



Fourth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

42 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Denis C. Rocan
Speaker*



VOL. XLII No. 109A - 1:30 p.m., MONDAY, JULY 26, 1993

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	Liberal
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP
<i>Vacant</i>	Rossmere	
<i>Vacant</i>	Rupertsland	
<i>Vacant</i>	The Maples	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, July 26, 1993

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): I wish to inform the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker and, therefore, in accordance with the statutes, would call upon the Deputy Speaker to take the Chair.

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

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition (Mr. Hickes). It complies with the rules and the practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS there is a very serious solvent abuse problem in northern Manitoba; and

WHEREAS according to the RCMP over 100 crimes in Thompson alone in 1992 were linked to solvent abuse; and

WHEREAS there are no facilities to deal with solvent abuse victims in northern Manitoba; and

WHEREAS for over three years, the provincial government failed to proclaim the private member's anti-sniff bill passed by the Legislature and is now proposing to criminalize minors buying solvents even though there are no treatment facilities in northern Manitoba; and

WHEREAS for nine years, the 25 Chiefs who comprise the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, supported by medical officials, police and the area Member of Parliament, have proposed a pilot treatment project known as the Native Youth Medicine Lodge; and

WHEREAS successive federal Ministers of Health have failed to respond to this issue with a commitment; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba provincial government has a responsibility to ensure that there is adequate treatment for solvent abuse.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier to consider making as a major priority, the establishment of a solvent abuse treatment facility in northern Manitoba.

* * *

Madam Deputy Speaker: I have reviewed the petition (Mr. Ashton). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the state of Highway 391 is becoming increasingly unsafe; and

WHEREAS due to the poor condition of the road there have been numerous accidents; and

WHEREAS the condition of the road between Thompson and Nelson House is not only making travel dangerous but costly due to frequent damage to vehicles; and

WHEREAS this road is of vital importance to residents who must use the road.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba consider reviewing the state of Highway 391 with a view towards improving the condition and safety of the road.

* (1335)

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Bob Rose (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments): Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg to present the Twelfth and Thirteenth Reports of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Law Amendments presents the following as its Twelfth Report.

Your committee met on Thursday, July 22, 1993, at 9 a.m. in Room 254 and 7 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.

Your committee heard representation on bills as follows:

Bill 35—The Fisheries Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche

Pascall Bighetty - Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Bill 47—The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la location à usage d'habitation

Michel Mignault and Alan Borger Jr. - Professional Property Managers' Association

Bob Hanson and Peter H. Warkentine - The Apartment Investors Association of Manitoba

Gail Jarema - Private Citizen

Bill 49—The Summary Convictions Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les poursuites sommaires et apportant des modifications corrélatives à une autre loi

John Ryan - Private Citizen

Ellen Olfert and Rene Jamieson - Winnipeg Harvest Inc.

Rick Penner - Habitat Re-store

Bill 52—The Manitoba Foundation Act; Loi sur la Fondation du Manitoba

Dan Kraayeveld and David Cohen - Winnipeg Foundation and Jewish Foundation of Manitoba

Your committee has considered:

Bill 35—The Fisheries Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la pêche

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT the proposed section 33, as set out in section 4 of the Bill, be amended

(a) in subsection (1), by adding in the part preceding clause (a), "and after such consultations with fishermen affected as the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers appropriate" after "commercial purposes"; and

(b) by adding the following after subsection (2):

Transfer of individual quota entitlements

33(3) A regulation made under subsection (1) shall provide that a fisherman is not entitled to transfer or dispose of his or her individual quota entitlement in respect of an area in Northern Manitoba as defined in The Northern Affairs Act unless the fisherman has publicly offered the individual quota entitlement to other persons who hold, or who are eligible to hold, an individual quota entitlement in that area.

Transitional

33(4) A fisherman who becomes the first holder of an individual quota entitlement under the regulations made under subsection (1) shall not be entitled to transfer or dispose of that individual quota entitlement until one year after the day he or she first becomes the holder of that entitlement.

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 47—The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la location à usage d'habitation

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendments:

MOTION:

THAT section 7 of the Bill be renumbered as subsection 7(1) and the following be added after subsection 7(1):

7(2) Subsection 25(3) is amended by striking out "subsection (1)" and substituting "subsection (1) or (2)".

MOTION:

THAT the proposed subsection 183.1, as set out in section 58 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "making an advance" and substituting "an advance is made".

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 49—The Summary Convictions Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les poursuites sommaires et apportant des modifications corrélatives à une autre loi

and has agreed to report the same without amendment.

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 52—The Manitoba Foundation Act; Loi sur la Fondation du Manitoba

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT subsection 8(3) be struck out and the following substituted:

Other trustees

8(3) Subject to subsection (2), when the first institution is designated by regulation in a category of institution that represents

- (a) all educational institutions;
- (b) all hospital institutions; or
- (c) all museum institutions;

the board shall include two trustees in respect of that category of institution, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council from a list of nominees submitted by each category of institution set out in clauses (a) to (c).

All of which is respectfully submitted.

* * *

Mr. Clerk: Your Standing Committee on Law Amendments presents the following as its Thirteenth Report.

Your committee met on Monday, July 19 at 9 a.m., Tuesday, July 20 at 9 a.m., Wednesday, July 21 at 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., Thursday, July 22 at 9 a.m. in Room 254 and Thursday, July 22, 1993, at 7 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building, to consider bills referred.

Your committee heard representation on bills as follows:

Bill 24—The Taxicab Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les taxis et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois

John Mann - Private Citizen
 Randy Delorme - Private Citizen
 Jasbir Chahal - Manitoba Taxicab Association
 Martin Boroditsky - Private Citizen
 Balwant Singh - Private Citizen
 Akiholu Abiodun - Private Citizen
 Mohinder Gundhu - Private Citizen
 Momsuru Tijami - Private Citizen
 C. Amado - Private Citizen
 Olufemi Illelaboye - Private Citizen
 Gurdev Singh - Private Citizen
 Baljinder Bhumber - Private Citizen
 Vijay Kaushal - Private Citizen
 R. Henry - Private Citizen

M. Akram Rana - Private Citizen
 Neil Olukoya - Private Citizen
 Reg Kambo - Private Citizen
 Clement K. Betiku - Private Citizen
 Dan Nadoryk - Private Citizen
 Theodore D. Johnston - Private Citizen
 Ed Zurawzuk - Private Citizen

Your committee has considered:

Bill 24—The Taxicab Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les taxis et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendments:

MOTION:

THAT the proposed subsection 4(1), as set out in subsection 5(1) of the Bill, be amended by striking out "directly or indirectly".

MOTION:

THAT subsection 5(2) of the Bill be struck out and the following substituted:

5(2) Subsection 4(2) is repealed and the following is substituted:

Penalty

4(2) Any person who contravenes this section is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction

(a) for the first offence, to a fine of not less than \$100. and not more than \$500.; and

(b) for a subsequent offence, to a fine of not less than \$250. and not more than \$1,000.

MOTION:

THAT subsection 10(2) of the Bill be struck out and the following substituted:

10(2) Subsection 11(3) is repealed and the following is substituted:

Penalty

11(3) Any person who drives a taxicab without first obtaining the licence referred to in subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction

(a) for the first offence, to a fine of not less than \$50. and not more than \$250.; and

(b) for a subsequent offence, to a fine of not less than \$100. and not more than \$500.

MOTION:

THAT the proposed clause 14(1.2)(c), as set out in section 12 of the Bill, be amended by striking out "left in custody" and substituting "if the holder cannot be found, left in the custody".

MOTION:

THAT the proposed subsection 14(1.3), as set out in section 12 of the Bill, be struck out and the following substituted:

When notice is given

14(1.3) A notice is deemed to be given

(a) on the third day after the date of mailing if sent by registered mail as provided under clause (1.2)(b); or

(b) on the day when it is left in the custody of an adult person as provided under clause (1.2)(c);

unless the holder of the licence or permit to whom it was addressed establishes that he or she, acting in good faith, did not receive the notice until a later date, through absence, accident, illness or other cause beyond his or her control.

MOTION:

THAT the proposed clause 14(1.8)(c), as set out in section 12 of the Bill, be amended by adding "if the holder cannot be found," before "left in the custody".

MOTION:

THAT the proposed subsection 19(3), as set out in subsection 17(3) of the Bill, be amended by striking out "Every" and substituting "Subject to subsection 14(1.8), every".

MOTION:

THAT the proposed subsection 19(6), as set out in subsection 17(4) of the Bill, be struck out and the following substituted:

Completion of proceeding

19(6) Where a quorum exists at the commencement of a meeting of or hearing or other proceeding before the board, and thereafter a member thereof dies, resigns or for any reason becomes incapable of acting, the remaining members may complete the meeting, hearing or proceeding or any adjournment thereof; and any decision with respect to that meeting, hearing or proceeding made by a majority of the remaining members shall be deemed to be a decision of the board as if a quorum had been present.

