

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, June 9, 1989.

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Reports for 1986-87 of the Manitoba Labour Management Review Committee.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table three reports: first of all, a report pursuant to Section 20 of The Public Officers Act; secondly, a report to the Legislature pursuant to Section 56(3) of The Financial Administration Act; and finally, the Annual Report of Manitoba Data Services for the 1988 year.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a ministerial statement.

It is with extreme pride and extreme pleasure that I rise in the House today to announce the final sales for our premier issue of Manitoba Hydro Savings Bonds.

The people of Manitoba have demonstrated, without reservation or qualification, the confidence they have in HydroBonds as a savings vehicle, as well as the confidence they have in their own province.

At the close of business on Wednesday, June 7, the HydroBond issue totalled slightly over \$300 million from sales to more than 33,000 Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, it is a fiscal display of the pride the people of Manitoba have for their hydro resource and their province. With sales over six times the level of the original minimal objective, the people have shown unequivocally the overwhelming success of this offering.

This special bond issue not only provided an opportunity for every Manitoban to participate directly as a builder and beneficiary in the Manitoba economy, but also was an important step in putting at less risk our whole borrowing portfolio by bringing a portion of it back home.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Hydro's current foreign debt is estimated at \$2.6 billion. Last year alone, they paid out over \$211 million to foreign banks in interest charges.

* (1005)

It should be noted that this premier issue of Manitoba Hydro Savings Bonds has already injected over \$3 million into Manitoba's economy through commissions and promotional fees. When interest payments to Manitobans are included, that figure becomes in excess of \$91 million over a three-year period.

Mr. Speaker, I would rather be paying interest income to Manitobans, where I know that the money will be spent buying local goods and services, generating local economic growth and employment for the benefit of all people of this great province. Manitoba HydroBonds are a made-in-Manitoba investment opportunity which will enable us, all of us, to contribute to and participate in Manitoba's future.

When we embarked upon the Manitoba HydroBond campaign, we wanted to put the bonds into the hands of as many Manitoba residents as we could, and I think we have been extremely successful.

Mr. Speaker, as I said before, the success of Manitoba Hydro Savings Bonds is attributed to the confidence the people of Manitoba place in the future of their province. I would like to thank all of those who participated. Thank you.

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and my compliments to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). As all Manitobans know, Mr. Speaker, the continuation of high interest payments and foreign debt is a drain on the economy. The approximate \$9,000 per purchaser by the people of Manitoba is very rewarding and is certainly supportive of the massive advertising promotion program that the Government ran in order to convince and persuade Manitobans that this was a reasonable investment. It couples with the rewarding of high commissions to salespeople throughout the marketplace.

It is regrettable that the issue could not have been organized by a Manitoba firm, that we had to go to a British Columbia firm to organize the package, but I am very pleased—they have their head office on the West Coast, I believe. It could have gone to Richardson's, as an example, Mr. Speaker.

Once again, Manitobans do have pride in the economy of Manitoba. They do have pride in the ability of Manitobans to reach down and pick up the pieces that are required to pull together. I am pleased that Manitobans have responded to this well-advertised, well-promoted initiative.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I certainly am pleased with the success of the savings bond issue and I think that it certainly does, in the words of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), indicate some faith of Manitobans in the future of their province. I think it also indicates the belief of Manitobans that the course of policy of Manitoba Hydro over the last number of years was a correct one, particularly in regard to hydro construction.

I remember the comments of the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), who indicated that Limestone was Lemonstone, comments that suggested we would be spending \$5 billion to construct Limestone when in actual fact the cost of Limestone turned out to be \$1.8 billion.

I think that now several years after the debate—and the Conservatives should take care too because they were critical of the New Democratic Party's decision to construct Limestone at the given time. I think we should reflect on the fact that the decisions of the New Democratic Party, Government of the Day, to move ahead with hydro construction were the correct ones. I think the fact that Manitobans have responded so overwhelmingly to the savings bond issue is, yes, an indication of faith in the future of Manitoba Hydro, of faith in the future that is built on the very strong foundation that was built by the New Democratic Party.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

BILL NO. 20—THE MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT ACT

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 20, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale.

MOTION presented.

* (1010)

Mrs. Yeo: I just may make a very brief statement to the Bill, Mr. Speaker. The amendment to The Municipal Act is addressing in my mind the question of equity and the question of fairness. I am well aware that currently there are major changes being contemplated for the entire Act. However, the concerns of The Salvation Army, Catherine Booth Bible College, must not be lost in the process, and therefore I would urge a consistent, hasty approval of this particular Bill.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Budget Job Creation

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): In the last 24 hours, two studies which were released paint a very dismal prospect for the unemployment situation in the Province of Manitoba. The Conference Board of Canada is telling us the federal Tory tax grab will result in 70,000 jobs lost in the first year of its implementation. The Manitoba Bureau of Statistics announced just this morning that under the present Government, Manitoba has dropped from third to fourth in terms of the lowest unemployment rate across the country, with a seasonally adjusted rate up by .2 percent from last month. In October, 1986, we were first, now we are fourth. Yet we have before us a Budget that slashes virtually all job creation and kills training programs in this province.

My question is to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). At a time when unemployment is up in this province, how can he account for the drastic reductions in job creation measures in his Budget?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I rise because I am very concerned about the negative gloom

and doom that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) continues to spread. If she were to look at the figures that were published today by the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, she would find many, many areas that should hearten her and her colleagues about the progress that Manitoba is making. For instance, comparing last year, a year ago, to this year in terms of actual employment, there are 3,000 more people employed in Manitoba today.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Filmon: More particularly, there are 11,000 more in full-time employment. Those are the long-term jobs. Those are the jobs in the manufacturing sector, in the finance sector, in all of the strengthening areas of our economy that are responding to the moves that we have made, the reduction of the payroll tax, removing some 70 percent of those who had been paying it off the payroll tax as a result of two Budgets.

Reduction of the deficit, creating a business economy and climate that is causing people to now choose Manitoba as a place to invest, to create jobs, to grow, all of those things are very, very positive, Mr. Speaker. They show things going in the right direction.

I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is basing her concern on the fact that there are some fewer part-time jobs in Manitoba. Maybe that is what the Liberal Party would like to see is more part-time, make-work jobs, those kinds of jobs that she would like to see out of Government stimulation.

An Honourable Member: We have been through that.

Mr. Filmon: We have been through that. That was discredited. That was what defeated solidly the New Democrats in this province. That is what almost destroyed our economy, with the highest taxes, the highest debt load in our country because they went for short-term, make-work jobs. Now I am shocked at the Leader of the Opposition advocating that we should go for short-term, make-work jobs. Shame!

* (1015)

Mrs. Carstairs: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but now that the First Minister has had his little tirade this morning, would he like to address the question which is, why have there been cuts to job creation measures in this Budget and why is Manitoba now fourth when we used to be first in the country?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Liberal Party would like to go back to the NDP days in this province where all of the money that was being injected in the economy in terms of so-called job creation was for short-term make-work jobs, where we had all of those numbers of people who showed up in statistics as working in part-time jobs because of Government employment programs, I tell her she can have those days any time.

The people of Manitoba do not want those days. The people of Manitoba want what they have today and

that is increasing full-time employment, 11,000 more people employed full time in this province than were there just one year ago because business is responding, because the economy is responding to a better climate, more investment, more job creation, because we have reduced the payroll tax, because we have reduced the deficit in this province. Because we have shown our confidence in the private sector, they are responding with the kind of full-time jobs that we must have and we are very proud of it, and she can have her way of doing it any time, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Carstairs: But we still have not heard anything about job creation in the Province of Manitoba. Is that not interesting? Personal bankruptcies are up and corporate bankruptcies are up in this province and the unemployment rate vis-a-vis the rest of the country is up.

Federal Sales Tax Increases Job Losses

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Will the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) tell the House today how many jobs is it estimated that this province will lose of the 70,000 that has been announced will be lost as a result of the federal sales tax increases?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Again, let me reiterate the answer given by the Premier (Mr. Filmon). We have a different philosophy than the Liberal Party. Obviously they share the same philosophy as the NDP, and that is that they want the Government to go and buy employment statistics through short-term programs like cutting grass in the month of June. We have a different philosophy so we will have to agree to disagree on that.

With respect to the national sales tax, Mr. Speaker, we are trying to find out, get a better feel for the analysis done by the Conference Board of Canada to see specifically what measure of the impact which they talked about would apply to the Province of Manitoba. At this point in time, we do not know that.

Job Training for Tomorrow Funding Reduction

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a new question to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), once again the Conservatives seem to forget that there is more to the economy than just the business sector. There are also the people who are unemployed, Mr. Speaker, and if we are to use the Government's own words, we are to have a skilled, productive and adaptable work force, and that is their phrase. We must create incentives in order to train and educate workers. Will the Minister please tell the House today why or how he anticipates that is going to happen in Manitoba when Job Training for Tomorrow has been cut by 52 percent?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, again I must take exception with part of the preamble of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs.

Carstairs). As the Premier has indicated, there are 11,000 more employed today than there were—

An Honourable Member: Full time.

Mr. Manness: —full time, within the full-time classification, as a year ago. To me, that is meaningful employment. Mr. Speaker, the participation rate, the number of people who are measured, who are part of the employment statistics has increased. So today a much greater proportion of the total Manitoba population is being measured as being within the work force.

* (1020)

We have not reduced our commitment to retraining or to the whole area of job readaptation. Mr. Speaker, there is a tremendous commitment within the Budget, within that area. It will be continuing, because we recognize fully well that Government has a role within this area. I am afraid that the Leader of the Opposition again is attempting to mislead.

Mrs. Carstairs: We cannot get an explanation for why we have gone from third to fourth. We cannot get an explanation of how many, because he does not know 70,000 jobs are going to be lost. We cannot get an explanation for 52 percent cut in job training.

Skills Development Program Funding Reduction

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Can we get an answer to this one, Mr. Speaker? Will the Minister of Finance (Manness) tell us why Skills Development has been cut by 37 percent?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): If the Member is asking me specific questions dealing with some very specific Estimates numbers, then I would hope that she would give me proper notice so that I could give a proper response to her. Failing that, then I would ask her to put the question specifically to the Minister responsible.

