, our air, and our water, acid rain monitoring, legislation to protect the ozone layer and many initiatives to strengthen trans-boundary water quality agreements.

I might say, at this point, that I compliment my colleague, the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme), for signing that agreement with the City of Winnipeg and with the Shoal Lake Indian Band to stop the cottage lot development that was going to take place on Shoal Lake that had the potential to pollute that water supply. I say that is true leadership and commitment. It took nine years to get to that agreement, nine years of hard work. The former Government was not able to do it, and I can tell you that the Liberals are strangely silent on that topic.

One of their Members, the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), was the Chairman of Works and Operations and the Deputy Speaker was not able to get that commitment. Of course, one of their very close associates, Mr. Chretien, represented the band at one time and he threatened to pollute the water and he at one point in time said that it would take \$63 million to buy out their interest. That is what he was holding up the province and the city for on that agreement. Maybe that is why we have not heard very much from them on that.

Mr. Speaker, we are not hearing a great deal from them on protection of the City of Winnipeg's water supply against the possible development of mining on Shoal Lake. We are hearing nothing from the Liberal Party on the potential for mining development. We know that we are writing letters to the Honourable Jim Bradley, and we are making strong representations to him to stop that development until we are convinced there is absolutely no danger to our water supply. What

are we hearing from the Liberals—silence, Mr. Speaker, silence. You might wonder whether or not they know the Liberals in Ontario. You might wonder whether or not they know the Honourable Jim Bradley.

I happen to know that they know the Honourable Jim Bradley because I was introduced to him by the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor). He was here in Manitoba in January attending the Liberals Annual Meeting, and the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) took him to the Jets hockey game. I think they were sitting in the Winnipeg Enterprises seats, as a matter of fact. He brought him over to introduce him to me, so I know he knows him. I know, if he wanted to influence his decision on Shoal Lake, he only need pick up the phone.

Mr. Speaker, I could talk about our commitments on recycling, on waste management. I could talk about all of those things but they are all part of the sustainable development strategy that we are putting forth in this province.

My Government understands the interdependence of all regions of Manitoba. We know that every region and every person within that region requires opportunity to grow and develop. We do understand that and we are conscious of the need for rural development to take place in this province. The magnitude of the challenges that are facing rural Manitoba cannot be underestimated.

The impact of those challenges have to be met or else they will affect all of us, whether we live in the cities, the towns, the villages, the impact of all of the pressures that rural Manitoba is facing is going to have an effect on us.

Of prime concern is the future of our farm economy. We have great problems to overcome, not merely in Manitoba and western Canada but on a global scale. The international agriculture trade war is our greatest concern. We are concerned about unmanageable surpluses. We are concerned about farm subsidy wars between Europe and the United States that are affecting all of us. We recognize the need to address environmental issues ranging from soil and water conservation to increased concerns about the use of farm chemicals.

Another major concern is the future of rural communities in the face of out-migration into urban centres. Out-migration threatens the future of farm families, the health of our smaller but more important communities. My Government is working to keep the rural tradition alive and thriving. That is why we reacted with the special drought relief program, that \$18.3 million program last summer. That is why our Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) led a trade mission to Japan.

We know that we have to do everything possible. That is why the decentralization policy, that is why we placed people in Brandon, we placed people in Boissevain with new and recent initiatives. We are committed to that decentralization policy because we believe that agriculture is the lifeblood of our province and that rural Manitoba is absolutely key to our future prosperity.

* (1720)

Northern development, what about that region of our province, Mr. Speaker? It has to continue to be a land of opportunity. I was delighted when I read the article in the Winnipeg Free Press recounting all of the positive things that are happening in northern Manitoba. I know from my Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) that is an area that is going to become, and is already becoming, one of the boom areas of our province.

Our mining industry is experiencing the most buoyant times in its history. The Repap sale with \$1 billion of investment and 400 new jobs is the largest single private investment initiative in the history of this province.

We have the continuing development of our hydro-electric resources up there. Limestone is ongoing and coming to a successful completion and there will be other opportunities for us in the future.

This area of our province has plentiful resources and very, very willing people who want to work to expand their opportunities, and we have a Government that recognizes it. We have a Government that contributed to the Native communities of that area through the Northern Flood Agreement payments, that \$10 million commitment that we made earlier this year that recognizes the responsibilities we have for northern flooding and for northern hydro development.

We are committed to training programs that will allow northern residents, including members of Manitoba's aboriginal community, to have full access to these new economic opportunities.

That is what we have outlined in the Throne Speech.

I might say, in going through some of my notes and clippings in getting to the information for these remarks today, I found something else that I had not seen before. That was a promise made by the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) during the last election campaign that she would cut out \$800,000 of the Education Access Fund.