MOTION:

THAT Section 19 of the Bill be struck out and the following substituted:

19 Section 21 is repealed and the following is substituted:

Penalty for non-payment of fares

21(1) Any person who engages a taxicab that is licensed under this Act and who, on demand being made at the termination of the trip, fails to pay the proper fare to the driver or owner of the taxicab, is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction

(a) for the first offence, to a fine of not more than \$250.; and

(b) for a subsequent offence, to a fine of not more than \$500.

Payment of fares and costs

21(2) When a court or justice convicts a person of an offence under subsection (1), in addition to and at the time of imposing any fine, the court or justice

(a) shall order the person to pay the proper fare to the driver or owner of the taxicab if it has not been paid; and

(b) may assess costs against the person payable to the driver or owner of the taxicab.

Order filed in court

21(3) The driver or owner of the taxicab may file in the Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba a certified copy of an order made under subsection (2) and, on being filed, the order may be enforced in the same manner as a judgment of that Court.

MOTION:

THAT section 21 of the Bill be struck out and the following substituted:

Coming into force

21(1) Subject to subsection (2), this Act comes into force on a day fixed by proclamation.

Royal Assent

21(2) Section 19 comes into force on the day this Act receives royal assent.

MOTION:

THAT the French version of the title of the Bill be amended by striking out "à d'autres lois" and substituting "à une autre loi".

MOTION:

THAT Legislative Counsel be authorized to change all section numbers and internal references

necessary to carry out the amendments adopted by this committee.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Mr. Rose: I move, seconded by the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister), that the reports of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, I have a brief statement for the House.

Manitoba Water Resources Branch advises that the flash-flood watch issued for the Red River Valley last night is still in effect. Most streams are still rising from the weekend downpours. Heavy runoff is taking place, and many smaller streams are already near bankful levels.

One of the areas hardest hit is along the Red River from Morris to Lake Winnipeg. The western boundary is from Poplar Point to Morden and the eastern boundary from St. Malo to Dugald. Streams in this area may experience overbank flows today or tomorrow resulting in some flooding of farmlands.

In the Winnipeg area, Sturgeon Creek may spill over Ness Avenue and Woodhaven Street during the next 48 hours, but the overtopping should be quite shallow.

The Red River continues to rise due to heavy runoff in the United States and the additional runoff from Manitoba tributaries. At Ste. Agathe, the river rose 3.5 feet in the last 24 hours. In the city of Winnipeg, low-level walkways at The Forks are now flooded. The river is expected to rise another 4 feet to 5 feet in the Winnipeg area before it crests around August 8, 1993. Flows on the Assiniboine River will be remaining near normal, but levels in the city area will be increasing due to the rise of the Red River.

The Red River Floodway is ready for operation and is designed to come into service at discharges over 30,000 cubic feet per second. Currently, the Red River flow is near 20,000 cubic feet per second at St. Norbert.

The flash-flood watch will likely continue until Tuesday. More specific forecasts for the Red River will be issued later today or early Tuesday. The Water Resources Branch will continue to monitor

the situation and provide updated information as conditions change. Thank you.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for his statement and thank his staff who I am sure are working 24 hours around the clock on this very, very urgent situation in the province of Manitoba.

We are almost in a situation of very different weather patterns in very different regions of the province. Northern Manitoba is experiencing very sunny and warm temperatures in relative terms, and southern Manitoba is experiencing quite moist and wet temperature patterns.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we know that many citizens of Winnipeg and other communities that are experiencing the overflow are very concerned about the impact on their houses and their dwellings. We would urge the government to show as much due diligence, if possible, to any decisions they can make that will aid and abet in flooding in basements and other matters.

I know that with the city of Winnipeg and other communities, it is really a situation where the sewer system and the basin drainage system are not able to handle all the water. If there is anything the Department of Natural Resources can do in any way, shape or form, dealing with the decisions they have at their disposal, I know that the citizens affected directly would be very thankful.

I know upstream from Winnipeg there are a number of other concerns by people outside of the floodway about potential flooding and damage. We look forward to the forecast from the government.

* (1340)

We recognize that not all members affected in the basin are covered by the floodway, and we would encourage again the minister to take whatever means at their department's disposal with the Department of Highways and the department of emergency measures to deal with people outside of the floodway district.

We hope this recent rain and moisture is not going to have a long-term impact on the crops in Manitoba. We hope the crops are able to survive this period of time, and producers in Manitoba will be able to overcome a pretty tough July in terms of the water levels in some growing areas of the province.

I thank the minister for his statement. We in the opposition look forward to raising our concerns directly to him, and of course in times of emergency we will work with him and his government in the most co-operative way we can on behalf of the citizens affected by this water. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, I, too, want to thank the minister for coming forward today in a very timely way with this information, which of course is important for members to know but, more importantly, important for the citizens of this province to know who are going to be affected by these very heavy rains.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I simply want to bring to the minister's attention that this morning in my office, and in some of the other members' I am sure, there were a lot of phone calls. Those phone calls were coming because other emergency lines set up through the city and around the province were not able to be accessed simply because of the volume.

I wonder if the minister would take under advisement anything he could do working with the minister responsible for emergency measures to supplement the information that people have access to, because of course there are concerns which are arising around the province from people who have never experienced the type of flooding they are experiencing in their homes, and they are concerned about the safety and what they should do and what they should not do.

I just wanted to bring that to the minister's attention as something that maybe could be done in disseminating information to bring a sense of calm. I think most people are able to deal with this, but in particular I think seniors and others who are in their homes are going to need all the assistance that we can give to understand what they should do and what they can and cannot do to alleviate the situation.

As well, I of course am sure that the minister is in consultation with his counterpart in cabinet the minister responsible for emergency measures to determine what designation should be given to this, what provisions can be made available to people and I am sure that may flow from an assessment of what kind of damage has occurred, because I think early indications are that it is extensive not just in the city, but obviously in the entire Red River Valley

area. There are extensive damages and likely going to be more to come.

I would appreciate further updates from the minister on a personal level, or in the House preferably, as to what might be done at a provincial level to buttress the dissemination of information and the emergency lines which are available, and, secondly, to determine what designation might be given to this very unfortunate level of water coming in this short time span, so we can ensure that we access whatever additional powers are necessary for the government to deal with it and perhaps even what relief funding there may be, if any, for individuals who have been so seriously affected by this unpredictable and very serious event.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do want to thank the minister again for coming forward. I would like to ask him to maintain contact and come forward on an ongoing basis with information as it comes to his attention and also to work with the City of Winnipeg and the rural municipalities in doing whatever they can to disseminate information and give whatever help they can to the people who are unfortunate enough to be caught up in this.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Social Assistance Reform Education Programs

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, my question is to the Premier.

We know that governments make mistakes. One of the greatest mistakes we feel this government has made is the cutback on student social allowances. After the government stated in its Speech from the Throne in November of 1992 that education is the key to unlock opportunities for our economic growth and prosperity in terms of our future, the government then went and cut student social allowances which was acknowledged by a number of people to be a good way to get people education and training and get them off the dependency cycle. After they have done that, they have then announced they are going to reform the welfare system.

I would like to ask the Premier: Will this reform of the social assistance program in Manitoba not include some program to get people education and training and why, therefore, would he cut student

social allowances which provides that function now in the provincial government?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, in all likelihood, it will, and the reason is we can perhaps make more efficient and more effective use of the dollars in being able to address those needs.

* (1345)

Student Social Allowances Program Cost Analysis

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): The government, after 16 questions from this side on the question of student social allowances, has not yet tabled any cost-benefit study, any cost-effectiveness study, of the decision and the rationale to cut student social allowances.

The Conference Board of Canada, Madam Deputy Speaker, is stating that for every person who is unable to complete education or receive training, it costs Canada, including the provinces, some \$29,000 over their lifetime.

Madam Deputy Speaker, if you look at the over 1,000 people who are being cut off student social allowances, that works out to some \$32 million for people cut off in the province of Manitoba from student social allowances, from getting their education and training programs in this province.

I would like to ask the Premier: What is their calculation of the long-term costs for students cut off from student social allowances, the long-term cost to Manitoba, to Canada, for people who are unable to get education and training and unable to get the same kind of opportunities to get out of dependency and into the workforce and into careers in this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, as we have discussed before, the member keeps assuming there are no other alternatives for these people.

In the course of the debate, we have had evidence put forward that some of these people utilize the program merely as a means of being able to move away from their homes in order to do that. Others quit jobs in order to go onto the program, Madam Deputy Speaker, so the fact of the matter is there has been a whole host of different—because of the lack of criteria for utilization, we believe there will be more effective and more efficient ways of

providing this kind of support for the students who might require it.