Labour Skills Training Initiatives

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): My final supplementary question this morning is to the Premier. Can the Premier tell us what initiatives his Government is going to take in this province to ensure that we have a better skilled labour force in the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we as a provincial Government increased spending on education by 7 percent, education and training. We gave the largest percentage increase to the universities of our province that they have seen in six years.

We are putting our dollars where we know they will pay dividends, unlike the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), who when she was running for office

suggested that we ought to cut the program, the ACCESS Program to universities for our Native students to get university education, \$800,000 she said should be cut. That is shocking, in terms of her commitment to training for young people who need ACCESS.

Mr. Speaker, what we are doing is working. All you need to do is look particularly at the statistics for the youth unemployment rates. Youth unemployment in this province has gone down now from 13.4 percent a year ago to 11.9 percent, a dramatic improvement. We are now standing at third best in the country from sixth best in the country during the NDP, and youth employment. That is because we are concerned about the young people. We are getting them into the work force, we are getting them in at full time—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Budget Job Creation

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), the Leader of this Government (Mr. Filmon), they talk about philosophy, they talk about philosophy of economic policy. The facts are and they are confirmed again today, the Canadian average rate of unemployment is down. The rate of unemployment in Manitoba is up again.

The facts are that in the City of Winnipeg, we have the fourth-highest rate of unemployment in Canada. We are in virtually the same range once again as St. John's, Newfoundland. When will this Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), when will this Government stop talking about economic philosophy, and bring in the kind of job creation that is necessary to deal with this problem? Specifically, will this Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) now commit some of the money that he has socked away in that Fiscal Stabilization Fund for the rainy day, to provide the kind of job creation that is needed in this province for the increasing number of unemployed in Manitoba?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, much of my response, much of the response I am about to give will be similar to the response given earlier.

Again, I say that our way is working and our way is working better. It is working better because we are not borrowing hundreds of millions of dollars in support of trying to create purely favourable unemployment statistics. What we are doing is by way of a \$61 million cut, and personal income to Manitobans, asking them to take that additional disposable income, take it to the marketplace, spend and stimulate the economy, ultimately leading to the creation of jobs. That is our philosophy. The Member can pooh-pooh it, he can make fun of it, but it is the way we are approaching the whole area of job creation. That is what makes us different and that is why we are governing today and they are not.

* (1025)

Fiscal Stabilization Fund Job Creation

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact there have been 22 major layoffs and plant closures in Manitoba in this year alone, in view of the fact that there are further indications that there will be even more layoffs in the upcoming period of time, why will the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) not commit some of the money which he has put aside in this fund, which we in the New Democratic Party have indicated that we wish spent on the needs of Manitobans—unlike the Liberals who have opposed such a fund and opposed the Jobs Fund before it—why will the Minister of Finance not now commit the money, stop talking about philosophy and face the fact that Manitoba's unemployment rate is increasing? We need action.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, again I say to my honourable friend, my answer is somewhat similar. We have found out by watching the New Democratic Government in action for six years, the approach of just trying to buy jobs does not work. It just does not work. Ultimately what it leads to, it leads to the highest corporate tax rate within the land, which we still have within this province. It leads to a payroll tax of 2.25 percent which is still the highest in the country, other than Quebec, and it leads to the highest personal tax regime in the country. Unfortunately, we still are at some of the higher levels, and that is what it leads to. Ultimately, that causes the removal of jobs and 22 major businesses going out of work.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I think it has become abundantly clear to Manitobans that the record under the New Democratic Party is far better than it will ever be under the Conservatives.

Workers Compensation Board King Task Force Recommendations

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I have a further question to the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation (Mr. Connery). Not a day goes by when I, as the New Democratic Party Workers Compensation Critic, do not get a call from an injured worker in Manitoba who is faced with an extreme delay on a minor case, who is facing problems in getting his or her case dealt with.

Today, despite the fact that the King Task Force Report was released in May of 1987, there is indication by the Minister of Workers Compensation (Mr. Connery) there is not going to be legislative action for two more years. When will this Government bring in legislative action in response to the King Task Force Report to deal with the problems facing injured workers in Manitoba?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister responsible for The Workers' Compensation Act): Mr. Speaker, in one respect, as the Member says, the delays in injured workers getting to their final adjudication, which is only a very small number of the people, is true. We are working very hard to reduce that time frame.

I do say that it is rather unfortunate that the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), who is the critic for Workers Compensation, would not take advantage of an offer we made. We said, pick a day out of 10 that you can make to take you through a tour of the Workers Compensation. I will say the critic for the Liberals took us up on that offer and went through a tour of Workers Compensation. We spent a whole half a day allowing them to ask questions, to review the problems, to review the resolve that the commission is moving towards so that we can make a better Workers Compensation. I will give the Member a copy of some of the concerns that were raised and problems that he can address for himself, and if a Page would give it to him, this is what he would have gotten if he had gone on the tour.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order. The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Mr. Ashton: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), on a point of order.

Mr. Ashton: The Member made reference to be invited to a tour of the Workers Compensation Board. I was invited on a specific day. On that day, I was in Ottawa as part of a protest against the northern tax allowance policies of the federal Government.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Ashton: I indicated to the Workers Compensation Board—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Ashton: —to his own secretary that I would be glad to take a tour of the facilities.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Ashton: I would ask the Minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Ashton: —for the Workers Compensation Board (Mr. Connery) to withdraw his rather sleazy accusation.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

* (1030)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member knows a dispute over facts is not a point of order. The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, perhaps in the answer to my question, the Minister will have the guts to do that. I asked the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order. The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), kindly withdraw your remarks.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I will certainly withdraw "guts," if the Minister will withdraw his false accusation with regard to Workers Compensation Board.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Member for Thompson.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this Government has only moved on two things in regard to Workers Compensation, firing Lissa Donner and bringing in the Chamber of Commerce's proposals for experienced rating system, when is this Government going to do something for injured workers and bring in an Act based on the King Task Force Report?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Act): Mr. Speaker, I do think it is unfortunate when the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) gets into that sort of rhetoric when we are trying as best we can to deal with the injured workers of Manitoba.

If the Member would like to refer those comments and procedures to a committee, I would be very prepared to do it. The Member was given a series of days up until the 17th of May, which was the day before the House went in, that he could pick a day we worked with the critic for the Liberal Party. He had an opportunity. He then wrote a letter to us with some concerns over Workers Compensation, and we replied to the Member, would you like another tour? We prepared to set up a day tour at his decision on his day that he would select. I have not had a reply from the Member yet to go and examine, take a tour.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), on a point of order.

Mr. Ashton: I really believe that in the interests of the proper function of this Question Period the Minister should not get into an extended fictional approach. Mr. Speaker, I have phoned the Workers Compensation Board indicating that I am pleased to be able to take a tour of the facility at any time and I wish the Minister would stick to the facts.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. We are very contentious this Friday.

Prince Charles School Closure

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, on a serious note, the final graduation from the Prince Charles School will be held in less than two weeks, and then the school will be closed. The remaining children are to be integrated into high schools in Winnipeg No. 1. Approval in principle was given by the Public Schools' Finance Board last February. Parents, children and staff have been preparing for this move for over a year, but where are the actual funds that are necessary to prepare the clusters in the receiving schools? It is a pathetic situation, where handicapped children will be sent out into the community without even adequate planning and preparation for their acceptance into the local schools, into the mainstream.

Will the Minister check today with the chairperson of the Public Schools' Finance Board to demand the approval of the funds for the clusters in those schools that will be receiving these vulnerable young people.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, with regard to the closing of Prince Charles School, that is a decision that is made by the school division. The school division then makes application to the Public Schools' Finance Board with regard to renovations that need to be made to the various schools. The Public Schools' Finance Board has moved as quickly as it possibly can in terms of providing the kind of access that is required to the schools and the upgrading that is required to those schools.

However, I have to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that the decision and the planning has to be done at the local school division level. Before that school division makes the decision to close that particular school, they have to ensure, as a school division that is responsible for those kinds of matters, that those facilities be adequate for students who are going to be received into those various schools.

Public Schools' Finance Board Mandate

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): The hold-up in this matter, Mr. Speaker, appears to be that the Public Schools' Finance Board is dictating to the Winnipeg No. 1 School Division that the Prince Charles must be designated as an educational setting. Will the Minister intervene and ensure that the Public Schools' Finance Board is operating within its mandate?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the Public Schools' Finance Board does operate within its mandate. I do not know what issue the Member is raising now. She has slipped from one item to another. Mr. Speaker, first of all, she asks about the provision of adequate space. Now she is talking about using the Prince Charles School as an educational institution.

Mr. Speaker, any school that is closed in this province has been funded by the taxpayers of this province, and

certainly the first priority for use of any building that is closed as a school is going to be as an educational institution rather than some meeting place for other groups.

Handicapped Children Educational Facilities

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): The facilities for the handicapped children should be a priority with this Government. Will the Minister personally guarantee that the facilities be in place on September 1 when children from Prince Charles School will be back at school, each handicapped child in a new and unfamiliar setting?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, it is not up to the Minister of Education or the department to ensure that when a school division makes a decision to close, a school which has facilities that are up to par for handicapped children, that it is up to the department to ensure that other schools then will have those facilities up to par.

That school division, whether it is Winnipeg No. 1 or whether it is any other school division, must ensure that if it is going to close a facility that the facilities where the students are going to be designated for, in fact, have facilities that are upgraded to spec, and it is certainly not up to the department to do that.

Labour Adjustment Branch Funding

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Labour. In the Speech from the Throne, this Government stated that they plan "to expand," and I emphasize the word expand, "provincial measures to help Manitoba workers adapt to changing job and skill requirements." Mr. Speaker, we saw that as an admission of the deleterious effects of the Free Trade Agreement in this province and we welcome that admission. But, Mr. Speaker, we need a real commitment to labour adjustment in this province.