We all know what that Education Access Fund goes towards, training aboriginal people for new opportunities and professions, new opportunities in the types of technology and skill development that they must have in order to brighten their future. That access fund pays for Native people to go to our universities in Manitoba, some of them enrolled in engineering, some enrolled in law, medicine and many of our technical disciplines and our professional disciplines. That was a promise I had not realized she had made and that I think shows a difference between our Throne Speech and the kind of attitude they have to training opportunities for aboriginal people.

Winnipeg must benefit from reinvestment in sustainable development, no less than our smaller urban centres. Many exciting things have been happening to improve the quality of life in our city such as the Core Area Initiative, the North Portage development, the Forks development. Nevertheless, there is much more to be done.

What do we hear from the Liberal Opposition? They say there is no downtown planning and they of course bring that to the Legislature. Who is the Chairman of

the Planning Committee of the City Council of Winnipeg? I believe his name is Ernie Gilroy. I believe that he was the Chairman of the Liberal campaign in that election of 1988. Mr. Speaker, if there is a problem with downtown planning, with urban planning, all she needs to do is pick up the phone.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba can have the most prosperous economy and the cleanest environment in Canada, but if all Manitobans do not share the same opportunity to share in the benefits, our province would be a poorer place in which to live. Our Government has committed to ensuring that every Manitoban is able to contribute to their fullest opportunity. It is not only important to each of us as individuals, it is important to Manitoba as a province.

We are a mixture of backgrounds, of cultures, of strengths. There is no region in this province that can remain independent of all others, and there is no group that can thrive and prosper without the encouragement of all Manitoba. Every Manitoban has a unique contribution to make to our province. Some prosper in business, others excel in sports, some provide care and nurture to others around them, but every individual contribution makes us all a little better and makes us all a little prouder to be Manitobans. We in Government do not have all the answers. We do not even have all the questions. I will readily admit that, Mr. Speaker. Our challenge is to draw Manitobans from every region, every culture, every walk of life, to build a better future for us all.

When I went through high school and university in the Roblin years, I was a Polish-Ukrainian kid from north Winnipeg. I had the unshakeable confidence that things would turn out well, that I would have a future of opportunity ahead of me. We have to ensure that today's children, regardless of where they live in this province, whether it be in the North End, whether it be in Concordia, whether it be in northern Manitoba, or anywhere else in this great province of ours, have the same hope and the same opportunities that we all shared growing up in Manitoba.

This Throne Speech contains a series of initiatives to assist visible minorities, new Canadians, and Manitobans from our rich multicultural background. I am particularly pleased with the emphasis that we have been able to place upon women's programming, following upon the report of the Women's Initiative and the Day Care Task Force. I tell you I was very upset to hear the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) criticizing the establishment of a Women's Health Directorate, because whenever we have met with women's groups in this province, they have told us that women have special needs when it comes to health care. Women have special concerns when it comes to health care. Women use the health care system perhaps to a different extent and in different ways, and her comment was that we did not need another fragmentation of the health care system. Yet women's groups throughout this province say we must focus our concerns and our attention and our action and that this is the way to do it. I cannot understand the Liberal Party being opposed to that.

We are proceeding with a program called "Manitoba Business Start" to provide start-up capital for new small

business, targeted particularly at women and rural Manitobans. Of course, we all recognize the tremendous impact that women are having on our economy already. There are so many examples and I had many of them listed here of women who are taking initiatives as entrepreneurs, good, small, new business opportunities that will grow into large enterprises because of what they are able to do in our society.

We are committed, Mr. Speaker, to protecting and enhancing the quality of life. Whenever I meet with people from outside our province, they remark coming here and how beautiful this province is, how much we have offer, what a tremendous quality of life. We have recently had investors here from Japan. We have had investors here from Hong Kong. We have had investors here from all parts of Canada and they say to us that we have so many advantages that it is absolutely astounding that we could have Opposition Parties who are so negative and critical of this great province of ours.

We are committed to all of the things that are contained in this Throne Speech of ours. We are committed to the release and the implementation of many of the initiatives under the Child Care Task Force, many of the things that will result from the studies that were done last year by our Literacy Task Force, many of the things that will result from the studies that were done last year by our Literacy Task Force, many of the studies and the decisions and recommendations that will come out of our Health Care Network that was set up last year. We believe in planning for a better future and then we believe in implementing those plans in a very positive, upright and upbeat way.

Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that I support this Throne Speech. I believe it is ambitious, it is broadly focused, and it is thoughtfully prepared. I am proud of its commitment and I am committed to its priorities and I believe that it will be good for all Manitobans.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, Hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order please; order please. The hour being 5:30 p.m., in accordance with the Rule 35(4), I am interrupting the proceedings to put the question on the motion to the House.

The question before the House is on the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz), for an Address to His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor.

* (1730)

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? (Agreed) Those in favour of the motion will please say aye. All those opposed will please say nay. In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, 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 10 a.m. tomorrow morning (Friday).