Alternatives

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, how can this Premier sit in this House and cut back student social allowances, cut back students in mid-course from education and training, admit that education and training is important, admit that the words in the Speech from the Throne about it being the key for future economic opportunity are valid, and at the same time not provide the alternatives in the budget they tabled in this Chamber, not provide the alternatives for those 1,100 students, not provide the alternatives to those people looking at those kinds of education and training programs?

Why did the government not have that alternative in place for those students, so we do not have people cut off in mid-term and cut away from careers in mid-term as this government has callously done over the last couple of months in their budget deliberation?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): There is no suggestion that people are cut away from careers, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The fact of the matter is these people are involved in various levels and various programs of education which may or may not lead to a career. The fact of the matter is we have indicated that the matters will be addressed in a type of program arrangement we believe will be more effective and more efficient use of public tax dollars.

* (1350)

Red River Community College Waiting Lists

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Madam Deputy Speaker, if any Manitoban were to call Red River Community College today, after five years of Tory government, they would find there is only one course remaining open to them, and that is the Child Care Challenge Program.

They would find that more than 15 courses have been either reduced or eliminated at the college. They will find that overall student enrollment is less now than it was five years ago. They will find that every existing program has a waiting list of at least one year, if not two years.

I want to ask the Minister of Education now to acknowledge that Tory policies, both federal and provincial, have, in fact, closed the doors of training and are giving a generation of young Manitobans a future of unemployment.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Deputy Speaker, I absolutely reject, absolutely totally, what that member has said. She is just completely wrong.

I would say to the member, first of all, she speaks of young Manitobans. I am sure she knows that Manitobans of all ages attend our educational institutions, including Red River Community College. I also explained to her on Friday that waiting lists without a student number have been unreliable and that the college is moving ahead to look at what the waiting lists really mean in terms of is that a first, second or third choice for students. What is it that really is the true waiting list?

I would also remind the member as well that with the colleges having moved to governance, which is a major initiative, it allows the colleges, therefore, to set up other kinds of training. Some of it may be short-term training. Some of it may be longer-term training which they negotiate themselves directly.

Course Cancellations

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Madam Deputy Speaker, the minister continues to look at enrollment issues as essentially minor accounting problems.

I want to ask the minister to explain why Red River Community College has cut courses in telecommunication and refrigeration, courses where there is both a continued employer demand and certainly a high student demand.

Is there any connection in this government between education and training and industrial strategy?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Deputy Speaker, as I explained to the member when she first raised this several months ago, the reduction in telecommunications specifically has been by one intake. There are continued intakes. There is another intake which the member well knows, had she in fact checked with the college. She also knows that this reduction was a result of the federal funding change, and how the federal government is

providing funding for training through the colleges, flowing it through the provincial government.

The member also knows that the colleges, now that they have moved to governance, may in fact be able to renegotiate that particular intake or another one back directly from the federal government.

Adult Basic Education

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Will the minister confirm that the reason Red River Community College cancelled yet another Adult Basic Education program, this time for 50 mentally handicapped students at Premier Personnel, was because it generated no revenue for the college?

Is this now the future for Adult Basic Education in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): The whole issue of Adult Basic Education is a very important one to the Department of Education and Training. Therefore, as I spoke about in the 70 hours of Estimates, I outlined to the member at that time how this department and this government is now looking to provide a more efficient Adult Basic Education program, and to also widen the opportunities for Manitobans in terms of Adult Basic Education, because the member knows that for some of those individuals, they actually required literacy training.

Student Social Allowances Program Information Tabling Request

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): As the First Minister will know from the committee reading of the student social allowance act and the questions posed in this House to his minister by me, I, too, share the concerns of the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), the Leader of the New Democratic Party, that withdrawal of that service is absolutely backward, absolutely inconsistent with everything this government purports to be about in terms of education.

But I heard today some new things. The First Minister seems to say that students have left home to access this program, and they have quit jobs to access this program. Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, that is absolute nonsense. If one had attended the hearings, everyone who knew anything about this program said everything exactly opposite to that. There was absolutely no

evidence that came forward about that, either from the minister or from any of the presenters.

Can the First Minister table any evidence that those things he is relying on to defend his cut of this program are in fact true?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): If the member were paying attention to the issue, he would see that—

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): If you were paying attention to the issue, you might be able to do a better response.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for Inkster wants to respond to his Leader.

* (1355)

Mr. Edwards: That type of attempt to dodge the bullet is not going to serve this Premier.

This Premier has made statements—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Leader of the second opposition party, to pose a question.

Mr. Edwards: I have a further question for the First Minister.

He also indicated that there was no guarantee that careers would be available, in any event. What evidence is there that these people will be less able to have a career, less able to get off the welfare system if they do not have an education? That is the only hope. That is what we heard time and time again at the committee.

What evidence does this First Minister have that withdrawing this program will do anything to help those people, and, in fact, will not cause them absolutely irreparable damage in their search for a career?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, in responding to the member's initial questions, all he needed to do was to read the newspaper coverage of the various debates that have taken place now for at least three months on the issue. People acknowledged on the record and were named in the newspaper, who said they quit jobs to go onto this program.

So I do not need to do his research for him. All he has to do is pay attention to the debate instead of get involved at this late stage.

The fact of the matter is that we have said, if you are going to spend public money, you should have some idea that it will create positive effect, not that you will be able to say it will not create any negative

effects. It is one of those things that he is saying, like chicken soup, it would not hurt. Well, it costs a lot of money. There is a tremendous investment of the public in it, and we want to be assured that we are having a positive effect and that we can direct the dollars to get the maximum benefit. That is the whole principle behind the decisions being made.

Mr. Edwards: My final question for the First Minister: If, in fact, he is saying that this program did not work, it was unsuccessful, can he produce the study that shows that? Can he produce the study that his department presumably did to show that this does not work?

Secondly, can he tell us, if this does not work, what will work? What new program is he going to replace this with? Nothing. The fact is they are cutting, they did it in an unthinking way and they have nothing to replace it with.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, again, if he had paid attention to the debate, the Leader of the Second Opposition would know that no other government in Canada is carrying on a program of this nature.

Secondly, the Leader of the Liberal Party is alleging that we are saying that we have no other program. We have said there is another program that is being developed that we believe will be more targeted and a more effective use of tax dollars.

SOSAR Program Elimination

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Deputy Speaker, there have been so many programs eliminated by this Conservative cutback government that it amounts to a vicious attack on the poor. In addition to the elimination of the Student Social Allowances Program—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I am certain all honourable members would like to afford the courtesy to the honourable member for Burrows to pose his question.

* (1400)

Mr. Martindale: Madam Deputy Speaker, I have learned today that this government has eliminated another program called SOSAR which allowed single parents to attend university full time. In fact, that was a requirement, they must have attended full time. This allowed many individuals, including a social worker I just spoke to a few minutes ago, to

get off social assistance, to get a full-time job, to be totally independent and to be paying taxes.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services: Why did his government eliminate this excellent program which allowed many people over the years to get off social assistance and into paid employment?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): Madam Deputy Speaker, I think the member is aware that this department in the past has spent upwards of \$12 million to \$13 million on training programs for people on social allowances. All of the training programs have now been moved over to the Department of Education.

I have also indicated and the member is aware, in the whole area of social assistance, this is a very dynamic area. There are major changes that are taking place across Canada, across North America. There are some changes we will be addressing in the near future that I think will meet some of the concerns that have been raised today.

Mr. Martindale: I would like to ask the minister why did he and his government, when given a choice between assisting people for two to four years to become independent, choose to eliminate this program instead of allowing it to continue, the alternative being they are on social assistance, perhaps even indefinitely. Why did they make this choice?

Mr. Gillieshammer: Madam Deputy Speaker, the training programs for the Single Parent Job Access, the Gateway program and others are still in existence. If there are people who meet those guidelines, they will be allowed to persist with their educational plans.

If there are extenuating circumstances that take them beyond the regulations that are in place there now, I would personally look at those on an individual basis. If the member has a particular case, as he often does, if he wants to bring the case forward, I would see that that individual gets fair treatment.

Mr. Martindale: I thank the minister for that helpful answer because, indeed, I do have a particular individual I would like him to look into the circumstances of, who is six months from graduating, who, when she graduates, could be earning \$38,000 a year, instead of being paid \$13,000 a year on social assistance—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Does the honourable member for Burrows have a question?

Mr. Martindale: Can the minister look into this particular example, but also will his government reconsider not just for one individual, but for many people who want to get a university education, instead of being on social assistance?