My question is, why did the Department of Labour lose 1.1 percent in funding, and more particularly, why did the Labour Adjustment Branch only receive a scant \$60,000 in additional funding to come up with the new initiatives which had been promised by this Government?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, in the first place, I do not agree with the Honourable Member that free trade has anything to do with any of the closures that have happened in this province, and we deeply -(Interjection)- I also wish to say that our department, the Department of Labour, is working with any of the firms and any of the employees that need adjustment, and that we will be able to work within the monies that we have in our department with the employer, with the employees, to make sure that workers do have an easy task as far as finding jobs or getting retraining, whether it is our department or any other department in this Government.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. James, with a supplementary question.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, this Minister obviously was not involved in the writing of the Speech from the Throne because there is a specific admission that there is massive job dislocation going on in this province.

* (1040)

Initiatives

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): My further supplementary is, aside from these nice words, what specific new initiatives, as promised, will the Labour Adjustment Branch be taking in the coming year with \$1.46 per unemployed worker in the province for the coming year?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): I will take that question as notice.

Pay Equity Branch Funding

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. James, with a final supplementary.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): The Minister of Labour albeit is new at her job, however, the crisis is here. It is happening every day. Mr. Speaker, finally for the same Minister, why is the Pay Equity Branch of the Department of Labour losing 1.1 percent in funding after inflation, given the commitment in the Speech from the Throne to extend pay equity further into the public sector? How is this Minister going to achieve the stated commitment of expansion when the Pay Equity Branch has taken a cut?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): It is not the intention of this Government to have to spend more money to do work. Our branch, the Pay Equity Branch, will be able to deliver a program without throwing money at the problem. We have that program under control. Most of the work in the Civil Service has been accomplished. We are now consulting with the other groups that we are hoping to bring on stream, but it does not mean that we have to throw more money in. If we can do more for less, we will.

Liquor Control Commission Rural Outlet Closures

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner). Yesterday, we raised a number of concerns with respect to initiatives that were contained in the three-year strategic plan of the Manitoba Liquor Commission, which we received through The Freedom of Information Act. We have some very serious concerns with respect to the inconsistencies of the Government's rhetoric on drunk driving on the one hand and its Crown corporation's actions to promote increased drinking on the other.

In their Speech from the Throne, the Government talked about a strategy to strengthen Manitoba's rural communities. The plans of the commission are also inconsistent with this Government's policies. Can the Minister responsible for the Liquor Control Commission tell this House how the closure of 11 rural liquor stores and the redeployment of existing employees, as outlined in the commission's strategic plan, coincides with this Government's commitment to decentralize service delivery?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I stand as the Acting Minister of Justice whose responsibility is the overview of the Liquor Control Commission. I can indicate to the Minister that the question will be answered in greater detail by the Minister on his return. But with respect to the information brought forward by the Minister yesterday, much of that was a strategic plan developed within the Liquor Control Commission long before this Government came to power. I think Members of the New Democratic Party were well aware of that and that is probably one of the reasons they asked for information from Freedom of Information.

Ms. Hemphill: A licensing official has indicated and confirmed the fact that the commission is moving to implement parts of this plan. Would the Government today or as soon as possible provide information to the 11 rural communities where the intention is to close in those communities, so that they can prepare for the loss of jobs and the impact of the closures? Would you put the information out to the public of what is being considered by your Government?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, that is a fair request and it is probably the reason that an announcement was made by the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) in Brandon on Tuesday, indicating that there would be a task force very quickly involved with two people, the Deputy Minister of Rural Development plus the Chairman of Manitoba Hydro, who would be looking particularly into areas of Crowns, strategic plans and other opportunities for rural development. I would think that the request is fair and we will undertake to provide that information.

Ms. Hemphill: I appreciate that answer. I think it would also be wise then to communicate to the commission that there will be no movement or intention to look at this until that task force has completed its work.

Liquor Control Commission U.S. Beer Sales

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, with a final supplementary, it would appear now that the worst fears of the Manitoba beer industry are going to be realized if the commission proceeds with their plans to permit imported beer to be carried by beer vendors. Given Manitoba's rising unemployment, given the Molson-Carling merger and the results of that and the experience that shows that American beer producers have taken as much as 30 percent of the market, can the Government please get on the phone to the

commission immediately and tell them their plans for the vendor sale of U.S. imports are unacceptable?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): First of all, let me say that any relationship between the importation of foreign beer is the subject matter of GATT rulings, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trades. It has nothing to do with free trade. Free trade has beer excluded from it. As well, foreign beer entering this province, as I understand it, will have an imposition of warehousing and distribution placed upon it over and above the cost of regular beer that is now borne by Manitoba breweries, so that additional cost will be applied to any foreign beer entering this province to be sold in any kind of location. That will impose a price differential which is significant.

Federal Sales Tax Revenue Neutral

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), once again we have yet another study of Mr. Wilson's proposed sales tax which contradicts the Finance Minister's repeated assurances in this Chamber that the tax would be revenue neutral. The Conference Board of Canada reports that the tax will not be revenue neutral. Not only that, but it will increase inflation, slow economic growth and reduce net job creation by 72,000 jobs. Will the Minister table the studies which he used to come to the conclusion that the tax will be revenue neutral?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Let me firstly say I do not know what specific quote or reference the Member is making with regard to some past comments of mine. Let me say firstly, within the federal context, that I was again using the general statement made by the Minister of Finance of Canada that the tax would be revenue neutral, and at the end of the day of course it was that there may be more money coming in but, through tax credits, through sales tax credits, most of that would be rebated out. I am not here to debate or to give greater clarity to that statement.

With respect to Manitoba and whether or not if we were to be an equal partner, which at this time we are not, I said that tax would be revenue neutral. That is obviously not going to require further discussion because Manitoba will not be a partner in national sales tax reforms. Indeed, no other province will.

Tourism Impact

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, to the Minister for Tourism (Mr. Ernst), at a time when Manitoba is trying to strengthen its tourism industry despite cuts to the Minister's budget, this sales tax will create a \$1 billion reduction in revenues in tourism and will encourage people to go south rather than come to Manitoba. Can the Minister table the studies that he has used to do his planning to get ready for this tax?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): First of all, Mr. Speaker, let me say that the

preamble of the Member is wrong. The tourism budget is not cut. If anyone on the opposite side had bothered to ask, they would have found out that the reduction of about \$300,000 in the tourism budget related to overexpenditures from the former NDP Government that had to be contemplated last year in order to pick up those costs.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, on top of the million dollar increase in spending that we put into marketing last year in tourism, over and above that we have solicited and have entered into agreements with two private sector companies to enhance the Government's and the taxpayers' expenditures with regard to tourism in this province, and have in fact contributed significantly towards our marketing budget for this year.

Now to deal with the exact question, we are very concerned with regard to the imposition of sales tax and how it will affect the tourism industry. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has held the price on liquor just for that purpose. We have delayed the question of the gasoline tax, just for that particular purpose, in order to enhance tourism in the Province of Manitoba.

* (1050)

Manitoba Impact

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): My question, Mr. Speaker, was what will the impact of that federal tax be on Manitoba and what studying have you done for it?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): The question continues to be repetitive. There has been nobody that has a great model. The Conference Board has a fair one, the Department of Finance federally has a better one, but there is no province in Canada that has a grand model that allows them to understand immediately the impact of any tax. So he asks a question that cannot be answered. In a sense, it is to know immediately the impact on any sector within any province within the nation. He knows better.

Family Allowances Benefits Changes

Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Leis (St. Johns): I have a question for the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). As all Members know, in the recent federal Budget, the Mulroney Government introduced measures to claw back Old Age Security and Family Allowance benefits to ordinary Canadian families. As the Minister is undoubtedly aware, these benefits are already considered part of income for tax purposes. The Mulroney proposal would actually impose a special tax on OAS and Family Allowances so that they would be taxed at a much higher rate than any other types of income.

My question to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) is, considering that the Leader of the Liberal Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) here in Manitoba has said she finds no fault with this particular part of the Conservative Budget, what is the Minister of Family

Services' position, this Government's position, on the proposed clawback?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): As I understand it, that will be on higher income people. Manitoba recognized the need for families to have more income and that is why we changed the tax structure for families in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), with a supplementary question.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister is probably not aware of the full nature of this proposal given the fact that the limit is not indexed, which means that in very short order almost a third of Canadian taxpayers will soon be covered by this proposal.

My question to the Minister, therefore, is one of tax fairness and one of this Government's policy with respect to Family Services and family policy. Given the fact that we have all kinds of tax breaks for the rich and given the fact that there will be families making—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: —over \$56,000 will soon lose 100 percent of their Family Allowance—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Would the Honourable Member kindly put her question now?

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: What is the position of this provincial Government on this proposed clawback and what is her department's new policy on family policy?

Mrs. Oleson: This Government's policy toward families is to do all we can to help families. We demonstrated that by giving them a tax break with this Budget.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) has time for one very short question.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: A short question, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister goes back and studies the nature of the federal proposal and finds that it has that kind of impact on Canadian families—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member, kindly put her question, now.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: —will the Minister agree to put considerable pressure on the federal Government to have this clawback reversed and to ensure fairness for Canadian families?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Speaker, this Government is interested in fairness to families.

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

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I wonder if we could have leave of the House to revert back to Reading and Receiving Petitions.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have leave to revert back to Reading and Receiving Petitions? (Agreed)

Order, please; order, please. Under Reading and Receiving Petitions, I must inform the House that the petition of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) does not comply with our rules and practices in that: a) it has not been endorsed by the Member presenting it as required by Rule 81.(5); b) it is not in the form set out in Appendix "A" to the Rules of the House and as referred to in Rule 81.(6); c) it does not comply with the usual practices of this House whereby petitions are phrased in the form of a prayer requesting action by the House; and d) instead of the above, it has been written in the style of a motion or a resolution.

I must, therefore, rule the petition out of order.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to make a non-political statement?

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

Mr. Lamoureux: This year commemorates the 91st Anniversary of the Filipino independence from Spain. The proclamation occurred at Kawit, Cavite on June 12, 1898.

The Filipino community will be hosting a Philippine Heritage Week between June 11 to the 18. Some of the activities include: a thanksgiving mass, an orientation workshop and a flag-raising ceremony at City Hall. On June 15, approximately 80 new Canadians will participate in the citizenship ceremony.

The Filipino community has become an important part of the multicultural fabric of Manitoba and Canada, and I am sure all Manitobans join with me and the Filipino Canadians in celebrating the 91st Anniversary of its independence.

The struggle for the Philippine independence was led by Emilio Aguinaldo who became the first President and created the first Constitutional Cabinet as Premier.

Filipino Canadians are becoming increasingly important in all facets of Canadian life, business, education, and even in politics where my good friend, Dr. Rey Pagtakhan, is so ably demonstrating to the people of the Winnipeg North area.

Canadian life is enhanced by multicultural groups who settle in Canada and contribute to the social, political and economic development of our country. Thank you.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): I wonder if I may have leave to make a non-political statement?

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

Mr. Cowan: Yesterday, a delegation of supporters of the Port of Churchill travelled to Ottawa to meet with federal Ministers to lobby on behalf of the port. That delegation included elected officials of three levels of Government. It included representatives of unions, businesses, aboriginal groups and the farming community. It included representatives of lobby groups for the port and northern Manitoba, and it included residents of both Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

That diverse group was bound together by one common purpose. They care about the Port of Churchill and they fear for its future. They care about the Hudson Bay rail line and they fear for its future as well. Every member of that delegation in the meeting with the federal Ministers spoke eloquently and passionately about the port and its importance to the North, its importance to Manitoba, to prairie farmers and to Canada as a whole.

They spoke out strongly in defence of the port and the railway. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, their presence and their words were effective. At yesterday's meeting, we heard better news on Churchill than we have heard for a very long time.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowan: Firstly, we received a definitive commitment that the Port of Churchill will be kept open. The federal Minister of Transport, Benoit Bouchard, clearly stated that he has no current plans to close the Port of Churchill. Secondly, Mr. Bouchard assured the delegation that there are no current or anticipated plans to abandon the Hudson Bay rail line. Thirdly, the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board indicated it is likely that grain will be shipped through the Port of Churchill this year. That is a complete turnaround from comments made last month by Government Ministers that it was highly unlikely any grain would be shipped through Churchill this year. That is the better news.

Unfortunately, the bad news is that the federal Government still refuses to commit to shipping a fair share of Canada's grain export shipments through the Port of Churchill on an ongoing basis by ensuring that the Canadian Wheat Board ships an average of at least 3 percent of total grain exports through Churchill on an annual basis.

The delegation yesterday was unanimous in that recommendation and they avow to continue to fight for that goal and fairness for Churchill. I am certain all Members of the Legislature will join with me in thanking members of the delegation for that which they have accomplished and, furthermore, in encouraging them to continue the fight for fairness for Churchill.

* (1100)

In recognition of those efforts, I would like to read the names of those in the Port of Churchill Ottawa

delegation into the records of this Legislature: Mr. Dennis Delaronde, President of the local union at the Port of Churchill and representing the Manitoba Metis Federation; Mr. John Hrominчук, President of the Churchill Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Mark Ingerbrigtsen, Mayor of Churchill; Mr. Charlie Phelps, President of the Hudson Bay Route Association; Mr. Don Figsurski, Chairperson of the Port of Churchill Development Board; Mr. Stan Geddes, Mayor of Lynn Lake and Chairperson of the Northern Manitoba Regional Development Corporation; Mr. Ken Collin, Deputy Mayor, Thompson; Mr. Terry Hendrickson of The Pas Port of Churchill Promotion Committee; and representing Members of this Legislature in that group, Mr. Speaker, were Mr. Gary Doer, Mr. John Plohman, Mr. Elijah Harper, Mr. Steve Ashton, myself and, of course, Rod Murphy, the MP for Churchill was present.

I want to personally thank all of those in the delegation for all that they have done to help Churchill through this difficult time.

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

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

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for Churchill on his making those comments to the Legislature. I, as well, want to associate the Government's thank you to those individuals who went to the Government of Ottawa yesterday on a delegation. I may say that my colleague, the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), has been working very aggressively to accomplish those very goals. I think it is a matter of joint efforts that are paying some rewards, and I show my thank you on behalf of the Government for those efforts.

The records of the province, whatever Government it has been, I am sure has over the past many years, remembering our activities as Government from '77 to '81, the efforts put forward to bring a national recognition to the usefulness of the port and the need for extending the season to increase the capacity. It is that continued follow-through support by the last administration in Manitoba and, again, the continued efforts of the Hudson Bay Route Association, the different organizations, through legislative committees we had, through efforts that were advanced yesterday I am sure will continue to auger well. We are in absolute full support of the maximum use of Churchill not only for the use of exporting of grain, but for alternative activities as well.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) is today in Ottawa aggressively negotiating with a customer that could well be some of the grain that will be flowing through there. So I thank the Members of the House for giving me this opportunity for making those comments. Let me say it is the kind of activity we have seen that we all are very supportive of.

ORDERS OF THE DAY BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the adjourned debate, the fifth day, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that this House approve, in general, the budgetary policy of the Government which was left open. The Honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner).

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): It gives me some pleasure to be able to rise in the House today to address the Budget.

Rural Manitobans have for a long, long time looked forward to a Budget such as our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) tabled in this House just a few days ago. They have been looking forward to less taxation. They have been looking forward to an indication from this Government to support the establishment of viable industrial units in rural Manitoba.

Rural Manitoba has suffered through an economic time period during the last three or four years that has been unprecedented, I guess, by no other period. I say this because farmers in rural Manitoba today have to expend large amounts of money every year to put their crops in. Action that Government takes in taxation of products or the reduction of taxation has a major impact on the economy of that farm community.

Farmers for instance today spend \$150 an acre to put a crop in before they are ever able to even harvest a crop that they can sell or have incomes. I think that needs to be recognized. This Government clearly indicated an economic strategy in this Budget that will lead towards the alleviation of some of the taxation that rural Manitobans have had to face under the previous administration.

Small businesses are applauding the reduction of the added tax on employment opportunities that the previous administration installed. I have had many phone calls, Mr. Speaker, in the last few days saying that we, for a long time, have looked forward to the reduction of some of these taxes.

Families all over rural Manitoba are applauding the increases to the child dependency taxes. It is really a reduction of child taxes that we are talking about. The payroll exemption will allow those small businesses that are so prevalent in rural communities to employ more people, to encourage more families to establish and live in those smaller towns and cities in rural Manitoba.

The industries that are so dependent on a good economy, a good trade balance and a good trade climate are looking forward to be able to be put in a more competitive position because of the payroll tax exemptions.

Those same communities are also looking forward to the better medical services that are being discussed in this Budget, \$54 million to Manitobans is a large amount of money to build and operate hospitals. I say to you that some of the facilities out in the rural parts of Manitoba and some of the smaller towns and villages,

some of our hospitals are in sad need of upgrading and repair, and those communities are applauding this Minister's Budget.

The \$13 million that we talk about to an increase in care homes is welcomed out in the rural parts of Manitoba. Again I say this to you because the family concept, the family unit is so important to rural Manitoba. Those families want to keep their elderly people as close to home as they can, and for that reason many of the towns and villages in rural Manitoba are saying we look forward with open arms to the increase in spending in the personal care home area. Towns such as St. Jean are saying maybe now this Government is receptive to us building better care homes so we can keep our elderly people in our own communities, and let their families be closer to the elderly and take care of them.

Education is a very important part of life in rural Manitoba and the importance of establishing good educational facilities in rural Manitoba to provide that declining population out there with the kind of facilities which are required to make sure that the young people in those rural communities have the ability to have a proper education.

The increase in funding to our universities is going to be ever more important to make sure that the young people of our province have the proper background and education to move into this new world of high technology, to develop good management skills, to learn to be good businessmen.

* (1110)

The \$6 million spent to provide communities with better day care service is welcomed by rural communities, because day care services to rural Manitoba have been an important part of rural life. Farmers and their wives have had to take off-farm jobs to support their farm units. It is becoming ever more important that those farm families are able to access some outside income to support their businesses to make sure that those businesses will be viable when the agricultural economy turns around. This Government has realized the dilemma that Manitobans have faced.

We have also indicated in our Budget \$37 million more dollars to develop our primary and our secondary school systems. Again I need only to go back to my constituency and look at some of the conditions that some of our school buildings are in such towns as Letellier, which I toured not too many months ago. You can actually shake the outside wall of the building. They have the stairs propped up with bricks to keep them up. I say to you Members opposite that if you think the facilities that you have in this city are in need of repair, go and look at some of our rural facilities. Take a look at them. What we are doing about it is that we have indicated \$37 million more dollars to make sure that those kind of facilities will be in better shape for our future generations, to make sure that the education opportunities exist.

But more important to rural Manitoba than all that is the ability for those industries that are currently

operating in rural Manitoba and those that want to establish in rural Manitoba to have access to a proper infrastructure, a proper transportation system. Those of us who have grown up in rural Manitoba and operated and ran businesses in rural Manitoba know how important our highway system is to get our goods to market. More and more of our products move these days by truck. Regardless of what kind of transportation laws or changes are made federally on to the railway system, more and more of our goods are going to and will move by truck. So it is important that our highway system be upgraded to recognize that.

I certainly welcome the initiative that this Government has taken and the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) has indicated, in the increased amount of dollars spent and that are going to be spent on the construction of good roads to provide those rural communities with a proper transportation route. Highway 75, for instance, was not even on the program until we put it back on the program. It is now back on the program and we are going to, as quickly as allowed, will move towards twinning Highway 75. Not only has the Minister indicated that he will do this as quickly as possible, he has started at both ends.

An Honourable Member: Will it reach the middle?

Mr. Penner: It will reach the middle, Sir, it will reach the middle. It will not only reach the middle, it will expand beyond the middle, and the south-north traffic flow that is so badly needed to move products into a 250 million person market will be expanded and enhanced by the twinning of Highway 75. It is a clear commitment by this Government to create jobs that will be long-term jobs by encouraging industries to establish and expand, not only in rural Manitoba but also in Winnipeg.