Mr. Gillieshammer: I had already indicated that I would ensure that the individual the member is representing would get fair treatment. However, I am always cautious with the member's examples. Last week, he talked about hundreds of phone calls and letters, and then produced one he had written himself.

We are looking into that, and if you do have other examples, we would be pleased to look into them and see that, by the guidelines and regulations, individual Manitobans do get fair treatment.

Education System Reform Action Plan

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Madam Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Education talks about initiatives in education but provides no definitive action plan for education reform.

During the Estimates, the minister repeatedly failed to provide information on the timetable and scope of any legislative reform or reform of The Public Schools Act. She has no plan, no timetable and absolute confusion.

In view of the fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, it has been almost six months since the legislative report of the panel on legislative education reform was received by the minister, I want to ask this minister whether she today can provide this Legislature with an action plan on reform of The Public Schools Act in this province.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): As I said in the announcement last week, we have six major initiatives which are ongoing in the Department of Education and Training. They are interlocking initiatives, and the reform of The Public Schools Act is one.

As the member knows, I am sure he may have heard during committee hearings, perhaps he did not, various organizations who presented have said they have received a copy of the report and that they are looking at their responses, and as he will have remembered, perhaps he will not, they

have not yet forwarded the responses from the field into the Department of Education and Training.

Public Schools Act Amendments

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to ask the minister specifically, in light of the fact that there are major educational issues that need addressing by this minister, including such issues as equal opportunity for students across this province, greater community involvement of schools, the medical requirements of special needs students, violence in the schools—I want to ask the minister whether she is committing to a major rewrite of The Public Schools Act that will deal with these critical issues in education.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): As the member knows, we already have a number of those issues ongoing. The member may know, he probably does not remember, but in the 70 hours of Estimates, we spoke about the \$3 million that is specifically designated to initiatives to deal with violence in the schools. We have a boundary review ongoing. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), myself and the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) looked very carefully at medically fragile children, and before the next school year we will be able to make a joint announcement on that initiative. That will be a policy initiative, Madam Deputy Speaker.

However, in terms of the reform of The Public Schools Act, this government has believed in consultation. We released the document to the field, and we are awaiting their response.

Mr. Plohman: Madam Deputy Speaker, during the Estimates, the minister could not even say—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Plohman: I want to ask the minister: Will she commit today to ensuring that these important issues I have brought forward to her during the Estimates and in this Legislature will be addressed in the next session of the Legislature by way of major amendments to The Public Schools Act?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Deputy Speaker, the member is not listening. The answer to the member is that we are already dealing with a number of those issues. I have explained to him how we are dealing with violence in the schools. I have explained to him how we are dealing with

medically fragile children and the issues that have been outlined for the reform of The Public Schools Act we now have out in the field. We are awaiting the response of the field to that particular report, and then government will be looking at the initiative for the reform of The Public Schools Act.

Manitoba Mineral Resources Sale of Assets

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy and Mines.

In 1971, the Manitoba Mineral Resources Corporation was set up and the mandate, which is still current, was to assist in the discovery and development of new mines in Manitoba, to create new wealth and opportunities for Manitobans and enhance shareholder value. The only shareholder in that corporation, of course, is the Province of Manitoba. The corporation has made a profit in five of the last six years. It is our understanding, it has come to our attention that the minister is actively considering the winding up of that corporation.

I wonder if the minister could indicate whether or not that indeed is his intention and, if so, what has prompted this retreat from the government's active involvement in promoting the mining industry in Manitoba.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Madam Deputy Speaker, let me assure the member that we are aggressively supporting the mining industry with all the new programs that have been introduced by this government, the encouragement for prospecting and developing, work with the prospectors of this province. I am encouraged by the numbers of people showing interest in the mining industry in Manitoba.

As far as it relates to the specifics of MMR, I answered that question during the committee report, and I would refer the member to those Hansard notes.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Deputy Speaker, I do recall that discussion. I was there at the time.

I want to ask the minister again, and if the answer is that MMR is not considering the selling off of its assets then let that be on the record, is he or is he not considering the selling off of the assets of the Manitoba Mineral Resources Corporation?

Mr. Downey: Madam Deputy Speaker, what I indicated, and I will refer again to the members of

the Legislature, is that in the interests of the people of Manitoba, we will be looking at all matters that will encourage and enhance the mining industry in Manitoba. As it relates to MMR, as I said, there would be a review carried on as to its effectiveness and how it would play a future role in the province of Manitoba.

Review

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, the minister speaks of a review. Can he indicate to the members today what stage that review is at, who is doing it and when we can expect to hear back from the minister as to the review on this very important issue? He seems to be saying that the review is obviously going to consider whether or not to sell off the assets, but is unwilling to indicate today whether or not that will be the political decision.

Can the minister indicate if the review is going on, who is doing it and when we can expect a decision to be made on this important issue for all Manitobans, but in particular northern Manitobans?

* (1410)

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Madam Deputy Speaker, as far as an outside review, there is not an outside review going on by anyone else.

As far as I am concerned as minister, as I said in the Estimates process—or I am sorry, not the Estimates process but committee review, it would be taken under review by my office as to the effectiveness of MMR, and, of course, the Hansard which comes from that committee further expresses my comments as it relates to this matter.

Red River Valley Flood Condition Monitoring

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to put my question to the Minister of Natural Resources.

Having driven into the city of Winnipeg from the Emerson area this morning, having witnessed the aux Marais River flowing full capacity of its banks, as well the Plum River, the Morris River and many of the other smaller streams that flow into the Red River, and having witnessed yesterday some five to six inches of rain falling in the Emerson area and hearing the forecast in the Pembina area of some seven inches of rain at Pembina and up to 10

inches of rain falling in Grand Forks, I am asking the Minister of Natural Resources what action he and his department are taking to ensure that residents or farmers in the Red River Valley can take some comfort in actions he has initiated to co-operatively monitor water flows and actions in the Red River Valley and whether we can be assured that there are proper facilities in place to help some of these towns and individuals to fight the flood that might, in fact, come.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank the honourable member for a very appropriate question.

I report to honourable members that we do have, by and large, good relationships with our neighbours to the south. I note the long-standing operations, for instance, of the facility controlling the streams in the southwest like the Souris, where we actually have board members sitting on the board that controls the Darlingford structure just in the Minot area.

The area the honourable member refers to and is more familiar with has more problems. We do have an ongoing relationship. We are members of the international coalition that meets on a fairly regular basis that has to do with the Red River basin. I think this waxes and wanes. During the drought years, we tend to forget it.

I do know that during the '70s when we had two major years of high water, '74 and '79, there was some very high-level consultation going on between the governors of Minnesota and North Dakota, and I would hope that maybe this season will precipitate such further meetings.

Disaster Assistance

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Madam Deputy Speaker, it is very obvious that the opposition members, in light of the fun they are making of the question, have very little sympathy for the huge number of—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would remind all honourable members this is not a time for debate. This is a time for questions.

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Madam Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, the member for Emerson, in his remarks, was impugning the

motives of members opposite, who were encouraging the member for Emerson to simply tap the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) on the shoulder and ask the question, rather than abuse the rules and use Question Period, which is for the opposition to ask questions of this incompetent government.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Flin Flon did not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Penner: Madam Deputy Speaker, I find it rather interesting that the honourable member for Flin Flon criticized—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Emerson is attempting to pose his question, but even I cannot hear him over the roar.

The honourable member for Emerson, to quickly pose a supplementary question.

Mr. Penner: I would like to ask the Minister of Natural Resources whether he and the department are prepared to ask the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) and his disaster relief program whether they would participate in the same manner in the Red River Valley that they participated in the Swan Valley.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): One of the unique features is the difference in the kind of flooding. The kind of flooding we experienced in the Swan River Valley off the Duck Mountains is quite different than the Red River Valley flooding that we have, which, as damaging as it is to the general crops, comes at us gently.

I have to commend governments, both federal and provincial, over the past 20 years, that have done a tremendous job of drought-proofing, to a large extent, the Red River Valley. I mean the individual homesteads, the ring dikes around the major communities of Ste. Agathe, St. Adolphe, Morris, Emerson, and I know the member is aware of this.

But, Madam Deputy Speaker, the most important point the honourable member makes is such a valid point. We have massive and major economic loss being experienced in the province of Manitoba, and what we hear from the opposition is nothing but

spend, spend, spend on more social programs, not realizing that this engine of economic activity, namely rural Manitoba, agricultural Manitoba, needs to survive to provide those funds.

ARCOR

Board Members' Severance Pay

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Madam Deputy Speaker, speaking of wasting millions and millions of dollars of taxpayers' money, since January of 1989, the Aging and Rehabilitation Product Development Corporation has had a board in place appointed by the two levels of government.