The Business Start Loans Program that was announced by Mr. Manness (Minister of Finance) in his Budget is certainly a welcome one. We have many, many small entrepreneurs in this province that only need just a bit of encouragement and a bit of financial help to get them started, to develop for themselves not only an ability to build and provide more jobs but to be able to target and develop and search out those markets that they need to be able to manufacture and produce the goods they know how to produce. There are many of them. That program has been identified as a key program to get those small industries on their feet.

The Vision Capital Fund again will lend support to those businesses that want to expand and industries that want to start. I refer to both of those programs because they are so vital to the program that we have initiated to turn around the migration of people out of rural Manitoba into urban centres.

I want to spend just a few minutes on the Fiscal Stabilization Fund that the Minister announced. It is interesting that the Opposition Parties have called it a slush fund or they call it a sock. They call it all sorts of things but the right thing. Those of us who have been in business for a number of years understand how savings accounts operate.

Those of us who have had to borrow fairly large sums of money during given periods of time understand what it means to set aside some money for a rainy day. I say to those Members opposite who call it a slush fund that they need to take a course in economics. They need to take a course in business administration for they know not what they talk about. It is fairly simple that when you are able to borrow money at a lesser rate of interest than what the current rate of interest is, it is sometimes a wise decision to take an amount of earnings and set it aside and collect the interest and not pay down a loan that is in at a lower rate.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Will I borrow money this year to buy a car next year, Jack?

Mr. Penner: Farmers understand that, and farmers are able to earn and know what it means to earn income, interest income on those sums of money to be able to do exactly what you are referring to, Mr. Evans, to buy the car.

An Honourable Member: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

Mr. Penner: Sorry about that, the Honourable Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans).

The Honourable Member, having been a professor for a long, long, time should know that if you are unable to earn interest on a sum of money that you can set aside, you can actually buy the car and keep a mechanic employed to service that car and keep a gas jockey employed to pump gas into that car, instead of paying down a debt at a lesser rate of interest than is currently going. I say that is good business; that is employing people. Plus, if and when you need to draw on those accounts to make up balances because of unforeseen circumstances, you have a bit of money around that you do not need to borrow. That is the benefit of having a Fiscal Stabilization Fund, Mr. Speaker.

* (1120)

Savings accounts, Mr. Speaker, are good accounts. They allow investment capital to grow and they also encourage creditors, when they look at you, to determine that you are responsible and, when they determine the credit ratings, it has a big bearing on that.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, William Chornopyski, in the Chair.)

I want to turn back just a wee bit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the whole area of the removal of the payroll tax and what kind of effect that has on some businesses in this province. We had a situation where we had a small businessman, and he was not a businessman until he had to become a businessman because he was laid off in a garment factory because the garment factory he was working for closed. This person turned around and set up shop in his own basement, and he and his wife started sewing sports jackets for the local community.

They did a good job. They put out a quality product and the little business in their basement grew. It grew

to the point where they had to employ 12 people in that basement of their own home because of the quality product they were putting out and the market that was developing. This young fellow moved out of that basement and moved back into the same place that he had worked before when he was laid off and rented this place and is now employing some 80 people.

Well, the payroll tax hit him square in the face. It became a factor in whether he could remain competitive or not remain competitive. He said to me just four months ago, if this payroll tax stays in place, I am going to have to shut my doors and lay off 80 people.

That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is why we removed a bigger portion of the payroll tax, to keep people working in our communities so they can support their families and stay there. Not only would one person have been laid off this time around, but 80 families would have been deprived of their income. Such are the implications of taxing at the wrong level. The 2 percent reduction in personal tax is something that this province has not seen in many, many years. I say to the Liberal Opposition, if they want to oppose that reduction in tax, go ahead, but you are going to have to incur the wrath of the public out there when you do so. When you vote against this Fiscal Stabilization Fund, you will be voting against the very basis of good business management, of sound management practices.

There are many areas in this province that are looking forward to actions by this Government to support the infrastructure program that we have talked about in our Budget, and the needs. There are many communities in this province that want to expand, that have industries that could establish there, but one of the restrictions that they have is that the infrastructure within their own system is not able to support expansion or establishment of new industries. That is one of the reasons why we have negotiated long and hard with the federal Government to look at a southern development initiative. It is important that those communities are able to, because of their incapacity to finance those kinds of expansions of the infrastructure, that they are able to expand those facilities.

I want to stress again the importance to agriculture, to the agricultural community, of the establishment of secondary industry in this province, the need to develop industries that will add value, that will add jobs and create employment in this province. I say to you, the initiatives that were announced in this Budget will lead towards that.

The Honourable Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) asked, when will it happen? It is happening today, and I indicate to you that there is a new air of optimism out there in rural Manitoba. It is caused not only by the economic turnaround, by better prices that they are seeing because of weather conditions and market abilities, probably even because of freer trade attitudes in the world.

We have got to encourage the investments in those communities and encourage the establishment and retention of those farms through initiatives such as we are proposing. For that reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker,

I am proud. I am proud today to stand here and say that I am a Member of the Government that has put in place a new air of optimism into this province.

I am interested to hear what the Honourable Member opposite has to say, but let me quote to you from an editorial that was in the Winnipeg Free Press, and it says, "Paying the price of politics in provincial Budgets," and it goes on to talk about the theory, "Governments get themselves into debt in poor times in order to cushion their voters from real economic consequences of letting the market settle everything. In theory, the borrowing can be paid back when times are better, perhaps even from the natural growth in taxes that are generated by a prosperous economy."

Well, Governments do borrow when they need to. Some Governments do borrow when they need to. Some Governments borrow even when they do not have to, or when they should not be borrowing.

Let me go on to quote Mr. Cleverley: "Governments borrow when times are bad and spend wildly when times are good. Ontario provides a good example." He says, "Given the overheated economy of that province, times were never better for reducing its accumulated debt." And I ask you, did the Premier of Ontario reduce the debt when his economy was booming? Did the Liberals in Ontario do that? Would they do that in Manitoba?

Well, instead of reducing his debt during good times, he actually increased it. He actually increased it. What would happen if he had decreased his debt? When the economy turns around in Ontario for the worse, what is he going to do now?

I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it will take a dozen Mr. Mannesses in Ontario to clean up the mess that has been created by this Liberal administration, the Peterson administration in Ontario. I say to you, when that economy turns around in Ontario, I would not want to live in Ontario. If we had that sort of economic strategy in this province, I certainly would not want to live in this province. I am proud of our Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) and in the Budget that he presented.

* (1130)

I want to say to you that all of Manitoba looks forward to the economic benefits this Budget will provide to them, the allowances that it makes for individuals to spend more money on what they want to buy, whether it is television sets or toasters or, yes, even cars. Maybe, just maybe, we could start and the Honourable Member from Ontario said before, when will you start making big changes in this province to lead towards the turnaround in the outflow of people from rural Manitoba into the urban centre? When will you make that change, he says.

I say to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have already started, but that the turnaround will be a long and painful process, that it will not be easy. It will not happen just in one year but it will take many years to turn around that attitude and encourage and instill more confidence over a long period of time. I would encourage the Honourable Member opposite to take a positive

attitude and not use the negative approach the Liberal Party has used up to now.

When you start talking gloom and doom for a long period of time, even whether you are in good times, you start believing that you are going down the tubes. I say to the Liberal Party that if they are going to keep on this gloom and doom theme, they are going to convince themselves that not only the province is going down the tube, but they are also going down the tubes. I am beginning to think they believe it already, as do the rest of Manitobans.

There is one other thing I want to raise before I sit down, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was encouraged by many of the comments that leaders all over this province made about the Budget, about the tax cuts, about the incentives that were put out for the creation of new industries, whether in rural Manitoba or in urban Manitoba, about the whole aspect of the economic move towards prosperity in this province.

There was, however, one person who I was somewhat surprised at, and he is the general manager of the Keystone Agricultural Producers. When he took a critical view of our Budget, and it leaves me to wonder whether that person is actually going to be running for the Liberals next time, as rumours have it, or what is happening over there. As soon as I heard those comments, I took the opportunity of speaking to the leaders of that organization. The remarks that the general manager of that Keystone organization made most certainly do not conform with the comments that I heard from the elected leadership of that organization.

It hurt me deeply, having been involved so closely with that organization, to have criticism come from that organization that there was nothing in this Budget for rural Manitoba. It indicated very clearly to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the person had taken a very shallow look at our Budget.

I want to say to you that farmers do not want charity. Farmers want to be able to look at an economic climate that they can themselves make a living on their own farms. They want market opportunities. They want prices for their products. They want to be paid for them. They do not want Government handouts. For the general manager of a farm organization to stand in front of TV cameras and tell the rest of the world that farmers are demanding a free handout from Government is not acceptable. I do not accept that as a farmer, nor do the leaders of the Keystone organization accept that.

I want to say to you, and I want to put this on the record, that it is time that the rest of the world recognize that the farm community is quite pleased and quite happy to be able to look at an economic turnaround and a price turnaround and are looking forward to a good crop. I say to you, the good Lord has let it rain this spring and they are pleased with the rain that they have received. The prospects of a good crop are there. If the prices hold up, they will not need Government handouts nor Government supports and they do not want it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have taken maybe too much of your time but I have appreciated to have been able

to speak very briefly about the impacts of the Budget that this Government has presented. I have stood here and I stand here with pride to be a Member of this Government. It pleases me to be able to be involved in not only putting in place economic opportunities for rural Manitoba and the rest of Manitoba but to be able to encourage them to stay in this province and to raise their families in this province because this is a good province. The opportunities here are far better than in most others. We need to encourage our people to stay here, our young people to stay here, not only by indicating economic opportunities but by indicating the lifestyle that can be had here and the freedom that we have here.

I was honoured to be at a gathering last night where the extreme hurt was expressed at what happened in China. We only need to reflect on some of the words that were said over there to realize how fortunate we are to live in a province that is as free as we are and has as many benefits as we have to give to our young people. We should encourage our young people to stay here. We should encourage our older people to raise their families here, to keep their families here because this is a good place to live. I am proud to be a Member of this Government that resides here now.

Ms. Judy Wasylcyia-Leis (St. Johns): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to join in this debate on the 1989 Budget of the Manitoba Government.

There have been some very interesting developments in the last few days around this Budget. Political opportunism of the Conservatives has clearly caused them to hold their noses, restrain their natural instincts and bring in a Budget that has some merit, some sensitivity to the needs of families and individuals here in Manitoba.

Political opportunism has also put the Liberals, the Liberal Opposition, the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) in a real pickle. That political opportunism caused those Liberals to jump immediately following the Speech from the Throne and decide that this was the perfect opportunity to respond to their lust for power, to seize the moment to put a motion of non-confidence before this House with little argument for doing so, with little basis in fact, and to cause this House to devote its time to dealing with that matter of non-confidence.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those Liberals are in, as I said, a pickle. They cannot figure out what to do. They have been presented with a Budget that has some fairness in it for families and individuals, but having demonstrated such political opportunism with the Speech from the Throne they are not sure what to do, how they should respond to this Budget. We still do not know exactly what their position will be. We do not know whether they are going to vote in favour of families and tax breaks for families. We do not know whether they are going to vote in favour of a better Manitoba because we do not know whether or not political opportunism and that lust for power will rule the day.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): How about an orgy?

* (1140)

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) says, how about an orgy. I think there is no question in this House that what we have seen on the part of both the Conservatives and the Liberals is an orgy of infatuation for political power. The power plays and the political games that have gone on over the last couple of days clearly reveal that what is at the top of the agenda for both political Parties, for both old-line Parties, is a power grab, is in the case of the Conservatives, holding on desperately to that very weak position of power, and in the case of the Liberals, making the fast move and hoping that if they get to the polls quick enough, the Manitoba public will not be able to see the true weaknesses and the true inconsistencies in the policies of the Liberal Party.

Maybe it is not just political opportunism, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the part of the Liberals. Maybe this uncertainty that they are facing now with respect to the provincial Budget is not just a question of how to carry through on this play that they started out with respect to the Speech from the Throne. Maybe it has to do with the fact that they really do not know how to handle a Budget like this because they do not know where they stand, because in actual fact they have clearly come out time and time again in favour of tax breaks for corporations. They have clearly come out against the family when it comes to something as serious and as devastating as the federal clawback.

They have clearly stood in the way of progressive measures like pay equity for all women in our society, like non-profit quality day care for all people in our society, for all families in Manitoba. They have a real problem in facing the Manitoba public as they should be faced over a document like this. They should be forced to come clear with their positions. They should let the people of Manitoba know where they come down on this question of public expenditures, on this question of deficit, what size of deficit is appropriate, on the question of universality of social programs, and on the question of job creation and full employment for all Manitobans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have yet to hear that clear, definitive statement on the part of the Liberals, and we would hope that in the coming days that will be revealed, that this political Party, the Liberal Party will not be so anxious to rush to the polls without first, in all honesty and fairness to the people of Manitoba, letting the people of Manitoba, letting this Legislative Assembly know where they stand, what is their political program on all of the critical issues facing Manitoba.

The New Democratic Party position has been clear early on in this debate. The position has been clearly stated and articulated by our Leader and by a number of our colleagues today. I will be carrying on with those remarks in that position and enunciating our views with respect to both this Budget in terms of what is in it but also in terms of what is missing and what we expect to hear from this Conservative Government and how we think minority Government can actually work to the benefit of all Manitobans.

The Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey), among other things—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for bringing both the raucous Grits and the raucous Tories under control. The orgy obviously continues.

I was about to say that the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey), among other things, questioned from his seat why we were voting for this Budget. I want to clarify that position and put some ideas on the table that I hope he will be listening to and, I hope, acting on it. We do not expect all of our ideas to be acted upon by Conservatives, given their particular ideological bent, given their infatuation with the free marketplace. However, I think given the minority Government situation and given their interests in preserving their power, however feeble it may be in Manitoba today, that there will be some sensitivity and some willingness to act on some of our ideas.

Let me first say that, and the Members will have heard this before, for the New Democratic Party and for our caucus, obviously we are pleased that this Government, however unexpected it may be, has come through with tax breaks for families.

Obviously, we think they could have gone further, given the kind of increase in revenues they have been fortunate enough to experience thanks to the good planning and good hard work of this Party when it was in Government, and thanks to the hard work of people like Eugene Kostyra who had the ability and the foresight to plan on a long-term basis for Manitobans.

I think it is important to note that the tax break for families worth about \$61 million is almost the same promise that the New Democratic Party made to the people of Manitoba last year. At that time, the Conservatives and Liberals, the old-line Parties, Tweedledee and Tweedledum, concerned themselves -(interjection)- Oh, excuse me the Liberals are Tweedledum and the Conservatives are Tweedledee? Oh, excuse me.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): No, no, no. You have still got it wrong.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Oh, excuse me.

Mr. Cowan: The Liberals are Tweedledumb and the Conservatives are Tweedledumber.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I think, for the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important to clarify this similarity between the two Parties. As the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has just said, it really is a question of Tweedledumb and Tweedledumber.

As I was saying, while these two Parties, the old-line Parties, concerned themselves about a year ago with tax breaks for corporations, the New Democratic Party was the only Party in Manitoba calling for tax breaks for Manitoba families.

Furthermore, it has been put to this Government by Members in the NDP Caucus very plainly and simply in these few weeks leading up to the Budget that if

there were no tax breaks for working people and their families, there would have been an election in Manitoba. That is our job in a minority Government situation and that is how we make minority Government work. As I said in my comments on the Speech from the Throne, one of the most difficult developments to accept in these last few weeks since we came back in this Session has been the fact that there has been so little focus on making minority Government work, on finding ways to co-operate, and putting aside our political agendas of whatever they may be, but particularly on the part of the Tories and the Grits, an agenda of acquiring power, either holding onto power as long as one can or acquiring power as soon as one can.

In all of that, this question of effective minority Government has been lost. It has been lost in this House, it has been lost in the media, it has been lost in public commentary more generally. I think it is time that we hear from the Liberal Opposition what their program is, what their policies would be with respect to budgetary planning for the Province of Manitoba, how they intend to deal with the difficult situations that are at hand that we are facing, that Manitobans are facing, so that we can begin to develop creative proposals and co-operate to make a minority Government work.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, having said that the New Democratic Party does support tax breaks for families, which is the basis for our support for this particular Budget, let me enunciate a number of very serious concerns, very strong reservations that Members of the New Democratic Party have with respect to the present Government, to the Conservative Government, and why we will continue to raise those concerns in this context of minority Government with the hope that some movement may occur with respect to those concerns.

Let me first say that one of the critical questions to be asked with respect to any Government of the Day, but particularly with this Government given the fact that it was forced through minority Government to bring forward a Budget that ensured tax breaks for families, how they intend to back up that move of tax breaks for families with far-reaching policies with a comprehensive program to deal with the very serious situation facing families and communities everywhere in Manitoba. Do their policies, in general, back up that initiative? Is there something more to the initiative of this Government to give a tax break to families than simply political manoeuvring?

* (1150)

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): A good question.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: The Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) has just said that is a good question. Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a good question for the Members of the Conservative Government to answer, and that is a very good question for Members of the Liberal Opposition to answer, because as I have just said, we are not sure where the Liberals are coming from with respect to this Budget. We are not sure how they intend to respond to the economic crisis facing

this province. The position of the New Democratic Party has certainly been clearly stated, and I will be enunciating aspects of that policy throughout my remarks.

The question to be asked by everyone in this Legislature and is being asked by Manitobans everywhere is, really if this Government is so concerned about families, about future generations, about ensuring equality for women, about healthy communities where all minorities are respected, about self-development models for our aboriginal community, then what are the policies? What are the signs? What are the signals? What are the indicators of that kind of policy? I am afraid, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have seen very little by way of indication, by way of signals even that this Government is really serious about the bigger picture, that it has more than simply a very Pavlovian response to the current political situation.

The second question is to ask how does this Budget or this particular aspect of the Budget, this tax break for families jibe with past actions? I am afraid we, as I have said and other Members of my caucus, particularly the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has said, there is very little resonance to this Budget when it is put in that context. We juxtaposed this tax break for families against a reduction in services for the unemployed here in Manitoba. We have to juxtapose it against cutbacks of the Unemployed Self Help Centre.

We are faced with a failure, a refusal on the part of this Government to move forward with respect to pay equity for all women. We are faced with a Government that has worked very diligently at eroding the best child care system in this country. We have seen cutbacks to our occupational health efforts in this province. We have seen cutbacks with respect to labour education. The situation with respect to home care has been enunciated very clearly. The similarity again of the two Parties has become very apparent with respect to moving away from universal programs for all citizens of our province, but particularly for seniors in this province and most specifically in the North End of the City of Winnipeg.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the facts of the past record of this Government, the actions that this Government has taken over the past year do not jibe, are not consistent with a particular aspect of this Budget that will actually ensure some fairness, some greater fairness for families and working people in the Province of Manitoba.

The third question that must be asked by this Government and they must come to grips with is what is their long-term plan? How do they intend to deal with some very critical problems in our society? Is there something more than an ad hoc, sporadic, piecemeal approach to the problems of the day, to the serious issues that Manitobans are raising every day and bringing to the attention to Members of this Legislature?

The sad part about this Budget, and it is regrettable that power did not move this Government to the point where they actually thought in these terms, is that this Budget does not set forth an economic plan for Manitoba.

Mr. Carr: Why are you voting for it?

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: There is no strategy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to create or secure jobs. Again, the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) says, why are we voting for this? Again, as I have said in the past, the options are to support some measures. The options are, given the very low expectations we all start with when it comes to the Conservative Government, to vote for a Budget that ensures some fairness, immediate fairness for working families, or to follow the Liberal course of action, this lust for power, and try to defeat this Government, end up in an election with the risk of electing a Liberal Government when they have no program, no strategy, no indication of how they intend to deal with the economic problems of the day.

There has not been any kind of strategy that has been presented to this House. Now maybe they are keeping it hidden away in dark places and behind locked doors but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they have not brought forward at any point their strategy, their industrial strategy, their job creation strategy, their employment strategy, their strategy of social services, community services and family services for the people of Manitoba.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we then have the choice between a right-wing Government that has been moved by a power to actually bring in something half decent by way of tax breaks for families versus nothing, no program from the Liberal Opposition, but instead all the signs, all the signals and all the indications that they are in fact as right wing and as mean spirited and as cold hearted as the Conservatives here to my left.