Madam Deputy Speaker, my question to the minister responsible for this centre and of the government's funding: Was the minister made aware of, was the minister consulted, did the minister have any part of the decision to provide some \$685,000 in severance of wasted taxpayers' dollars to the members of this particular corporation who were severed from their employment?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): The member for Flin Flon, I believe, is fully aware that there is an independent board that has been set up by the two levels of government to make decisions as it relates to the operations of ARCOR.

It was a board decision in terms of the termination of some six employees. I should correct the honourable member that the figure, the terminations costs, that were quoted in one of the newspapers over the weekend were partly incorrect. There was a letter sent from the chairman of ARCOR to one of the newspapers here in town that did a breakdown of what those termination costs were.

While they are still significant, I agree, the termination pay was some \$285,000, not the six hundred and some thousand dollars that the honourable member is referring to, certainly a very significant sum of money, and I am not denying that, but the decisions had to be made to get that corporation back on track.

I believe now it is on track in terms of accomplishing the objectives that were originally set out for that corporation.

* (1420)

Audit Tabling Request

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Madam Deputy Speaker, the hundreds of jobs that were promised by the creation of these centres of excellence have disappeared along with most of the Tory promises.

My question to the minister is: Given the fact that there has been an audit of this particular operation, can the minister now indicate when he will table the results of that audit so that members of this Legislature can judge whether the government and this minister have acted in the interest of taxpayers, preventing the loss of money and the wasting of millions of dollars in something that has produced virtually no jobs?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): The annual financial statements are certainly available to the member for Flin Flon.

It is interesting to note, Madam Deputy Speaker, we just went through the Estimates of my department which is responsible for this, and not a single question was asked about ARCOR, obviously now being driven by media coverage of this issue, not by any research being done by the member for Flin Flon.

I think what the member for Flin Flon is referring to is an independent internal management review that was done by ARCOR in 1990 by the accounting firm Coopers and Lybrand, which deals with a range of issues, a range of personnel issues that are confidential to that corporation because of the sensitivity around many of the issues they deal with. At this particular point in time, the advice is that report should not be released.

Mr. Storle: Madam Deputy Speaker, the fact that this minister is 50 percent responsible for this mess, for the fact that there are no jobs and that millions of dollars have been wasted, a reasonable question to the Minister responsible for Industry, Trade and Tourism: Will he now table the auditor's report so that we can see who is responsible for this mess and why it has been such a dismal failure on behalf of the taxpayers of Manitoba?

Mr. Stefanson: Once again, I assume the member for Flin Flon is referring to this internal management review that was done by Coopers and Lybrand back in 1990 that dealt with a series of issues the board took action on. It dealt with some personnel matters that the board took action on, and that is the reason you have the severance pay figures.

It also led to some actions that the board has taken to reduce their annual expenditures by some \$1 million. It also dealt with some issues around product commercialization and a refocusing of the organization in terms of meeting the original objectives.

It is interesting that only the NDP can argue these kinds of issues out of both sides of their mouths. I get questions occasionally about research and development. Here is an area of research in terms of independent living for our aging community and product commercialization.

The board, an independent board, has taken action to deal with that. They have a mandate to be self-sufficient by 1996-97, and I believe that will occur. The report the member is referring to is an internal management report that deals with a range of personnel issues that, not unlike many organizations, are separate and distinct reports.

I will gladly provide the financial information, the annual financial statement, and I look forward to future Estimates processes where we can talk about all of the finances on ARCOR, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Barley Industry Continental Market

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Since the announcement of the continental barley market, farmers across the province have been concerned with the impacts of this decision. In fact, today there are rallies along the border with farmers from both countries, from the United States and Canada, expressing their concern about their losses due to the continental barley market.

I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture if he will recognize that the changes that are being made by this continental barley market are having a negative impact on farmers, and will he take seriously his responsibility as Minister of Agriculture and address the concerns of those people who are gathering at the U.S.-Canadian border today, protesting the change to a continental barley market?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Deputy Speaker, as the member well knows, this is a rather controversial issue. There are people on both sides of the argument, but there are farmers who believe the opportunity is one they have wanted for a long time, and the time is right to

do it. They say the price will go up. On the other side, the people whom she stands up for are the people who say the price will go down, and they do not want it.

What is available to the farmers is choice. Those who want to move the market in barley and sell it themselves have that option. Those who do not want to sell it themselves can sell it to the Canadian Wheat Board, and the Canadian Wheat Board can sell it in the United States, as well as elsewhere in the world.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is all about choice. Nobody is forcing the other side to do what they do not want to do. Choice is what farmers have wanted, and it is offered to them at this point in time.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Deputy Speaker, the choice that farmers have in this is lower prices for their barley.

Madam Deputy Speaker, because there was not full consultation on the change to a continental barley market and because the majority of producers who are affected are not in agreement on this, will the Minister of Agriculture contact the new Prime Minister and ask her to reverse this decision of a move to a continental barley market until there is thorough consultation?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Deputy Speaker, as I said in my first answer, those who do not want to sell it direct can sell it through the Wheat Board who can sell to the United States. That is the system as it always was. The choice still exists.

Further, within six years, a review will be done, and if at that time it is deemed it is not a workable solution, it can be reversed, Madam Deputy Speaker. The situation is, nobody is forced to do what the other side wants. It is pure choice, and that is what the farm community wants.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, would you call Bill 28 followed by report stages, please, and I will give further instruction at that time. Well, let us do it now.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we will then follow report stages with the process around Main and Capital Supply bills, at which time the concurrence motion can come forward.

I would ask whether or not there is a willingness of the House to waive private members' hour and rise at five o'clock and then come back to the House to do House business and committee work beginning at seven o'clock tonight.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent of the House to waive private members' hour and recess the House at 5 p.m. to return at 7 p.m. to continue regular House business? [agreed]

Mr. Manness: Madam Deputy Speaker, I would also ask for concurrence of the House to sit concurrently in two committees outside, plus the committee inside the House most likely dealing with concurrence at the time, at 7 p.m. Could you ask for that agreement?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent of the House to have two committees running concurrently outside the House commencing at 7 p.m., as well as committee in the House to deal with concurrence? [agreed]

Mr. Manness: Madam Deputy Speaker, I would then call Economic Development committee at seven o'clock tonight to hear Bill 42 and also Law Amendments committee to hear Bills 53 and 28, should it pass the House this afternoon.

I forgot that Bill 53 had been shown in the Votes to be in the Economic Development committee, so could we move Bill 53 from Economic Development to Law Amendments?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to move Bill 53 from Economic Development committee to Law Amendments committee? [agreed]

Mr. Manness: Yes, then, Madam Deputy Speaker, my request then holds—Economic Development committee at seven to consider Bill 42 and Law Amendments committee at 7 p.m. to consider Bills 50, 53 and 28, if, indeed, it passes this afternoon.

* (1430)

Committee Change

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic

Development be amended as follows: River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) for Osborne (Mr. Alcock).

Motion agreed to.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 28—The Manitoba Intercultural Council Repeal Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 28 (The Manitoba Intercultural Council Repeal Act; Loi abrogant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba), standing in the name of the honourable member for Inkster.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Deputy Speaker, it has been a little while since this bill was first introduced in second reading, actually a few months back. We were quite—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I just want to notify all members of the House that the Speaker has been given notice that the honourable member for Inkster has been designated unlimited time on Bill 28.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Deputy Speaker, the only reason for that is just to ensure that if, by chance, I need an extra few minutes, I can go ahead on it, so I can finish my remarks on it. [interjection] The Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) is right, it is a bad bill. It is a bill that should never have seen the light of day.

I wanted to go over what has happened with MIC over the last number of years, five years, so individuals have an understanding of what it is this government is doing with respect to the concept of multiculturalism in the province of Manitoba and, of course, I would argue that if you look at the actions they have taken, it does not go along with what many individuals who are out there, who work very hard at trying to ensure that Manitoba does in the real world reflect a multicultural society, that those individuals are in fact quite disappointed with what this government has done over the last number of years, because for all intents and purposes, we have seen a lot of lip service. We have seen patronage. We have seen organizations such as the Manitoba Intercultural Council being taken apart, and I find that most unfortunate.

Let me start off by talking about when I was first elected back in '88. One of the first things I saw the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) do was to take away the funding

authority from the Manitoba Intercultural Council. The minister favoured the Manitoba Grants Advisory Council over MIC, because she was wanting to have more input in terms of who and which organizations were going to be receiving the multicultural grants.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think that was when we first understood what direction this government was going to be taking on multiculturalism in the province of Manitoba, because one of the first actions they did, is they chose to start financing and giving the grants out to the different multicultural organizations, thereby politicizing the multicultural community wherever they can by the issuance of these grants and cheques.