As I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is missing from this Budget and what is missing from the ongoing work of the Government of the Day is that kind of long-term plan around the economy, around employment, around measures to deal with the negative impact of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. There is no strategy in this Budget to create or secure jobs for the growing number of Manitobans laid off, as plants like Ogilvies, Liptons and Mars Leisure Products closed their door.

As I just hinted at earlier, on the one hand we are faced with from the Conservatives no strategy; on the other hand, from the Liberals, a refusal to move on any progressive legislation to deal with these kinds of situations such as progressive and responsible plant-closure legislation.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are serious concerns on that front. The economy is only but one of those fronts. There are many other areas that require some long-term planning and some serious thought. I think that the area that comes most quickly to mind from my perspective is the very absence on the part of this Government to do something meaningful, to present something meaningful by way of a policy on the family and on the changing needs of the family.

I am very worried that this Government is so preoccupied with window dressing, with putting in place new structures, with changing names of departments, with trying to put a good slant on the area but without doing anything real or meaningful. Now we saw it in the past with seniors, and the Government of the Day came forward a year ago with an announcement that

it was establishing a Seniors Directorate. To date, there has been no serious movement in terms of dealing with the serious issues that seniors are bringing to the attention of all of us.

Now in this Budget, we hear that this Government is so concerned about the family that it is changing the name of the Department of Community Services to Family Services. Has there been a single change within that department to reflect the needs of the family? Has there been an additional policy research and planning capacity added to the department to deal with family policy issues? Has there been any significant movement to advance steadfastly forward with respect to child care? Has there been any attempt to deal with the serious issues and problems facing our Child and Family Service Agencies? Has there been any comprehensive strategy dealing with abuse within the family, whether it be the serious situation of battered women or the issues of child physical and sexual abuse?

* (1200)

No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have seen no change in policy, no even concepts brought to our attention. Instead, as the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has continually said, what have we got? New letterhead.

Mr. Cowan: A new name on the door.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: A new name on the door and new letterhead. Mr. Deputy Speaker, enough is enough. We all know that the family is under crisis. The family is under attack by the federal Government, although I am sure we are not going to hear any kind of resounding support for that statement from the Liberals, given the statements by their Leader for support for the federal clawback. Instead of supports for the family coming forward from this province in the face of external factors, we have seen similar kinds of attitudes coming to the surface here in Manitoba, and similar policies placing the family under greater crisis.

I think the Budget should be the place for enunciating the new directions with respect to the family policy. We did not hear it in the Speech from the Throne. We now do not hear it in the Budget. We do not know if there is anything behind a change in name. Presumably, there is nothing behind that change in name. In fact, today the answers of the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) when it came to the issue of the Family Allowance clawback, clearly revealed not only does this Government not have a policy with respect to families and improving quality of life within the family, but it also is a partner in placing the family under greater crisis and expecting the family to deal, in a personal way, with the looming economic crisis, expecting the family to shoulder the burden.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when asked what the position of this Government was with respect to the Family Allowance clawback, which all Members should know is dangerous on one count because it totally disbands a universal program, but on the other hand and notwithstanding the elimination of the universality of this program, it will affect a great number of Canadian families, many more families and individuals than the

Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) actually understands the situation to be. She has clearly not informed herself about the impact of this budgetary initiative on the part of the federal Government. She is not aware that in very short order, almost a third of Canadian families will be negatively impacted by this clawback of Family Allowances and will be paying 100 percent back of the Family Allowance program.

That is unacceptable in the minds of the New Democratic Party. It is unacceptable to see such an important universal program come to an end. It is unacceptable that while corporations are getting tremendous tax breaks, through the tax exemption of \$100,000 on capital gains, through a dividend tax credit, which allows people making dividend income to not pay taxes on all of that income. It is not acceptable that is occurring while families earning over \$56,500 will have 100 percent of their family allowances clawed back as soon as the Mulroney Government gets the Budget passed and all of these provisions under way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the position of the New Democratic Party is clear. It has always been clear. Our belief in universal programs, important universal social programs like Family Allowances, like pensions and like child care, are no secret. The regrettable situation here in Manitoba is not only do we have a Government and a Minister who does not, first of all, understand the issues, and secondly does not really care, is not prepared to stand up to Ottawa, to Mr. Wilson and say, this is not acceptable and to try to exert some pressure on that Government to change its mind. Equally of concern in this province is that the Liberal Opposition, the Manitoba Liberal Party is apparently not concerned also about this clawback. I think the reports are numerous on this issue.

I refer specifically to an article of May 9 in the *Selkirk Journal* where the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) indicated that she does not, "Find a lot of fault with the Government's clawback on Canada Pension and Family Allowance benefits to upper-income Canadians."

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is really regrettable that in this kind of situation where the family is under crisis and under attack like it has never been before under attack, that there is so little effort on the part of the old-line Parties to put any kind of pressure on Ottawa to do anything on behalf of families, to do anything on behalf of working women, to do anything on behalf of children in the Province of Manitoba. That is a crying shame.-(Interjection)- I keep hearing the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) making a lot of comments. I am not sure what the last comment was but I would ask, through you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to ask the Liberal Opposition to come forward with a clear statement on their position with respect to Family Allowances. Let us hear how they feel about this kind of clawback. Let us hear how they feel about the end of an historic program that entrenches the principles of universality. Let us hear how they feel about all seniors in this country. Actually—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will try to carry on despite the orgy that is going on around me—

does not care about, as I was saying with respect to the Liberal Party, the fact that this clawback on pensions will in effect have an impact on all pensioners in this country in very short order. Some of the Members of the Liberal Party, at least in Ottawa, seem to have at least publicly expressed some reservations with this clawback. I would hope that Members of the Liberal Party here in Manitoba would analyze their position and come forward with a meaningful approach to this very serious problem.

Mr. Deputy Speaker -(Interjection)- the comments just now by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) that we are a right-wing Government going in left-wing circles probably sums it up best and actually is a good introduction for the comments that I was about to make with respect to another aspect of the Budget and of the directions being enunciated by the Government of the Day. I hinted at them in my remarks to the Speech from the Throne but I would like to elaborate just a bit.

The first is the infatuation of this Government, like its counterpart in Ottawa, with the free marketplace. It is clear, every analysis of the federal Budget is that it is a Budget for Bay Street. Furthermore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is unequivocally clear that it is also a Budget for Wall Street in New York.

This free trade Budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in this infatuation with the Free Trade Agreement, this infatuation with the free marketplace has meant that the unemployed have had to suffer. It has meant that the burden has been placed on the shoulders of Canadian families. It has meant that women have been set back in their struggle for equality by a considerable distance. It has meant that the weak and vulnerable in our society are being left in positions of weakness and vulnerability while this infatuation carries on, while this orgy of infatuation with the free marketplace preoccupies the thinking of the federal Government.

Unfortunately, we know that kind of thinking really is the bottom-line position of the Conservative Government of the Day. It is what is below the surface, if one eliminates the decision to move in a progressive way on tax breaks for families, because of the political climate of the day. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is what is worrisome. That is what we are starting to see show up in very subtle, in very quiet ways. The big public announcements right now of course are with respect to any move for fairness of families in Manitoba.

* (1210)

The dangerous part about this Budget and about this Government is that below the surface and hidden away in different statements and in different initiatives is a very right-wing agenda, an agenda that does attack, that puts blame on the unemployed for their predicament, that erodes the gains made by women in their struggle for equality, that does not recognize the needs of our multicultural communities here in Manitoba. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if time would permit, it would be possible to come up with an example for every single one of those moves on the part of the Conservative Government to not respect the needs that

Manitoba families and individuals have enunciated to this Government.

The other critical and dangerous part about this Budget and this Government is that it shows the same kind of contempt for the democratic process that the federal Mulroney Government has clearly demonstrated. It has shown the kind of contempt for democracy that has been unprecedented in the history of Canadian politics.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one only has to point to a Government in Ottawa that can promise one thing during an election, not only promise it once during the election but promise it many times over in that period and before that in elections predating that particular election, and turn around and decide that it is just not moving, just not addressing those concerns. I believe that the decision by the Mulroney Government to decide not to move one iota on the national day care program after promising it in 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988 and then has the gall to turn around and say in 1989, we are sorry, we are not moving on the national day care plan, is a perfect example of how contemptuous the federal Conservative Government views the political process.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

In fact, it has been said better by other individuals, most recently by Stephen Lewis on his recent visit to Manitoba when he said Conservatives do not lie, they just do not tell the truth. Mr. Speaker, I think that is the kind of contempt for the process that is causing Manitobans to be very concerned. It is causing women's groups, ethnocultural groups, Native groups, human rights groups, child care advocates, those providing services for the unemployed, every progressive force in our society to be very worried and very concerned. Unfortunately, we have seen those tendencies, that contempt for the process, we have seen that those tendencies are alive and well in the Government of the Day.

Mr. Speaker, let me refer to a few examples and perhaps we will get the attention back of Members of the Conservative Government. Let us look at the kind of contempt for the political process that is shown up here in Manitoba, first by pointing to the Women's Initiative. This Government has no policies, it has no idea with respect to the issues that women have been raising for years, it has no program. So to deal with that lack of commitment for a program to achieve greater equality for women in Manitoba society, it announces a study. It announces a consultation that somehow manages to get stretched out for five months and then, upon completion of that process, presents a selected number of recommendations from that consultation process.

-(Interjection)- I think I have got another—releases a selected set of recommendations from that consultation process without any explanation for those recommendations it has very deliberately ignored and just totally avoided.

When questioned, where is the plan of action, the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) says it was

given, when in fact—and I can read from her own press release, and then the press release of the new Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Hammond)—the plan of action would be announced in a month. The month goes by and we are told to wait for the Budget. The Budget goes by and we are told, well, wait another month, wait a month or so, wait for Estimates. The stalling tactics are agonizing.

The approach to women's issues in this province is painful on the part of the Conservative Government. There has been no respect for the serious participation by women in the political process over the years and particularly over the last number of months. I would hope that this Government would not embark upon the kind of blatant contempt for the political process that we have seen by the Mulroney Government by, for example, deciding deliberately not to meet with the most important, most effective, most representative umbrella group for women's issues anywhere in the country, to totally ignore that organization and then to deliberately single it out for a 50 percent cut because it has chosen to speak out on behalf of women. That is to me the utmost cynical example of cynical view of the political process that we have seen anywhere in this country.

The list goes on, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the Mulroney Government. We are starting to see the signs of it here in Manitoba. I say that trend must stop, that this Government must start to take seriously the work of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, of the Manitoba Child Care Association, of the Manitoba Community Living, all of those groups who have come forward and said we have not been consulted, we have not been listened to, we do not know what your plans are, we do not know what your policies are, we want to have a say and we want to know what your framework for Government is so that we can respond appropriately. We do not expect the Conservative Government to be all encompassing. In fact, we have very few expectations that this Government will move very quickly and very seriously on issues of inequities in our society.

The record speaks that the opposite is the case. Manitobans everywhere are saying, let us know how far you are prepared to go, how much you are prepared to spend, where are you planning to take these issues in the next number of years so that we can be meaningful players in this system, so that we do not have to seek ways to go around the political process, so that we can someday hope to achieve true equality in all aspects of our lives.

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

Mr. Laurie Evans: Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to have this opportunity to say a few words on the Throne Speech. I am a little sorry that I am only going to have 12 or 15 minutes this morning. It may be a little bit difficult to get warmed up in that period of time. I have to reflect on some of the comments that were made by my good friend, the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), when he spoke the other day. One could perhaps question some of the relevance of the comments that

he made, and I hope that he will not take me to task for that this morning.

Last night, Mr. Speaker, when I went home and sat down and watched the national news, the first thing that came on was the situation in China. That was followed by the situation in Iran, and then followed by the situation in Poland. As I watched those things, it just brought back to my mind, thank God I live in Canada, thank God I live in Manitoba.

I have been a resident of this province for more than 30 years now and I take some exception to the Members opposite when they say it is all doom and gloom. I am an optimist, Mr. Speaker. I am quite happy to live in this province. This province has a tremendous future. The only thing I am saying is that there is a better way to do some of these things—there is a better way.

We have watched a situation in this province for six-and-a-half years, Mr. Speaker, where we have been faced with a socialist Government. The only reason that socialists have been able to survive is they have always been fortunate enough to have one messiah. You had J.S. Woodsworth came along, and then you had Caldwell, and then you had Tommy Douglas and then you had David Lewis. The problem they have at the present time is there are no more messiahs on the . . . anywhere. They are a spent force and if we are fortunate, they will be gone and they can rest in peace, and so can we if they are gone.

I was one of those unfortunate ones who was in the Province of Saskatchewan when we had the box factories and the shoe factories and the move towards collective farms. All I can say, and I have spoken on this many times, there should be one provincial Government in this province that has a socialistic Government so that the rest can see how bad it could possibly be.

The problem today, Mr. Speaker, is Manitoba has had its turn, but no other province wants to stand up and take theirs. Everyone has watched it long enough to say socialism is dead and gone. I hope that we do not have to put up with it again in the future at any time. God help us if we are ever faced with a national socialist Government.

* (1220)

It is very clear from my comments, I am sure, where I stand in terms of the right-left spectrum. If I have to make a choice, I have to be closer to the group that are over there than to this group here, because individually I can stand the socialists, but when you put the whole group together the word scary, scary, scary, comes up every time. I could not tolerate that sort of a situation.

Then the question really becomes, if I am that right wing, why can I not support this document? I cannot support this document and neither can my colleagues. We are not going to support that document and the question comes, why would you not support that document? The thing is that you cannot take a document like this in isolation. I guess what happens to me is I have to revert back to my background as

an old professor. I think one of the colleagues across said I had been at it for a long, long time. You can be at it a long time and not necessarily be old, and I feel very rejuvenated today by having the opportunity to get up and speak against this flawed document.

An Honourable Member: Let us hear another good question, Laurie.

Mr. Laurie Evans: You sit around and you will wait and we will have some good questions, the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer). The problem that you have is you have to look at the record of the Government, and this Government now has a record. It has been in Government for a year. The previous year, it did not have that record. It was there with a situation where you could deal with their promises. This is why, and I am not going to deal with this specifically at the beginning. I am not even going to deal with the Throne Speech of 1989 at the beginning. I am going to go back a little bit further and deal with the Throne Speech of 1988, because this is where the promises were made. This is where the record has to be looked at as to whether or not they have done anything with the plans they had to begin with.

I will look at the first one and I have picked out about 20, because I do not want to be accused of selectively taking a few things out of here, so I am going to pick out about 20 of them. The first one says: "Action will be taken to preserve and enhance the Medicare system." Tremendous, the first thing we had was the fiasco with the psychiatrists. They were in Selkirk, they were in Brandon, you shipped them back and forth. We have had all of these situations here in Manitoba where you have had longer lines waiting for cardiac care. You have had situations where there are no beds available for the chronic. You have had a situation where the Minister has become a master of crisis management. The only problem he has is he is always one or two crises behind. He is always one or two crises behind. So for someone to tell me that Medicare has been enhanced and is better than it was when they came in, I cannot buy that argument.

Their credibility is not there. If you are going to talk about the level of credibility, you can only put it in one or two contexts, either it is an A, B, C, D, or E or it is out of a percentage of 100. If I take a look at the enhancement of Medicare, it has to be below 50 percent. There is no improvement in what has happened since we were faced with the socialists and what is happening in the medical situation today.

If you move on to the next one, No. 2: "Initiatives will be presented to meet the challenges of educating and training Manitobans at all levels from basic literacy to post-graduate studies." What has been done in terms of improving the literacy in this province? Not one thing. There has been lip-service given to it, but there has not been one thing that you can identify as a move in the direction of improving the level of literacy in this province.

We have had a northern tour. We have had a situation where we had a town hall meeting in north Winnipeg. Practically every one of the briefs that was brought to

our attention was based on the deficiencies in education.

What are they doing? You have a Sisler High School that does not know how it can possibly accommodate the students that are going to be channelled into it this fall. You have other schools in the North End of this city that do not know where they are going to house their students in the fall of this year. They are looking for relocatables. You can say that is because of the socialists, but you have been in this province doing this thing for a year and there is no sign of improvement. Your credibility is not being established.

It is the same thing at the university. That is a place I have quite a bit of familiarity with. I know the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has toured that university. You can find situations where there are buildings which are virtually falling down. In other words, we have moved from a situation a decade or 15 years ago when we were identified as having one of the leading educational institutions in western Canada. We do not have that anymore, Mr. Speaker, so their credibility in the field of education is not there.

How in the world can I stand up and say, yes, I will support this, when you have lost your credibility? This is an isolated document. If I could look at it alone, then one could probably say, yes, there are some pros and cons and it might come out somewhere that you can support it.

The third one that I want to address is that services to the disadvantaged, that "our vulnerable Manitobans will be protected and enhanced." Yesterday, we had a delegation from the Manitoba League of the Physically Handicapped and we asked them specific questions. Is your situation better than it was last year or the year before? They said unequivocally, no, access is not better, housing is not better. The facilities that are available to them are not better, so here again there is no evidence that anything is improved in the period of time since you took over.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to go through these items one at a time and I hope to do so very quickly because there are a lot of them here.

The next one I want to address, Mr. Speaker, is in here and I am going to read it out. "Multi-year Budgets will become a feature of the annual Budget process." To me, "multi" is barely two. "Multi" to me is something in excess of two, and what did we get in the past Budget? A paragraph that dealt very shallowly with what might occur in the future. "Multi" means a lot more than dealing with one year and a little bit of a single statement as to what is going on in the next one. That to me does not qualify as "multi."

The next one is: "My Government contains significantly fewer Ministers than previous administrations. My Government will be more efficient while continuing to deliver important services to Manitobans." Here you have a situation, you started off with a smaller number, you have added two, but you did not drop anybody. I do not want to single out anybody but I have to assume that you have some Ministers now who have a desk, a potted plant and a

pot of water. What else do they have to do? The efficiency of Government is not improving. Your credibility would have been a lot greater if you had added two and took two off the bottom.

Hon. Harry Enns (Lakeside): . . . coffee machines.

Mr. Laurie Evans: I am sure that the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) needs a coffee machine because I see him quite often attempting to chew at the end of a cigarette. Sometimes a coffee and a cigarette go together.

The other one that I want to touch on, Mr. Speaker, and I will quote again: "Reform of the Workers Compensation system will ensure that the needs of workers of the Province of Manitoba are protected by a financially stable and administratively sound compensation system."

We know that there are some attempts being made to upgrade the Workers Compensation, but everyone on this side of the House, without a doubt, will tell you that we are getting more and more calls coming in from people who are dissatisfied with the Workers Compensation Board. While attempts may be made to improve it, the rate of improvement is so slow that it is imperceptible. Here again the words were good but there is no action.

Mr. Speaker, we have had every board practically that is in this Government having been totally changed. The other thing that we have had is committees. We have had forums. We have had advisory councils. We have run out of names to talk about the same thing in this province, but the number of committees that have been developed in this province are tremendous.

There is nothing wrong with a committee if the committee, first of all, has a mandate and a time frame, but when the committee is open-ended the likelihood of that committee doing anything in a reasonable time frame is practically nil.

I have sat on many of these committees and many of those committees—a committee is not an answer. A committee frequently is something that you develop when you do not know what you want to do and you want to buy a little time. It is a blank process of procrastination is what the average committee is, and I am getting a little bit fed up.

Here you have a Government that sat in Opposition for six and a half years and they are still developing committees. I can guarantee my colleagues and I, if we are unfortunate enough to sit in Opposition for six and a half years, if and when we form the Government, we will be ready to roll. We are not going to let - (Inaudible)- all the rest of it, Mr. Speaker.

I realize that my time is up. I will just keep going on Monday if I may, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am interrupting the proceedings of the House according to the rules. When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member will have 28 minutes remaining.

The hour being 12:30 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. (Monday).