I think, if you follow it from that point right to today, where we now have before us Bill 28, which will in fact distance MIC from government and could potentially lead to a very fatal blow to the organization as we know it, that is unfortunate, because the concept of the Manitoba Intercultural Council is a very positive one.

I want to comment on that, because time after time we are given different opportunities inside this Chamber to talk about multiculturalism, and it is very easy to give lip service to multiculturalism. Many individuals will talk about or relate to multiculturalism as the songs, dance and the ethnic cuisines that are there, and believe that that is in fact what multiculturalism is in most part.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, that is only one aspect of multiculturalism. I have been given the opportunity as a multicultural critic, to go out to a number of different events over the past few years, and I like to talk about multiculturalism, and when I talk about multiculturalism, it is more than just the song and the dance.

We are talking about the political, economic and social integration, at the same time appreciating what those individuals have brought from their homeland, whether you are first generation, a recent immigrant, or 15th generation, that we do have a sense of responsibility to ensure that those cultures and our ancestors' traditions, cultures and heritages are in fact preserved, because that is what gives us our Canadian identity.

A story that I often make reference to is one from a teacher in the north end. She had a student teacher come into her classroom once, and the student teacher started off by asking the children

what they had for breakfast. The first child that she asked this particular question, the response was, of course, I had fried pork along with rice.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the student teacher kind of looked at the student in a very odd, peculiar way type of thing, and then continued to go down asking some children in terms of what they had for breakfast. Another student was asked, of the same ethnic background as the first one, and had said fried eggs and toast, and the more traditional, if you like, type of breakfast.

Well, the teacher brought the student teacher to that latter student and asked in fact: Did you have that eggs-and-bacon-and-toast-type thing? The student had replied no, but I thought that is what the teacher wanted to hear.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, you can have racial incidents by accident. Those accidents, if you will, will occur. Then you will have incidents which are fairly clear. You have the different extremes, right from the Ku Klux Klan hotline, if you like, to an incident that can happen that is very innocent—at least appears to be very innocent in the classroom.

What is most important is that we as legislators realize that both are in fact wrong and that we need to do what we can to ensure that incidences of these natures are minimized.

I would refer members to read the Combatting Racism report in particular that the Manitoba Intercultural Council put out, and you will see that the best way to fight this particular issue of racism is through education and tolerance. This is something in which it has been suggested to the government in a very, very strong way.

It would have been back in 1990—November, I believe it was—when MIC brought forward this particular report and made some fairly simple recommendations that would have been very easy for this government to follow.

One of the ones, and I have brought it up on numerous occasions to the current minister, was that one-day cross-cultural experience for all of the MLAs inside the Chamber. Yet we do not see this government acting on issues of that nature.

I do believe that when we talk about this multicultural society that we live in, actions speak louder than words do. This is what this bill again is doing. The actions of this government in this particular bill is not going to benefit the multicultural

fabric that we have, because MIC deals with issues such as racism, deals with issues such as systemic barriers that are put into place and quite often reports not only to legislators or politicians, but community members, because the Manitoba Intercultural Council itself is made up of representatives from all the different ethnic groups.

I have had the opportunity, as I say, to have met many of the different individuals, and I am not aware of any other organization that has as many participants from different ethnic backgrounds involved in one organization. That is the reason why I say the concept of the Manitoba Intercultural Council is a very positive one and that if in fact you want to be able to make some strides in terms of dealing with those real multicultural issues that are there, you need to have organizations such as the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

* (1440)

What this government is doing through Bill 28 is in fact a backward step. Now, I wanted to put this into proper perspective in terms of what it is that this government is doing. Having said in terms of how important that we recognize that actions do speak louder than words, I want to talk about some of the actions that this government has done.

I made reference to the Intercultural Council and the funding it used to have in terms of granting authority to the different multicultural organizations. The minister took that responsibility away from MIC and put it into the Manitoba Grants Advisory Council. Well, what is the difference between the two organizations?

MIC, in most part, is elected from the different ethnic communities and the minister does have some input in a sense that she is able to appoint the chair and also other members onto the board itself.

This is the agency that used to give the grants, Madam Deputy Speaker, and that granting authority was taken and given to MGAC. Well, MGAC is 100 percent appointed from the minister. If you look at the background of MGAC, you will clearly see how it is being manipulated and used by the government to try to take credit for the different organizations that are receiving grants as if it is this government that is giving the money to that organization, as opposed to MIC that was giving the money on behalf of the taxpayers. It was just

an allotment that was assigned through the lotteries.

Let us take a look at the MGAC. We remember the first chairperson of MGAC was David Langtry. David Langtry is an individual who has been the recipient of criticism from myself and not only myself, but by a number of other individuals who are out there in terms of his affiliation to the Conservative Party and why it is that this individual would in fact have been the chairperson of MGAC. Well, then we had the provincial election. It is wonderful to see individuals running for office, but Mr. Langtry ran for the Conservative Party in the riding of Kildonan.

After the election in Kildonan, the government created the multicultural secretariat's office, and David Langtry was taken from the campaign defeat and put into that particular position. Madam Deputy Speaker, one could question in terms of why it is that you bring up individuals. I think this is very symbolic.

What happened was this office was created, and one of the first things that was done is more positions were hired. Well, another individual, the campaign manager of Mr. Langtry, was brought into that office. Then there was another individual who was brought in through the civil service, and whatever happened to that particular individual? One should talk in terms of why it is that she was moved out or requested to be moved out, possibly because of some of the ongoings that were going inside this particular office.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this office cost the taxpayers a considerable amount of money. The idea again of having a multicultural secretariat's office is a very positive one, but who is kidding who on this? If we take a look at it, I would argue that the first and foremost priority that the current secretariat will have is not the multicultural secretariat, but rather the Conservative Party.

It will be interesting to see in terms of I go out to different events. The secretariat's office is out there whether it is the secretariat himself or the campaign worker who was there for Mr. Langtry in the 1990 provincial election. The office itself is being used as an extension of the Conservative government, of the Conservative Party. [interjection] The Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) says I am very suspicious. For good reason, I am very suspicious. I am sure if he was attending

the same events I was attending—and no doubt he is attending different events—he would see these individuals, and the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) is an individual who attends a good number of the events I attend and will attest that these individuals are in fact there.

If in fact you mingle around and you talk to some of the individuals who are attending these functions, they know, Madam Deputy Speaker. They are not being fooled by this government. When they see the multicultural secretariat's office, it is the Conservative Party, and it is nothing more than that.

The government tries to sell this off as a civil servant. Madam Deputy Speaker, if they are trying to say it is a civil servant, then how can you make it such a political appointment? Are we saying that the civil service—I will give some in terms of that there is a need for some appointments based on politics, but they are very selective positions. Anything within the civil service, I say an absolute no to.

This particular position, I believe, embodies a lot of the negative feelings that are out there when it comes to patronage that the public as a whole holds of politicians generally. It is reinforced every time we go to an event in which these individuals appear, and you talk to other people and they give you the sort of comments that they have to say.

Madam Deputy Speaker, if we look again, going to MIC—and that is the one aspect, the granting powers, if you will, and how those were taken away. The multicultural secretariat's office also had those two positions that I referred to, and those were policy analysts. Those positions took away another power from the Manitoba Intercultural Council, because that is what MIC was supposed to do. It was supposed to be advising the government, looking at different issues, analyzing them, coming up with advice and recommendations to the government of the day. Well, this is something that the multicultural secretariat again took on as part of their responsibility.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the government then comes out with this multicultural policy booklet. Inside this multicultural policy booklet, it made reference to having a multicultural act; from this booklet would come an act. We saw that particular piece of legislation come in last year at which time I

had the opportunity to speak on the bill and the concerns that I had. I had a number of concerns about that particular bill, and some of them were addressed. In fact, we did get some amendments to the bill in the winding days or hours of last session, but there were some concerns that were not ever considered.

* (1450)

We had the multicultural act introduced. The minister responsible for the act, when I asked her what she was doing with the Manitoba Intercultural Council, the minister's response to me was, well, we now have created the Don Blair report or task force. Mr. Blair was going to review what MIC is all about, its mandate and where it should fit in with any multicultural act. Maybe The MIC Act should just remain there in an amended form and so forth.

Madam Deputy Speaker, at that time, I indicated, or at least I was of the opinion, that the minister knew what it was she was wanting to do, that the consultant that was hired knew what his job was, and that was to assist the government in getting rid of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. In fact, we can even go back to previous sessions where I, representing the Liberal Party, introduced legislation or private members' bills that made reference to The MIC Act. The minister at that time commented on those bills and made reference to this multicultural act.

I remember one bill, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I introduced. It said something to the effect that MIC, the appointment of the chair, the minister should no longer do; that MIC should be able to appoint their own chair; that the appointments of the executive director should come from within, again, the minister should not be appointing. The minister, to her credit, stood up and said, yes, and that the New Democrats were wrong when they brought in the legislation, and they allowed for them to do that.

In fact, it implied to me, and it was very clear, that this government was going to be bringing in a multicultural act, and in that multicultural act they will address that particular problem, that she disagreed with the Liberals because she felt that the Liberals were doing it in a piecemeal fashion. She said, why would you want to do it this way when in fact we are going to bring in a multicultural act which will take all of this into consideration?

During the debate and discussion of the multicultural act that was in last session, I found the specific quote from Hansard that I brought up to the minister. The minister could not refute or challenge that what she had assured at least the Liberal Party, the Liberal caucus, was that she was going to bring in MIC or make some changes to MIC that would, in fact, be incorporated—or at least gave us the impression that it would be incorporated into the multicultural act.

That is why I was very surprised to see that, when the multicultural act came forward, it was not included. That is why we had proposed amendments and asked questions on it and lobbied the minister to incorporate MIC into the multicultural act. The minister, at that time, having changed her mind from the Liberal Party's bill dealing with MIC, had changed her mind and said, well, this report is coming back with recommendations, and then we will deal with the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

So we continued on with the discussion and debate on the multicultural act. As I said, we did get some amendments. You know, if you look at the multicultural act today, there is really and truly not that much to it. You have the multicultural secretariat's office established in the legislation. You have the Outreach Office, which, I believe, may be established and a wonderful preamble that I believe no one inside the Chamber would say otherwise.

So, if you listen in terms of what it is I have been talking about, the multicultural secretariat, you might wonder why it is that we took the position at the time on that particular piece of legislation. Again, for many individuals, especially those individuals who are at the other end of the systemic barrier or racism, Madam Deputy Speaker, they want government to be proactive and to do what they can to deal with the many different issues that are there. It is very easy for government to say that the multicultural secretariat's office is there to serve you, very easy to do that.

In fact, as I said earlier, the concept is, in fact, a valid one and a good one, but given the background and in particular what this government is doing with the multicultural secretariat, we would be better off not to have the secretariat's office and to use that money and put it into the Manitoba Intercultural Council or some other expenditure that deals with the issues, whether it is English as a

Second Language training, recognition of credentials of immigrants who come to Canada, individuals who have been here for a number of years who are not practising what they did in their homeland because their credentials were never recognized.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the money would have been a lot better spent in those areas than the way this government is using and manipulating the multicultural community, the multicultural community being all Manitobans, with this particular office. That is, in fact, what the government is doing. That is very unfortunate, because the organization that has lost the most as a direct result of this particular minister's actions is the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

Madam Deputy Speaker, what has the MIC done that is so wrong? During the debate on the multicultural act, because I had unlimited time, I had the opportunity at that time to go at length in terms of what MIC has done for Manitoba. I believe the government underestimates the potential good that could come out of the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

I have, from the 1993 Biennial Ethnocultural Assembly, a list of the registered delegates and organizations they represent. I would like to challenge the minister to come up with another organization that represents so many different ethnic groups in the province of Manitoba.

I do not believe she can. She might be able to make reference to the Folk Arts Council. The Folk Arts Council's primary focus is with Folklorama. The Manitoba Intercultural Council, in the past, has dealt with the many different issues that are facing Manitoba and society as a whole, as a multicultural society, that is, Madam Deputy Speaker. All you need to do is look at their annual report, and you will find numerous reports and advice and comments from that organization in terms of what government can do to make or to better reflect the mosaic of Manitoba.

I want to list some of those organizations so that members of the Chamber are, in fact, aware. This again comes from the '93 Biennial Ethnocultural Assembly.

Registered delegates range from the African Association of Manitoba, Agno Winnipeg Association, Association of Cultural Hispano Can., Association of United Ukrainian Canadians. The

list goes on—the Polish Congress, the Chinese Community Council, the Congress of Black Women, the Council of Caribbean Organizations of Manitoba, Immigrant Women's Association, India Association of Manitoba, India School of Dance, the National Association of Canadians of Origin in India, National Black Coalition, the Philippine Association of Manitoba, the Portuguese Association of Manitoba, Punjabi Community Voluntary Organization.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we are talking about four pages of organizations that participated in the last assembly. I covered just a handful, and these individuals are community leaders within the different organizations they represent.

That is the reason why I say, you know, if you do not like the name, the Manitoba Intercultural Council, maybe you have a better name. Maybe the minister has a better name of what it is she would like to call this organization, but come up with that name.

The concept is a very good one, and this government is ignoring that concept. I, for the life of me, do not understand why, because I look at it and I try to understand what it is that the Manitoba Intercultural Council has done to this minister or this government that has made them take the actions they have taken.

I do not see any reason why the Manitoba Intercultural Council could not be included in the multicultural act, no reason at all. I would like to hear from the minister why she believes that the MIC has no place or no role in the multicultural act.

I would argue that the concept of MIC should, at the very least, be incorporated into the act. If she does not like the name, change the name, but at least incorporate it into the multicultural act. If you cannot do that, then what is the sense of even having the multicultural act?

I do not see the reason being the multicultural secretariat's office or the Outreach Office. Yes, the concept of those are very positive. If government chose not to manipulate, they would be very beneficial, but surely to goodness the Manitoba Intercultural Council is just as valuable.

I would argue that an organization such as this is more valuable because they can bridge the different cultures and ethnic groups that are out there. It is reflected in terms of the individuals who

make up the particular council. It reflects all the different ethnic groups that are out there.

* (1500)

We talk every day, Madam Deputy Speaker, about issues that come before this Chamber. Well, if you want to be able to deal with some of these issues, you need to have the community leaders of the different ethnic groups who are out there talking about and dealing with the different issues that a particular community might be facing, because what might be important to one community, possibly because of an immigration wave or whatever it might be, is not necessarily of the same importance to another community.

You could get a good example of that by just looking at the issues that continually come up with the different organizations that are out there. There are different organizations I talk to where racism is the biggest issue. Other organizations talk about lack of recognition of credentials as their biggest issue.

It varies tremendously in terms of what the different communities require, but what we need to do is to ensure that the different communities are, in fact, working together, because if you do have that, I would suggest to you we will have more harmony in society in the future. We should be fostering organizations, not destroying organizations such as the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

I wanted to go over some of the recommendations. The minister brought forward this particular piece of legislation because of the Don Blair report. Mr. Blair's report has received a considerable amount of criticism from different leaders of the different ethnic communities. Even I myself, as the critic for the Liberal Party, have been somewhat critical of it, and for good reason.

These are the highlighted areas, as per the news release back on February 4, 1993, where Mr. Blair's first recommendation is that The MIC Act be repealed, and then it goes on: In the alternative, that The Manitoba Intercultural Council Act be amended to remove the power of government to appoint council members, to appoint the chairperson and to hire the executive secretary.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe that the minister had a choice. The minister did not have to dismantle the Manitoba Intercultural Council legislation, and wipe it out entirely. Even if the

minister reads Mr. Blair's report, the second—and this comes from the highlight that her government has put out. It says that, as an alternative to repealing The MIC Act, The MIC Act be amended to remove that power of government to appoint council members, to appoint the chairperson, and to hire the executive secretary.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that is what the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) said she agreed with. She agreed with taking that power away from the minister and giving it to the board itself, MIC. But she takes the argument that we in the Liberal caucus put forward five years ago, and she went a step further. She believes or tries to tell the House that this particular bill is justified, not only because she is concerned about the aspects that we have raised, but she wants to make it even that much more independent.

The best way to do that is to do the first recommendation, which was to repeal the act completely, in its entirety. To this day, I have yet to hear the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) put up a valid argument as to why MIC has to be repealed, that the changes that she is hoping for, the changes that Mr. Blair is suggesting to her, could not be incorporated within the multicultural act.

Madam Deputy Speaker, if she feels that she cannot do that, if she is unable to bring MIC or incorporate it into the multicultural act, then why does she feel that she has to repeal it? Why does she not follow what Mr. Blair is suggesting as an alternative to repealing the act—that is, just to make those modifications that were being suggested to her a number of years ago? I would like to hear from the minister why it is that she feels so firmly on it.

Mr. Blair suggests that the Manitoba Intercultural Council develop a clear definition of whom it represents, a specific role and mandate acceptable to its membership; specific processes for an election of delegates and council members, committee members and executive members; a process to ensure some degree of continuity of council and executive members; staggered terms to allow for elections of half members while the other half remain to provide continuity; a longer term plan with goals and objectives for which it is accountable to its membership and to government and the public in the event the act is not rescinded.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it goes on, and I would suggest to you that everything that Mr. Blair is talking about could be done in the multicultural act. If the minister does not want to bring MIC into the multicultural act, everything that Mr. Blair is talking about can be done within the current Manitoba Intercultural Council Act or what Bill 28 is going to take away.

This is not an issue that is new to this Chamber. If you have been listening to my comments, you will see that we have brought it up on numerous occasions. I, as the critic for the Liberal Party, had taken the minister at face value, in particular, in the session prior to last when I last introduced the MIC bill into this Chamber.

In that particular bill, I had suggested to the government that they give them that appointment power and that they also give them back the funding authority. We had amended and changed our bill, the bill that the Liberals were putting forward, because I believed at the time that the minister was, in fact, onside with us on the appointments. I did not expect her to come onside with the funding, unfortunately, and nor do I expect her to come onside with the funding. The only way, Madam Deputy Speaker, I can see a change in the funding is with a change in government or, at the very least, a change in attitude possibly from a different minister.

This session, unfortunately, the Chamber will never hear it, so I wanted to read it anyway. I was going to be introducing a resolution on behalf of the Liberal caucus. It happens to be Resolution 69, and with the government's approach to private members' hour, this resolution will not, in fact, be debated.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

* (1510)

Mr. Speaker, you will find that the resolution has a lot to do with this particular bill, and it reads—and I would have moved, and I would have had a seconder, I am sure; at least I could have selected from any member of the opposition party because I believe that New Democrats are onside with this particular resolution, and that would have read: That the Manitoba Intercultural Council has a significant role to play in the multicultural society in which we live. Whereas the Manitoba Intercultural Council can provide Manitoba with a unique and valuable perspective on the status of

multiculturalism in Manitoba; whereas the minister responsible for the Manitoba Intercultural Council has demonstrated her lack of support for MIC by removing the council's granting authority, reducing its advisory role in excluding MIC from the multicultural act, therefore be it resolved that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the minister responsible for the Manitoba Intercultural Council to reconsider her support of MIC.

Mr. Speaker, this particular resolution would have been put on the table back in November or December of 1992, well in advance of Mr. Blair's report coming out. The reason why we brought forward this resolution is because I was convinced at that time that in fact what the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) was doing with MIC and the way in which she brought the Don Blair report and after having an interview with Mr. Blair in my office, this government had absolutely no intention of bringing MIC into the multicultural act.

I had no idea in terms of this government's ability to be able to respect the hard work of hundreds of volunteers over the last number of years that have put in endless hours towards making Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, a better place to live in a multicultural society, the same better place I am talking about that the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) talks about when she gives her speeches, whether it is to a citizenship court, whether it is to a multicultural or an ethnic group out in the community. Those are the very same individuals that she is now taking the legislation away from.

I find that very upsetting, and I am sure many individuals find it upsetting. I believe that the minister does owe it to those individuals, to those groups that she talks to, an explanation as to why she feels that the Manitoba Intercultural Council, The MIC Act, has to be repealed because even Mr. Blair himself has not concluded that MIC has to be repealed.

The individual that they recruited to put the death nail in MIC did not, Mr. Speaker, say that it had to be repealed, in fact, recognized that as an alternative, there are some changes that were in fact necessary that would have given the minister everything that she wanted when she brought in this particular bill a couple of months ago.

I listened and I read why the minister brought in this piece of legislation and everything has to do with giving MIC that much more of an independent feeling, if I can put it that way, Mr. Speaker, that the government does not want to control it in any way. Well, I find that to be a fairly poor excuse, and I do not believe that it can justify it.

I have had a number of reasons to believe why this minister is not a big fan of the Manitoba Intercultural Council and it stems back to a number of years ago, in fact, when the government was in opposition. I am fully aware that when the New Democrats brought in the Manitoba Intercultural Council, the Conservative Party at the time believed that the NDP were going to be using this as an organization that was going to politicize the multicultural community. [interjection] Mr. Langtry knows. I have talked about him quite often.

Mr. Speaker, when the New Democrats brought in this piece of legislation, the Tories opposed it. Why did they oppose it? They opposed it because they believed that the NDP were going to use this organization in order to manipulate the different ethnic groups. They were very upset with the government of the day at the time and suggested, in fact, that what they were doing was wrong.

Well, knowing full well that the Manitoba Intercultural Council maybe at the time might have been very political in its makings, I believe that over time, what we have seen is the Manitoba Intercultural Council become apolitical. I can say that knowing full well, in fact, that this is the case in most part. As the multicultural critic, I believe I have attended maybe three assembly meetings of sorts, and I believe I have been at maybe one, possibly two, executive meetings of the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

At no point in time—and I would challenge any member of the MIC or the minister or the secretariat's office to tell me that I have tried to manipulate or to use the Manitoba Intercultural Council as a political diving board, if you will. I really and truly believe that there are, no doubt, some individuals within MIC who are, in fact, political. I could not tell you how involved they might be in politics. I can say I am not aware of any who have helped me in my provincial elections at all.

I do believe, very much so, that MIC was evolving into a very apolitical organization, and I

believe the organization could have been a lot healthier had the government chosen to foster it, as opposed to destroying it.

On the few occasions I have been able to meet with MIC in the form of general meetings, I have been very impressed and pleased with the high level of discussions in debates that have been presented at these meetings.

The minister herself made reference in Question Period a while back when I asked her about that cross-cultural awareness day for the MLAs. Her response was that she does not need to anymore because MIC provided this cross-cultural day experience for us. She recognized, at least at that point, that, yes, MIC has done some things even she appreciates.

I believe the minister is oversensitive to the Intercultural Council. I think she feels she got burnt in her first meeting or possibly the second meeting because I can recall back in '88 when the member for Selkirk at the time, Ms. Charles, stood up and asked a question about MIC. I believe it had something to do with the advocacy role, and the minister did not have a very good first meeting with the executive.

* (1520)

I think that, unfortunately, that particular meeting has remained in the mind of the minister, and she is somewhat vengeful and has not—nor will she rest until she feels that MIC, as we know it, no longer exists.

That is very unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, because one of the reports which I have had ample time, and I know the minister has, to go through was the last one that really MIC did of any great detail or depth that I am aware of anyway. They could have done others. It was the one with respect to the "Combatting Racism in Manitoba." They came up with a number of recommendations that dealt with everything from the elected officials to our educational facilities and things which we can do to combat racism—as the report itself is titled.

Mr. Speaker, there were a lot of volunteer hours that were put into coming up with this report. It is close to 100 pages in length. The minister is quite content to throw it out the window and, along with that, has discouraged a great number of individuals that would have participated in a much more active way had we had a minister or a government that gave MIC the respect that it deserves.

Unfortunately, as a result of that lack of respect, I do not see the future of the Manitoba Intercultural Council being as bright as it could have been, had the minister done the right thing. That would have been to incorporate MIC into the multicultural act, even if it disagrees entirely with giving it any money whatsoever.

I could go through organizations—because the minister has the list of the different organizations, ethnic organizations that receive money every year from government, from MGAC, if you will. Now the minister is taking the money away from an organization that I believe had potential to do a lot more for Manitobans as a whole than any other organization that MGAC has likely even given a grant to.

I think the minister has not done a service to this Legislature by bringing in this particular piece of legislation. I believe the minister, at the very least, if she plans to go ahead with this bill, should bring in a bill next session that will incorporate the concept of MIC into the multicultural act. I know that I will be working between now and the next session to come up with such a private member's bill. Hopefully, we will see some reforms inside the Chamber that will see private members and the work and effort that private members put into bills and resolutions be given more than just lip service and just appear on the Order Paper and never reach a vote, because I do plan on putting in some time in coming up with a bill that will reflect the concept of MIC.

Hopefully, Mr. Speaker, I will not have to introduce it, because the minister will take a look at the current multicultural act and be able to make a decision that, for all intents and purposes, yes, the multicultural act says a lot of wonderful things and has some good concepts in it but has, in most part, proven to be a major disappointment to those Manitobans who looked to government in terms of coming forward with some creative ideas.

There are things that government can do to give strength to the multicultural act, things that it can do such as working with the Multiculturalism Secretariat's office and the Outreach Office, to do what she can to ensure that the civil service is, in fact, depoliticized, and only time will tell. I look forward to the next session when, no doubt, the government once again will give some direction on its beliefs in policy on multiculturalism in the province of Manitoba.

Thus far, over the last five years, I would suggest to you that it has been a real disappointment, that the government did have an opportunity, and, unfortunately—and I do not who is advising the minister. Well, I have a good idea who is advising the minister, but I will hold back on those comments. Hopefully, we will see something coming from this department that will do some benefit to the community.

She has often talked about the data bank in terms of credentials, ESL. I think that we could see some tremendous results if we see a firm commitment in those areas. I am not, as of yet, convinced that the government has committed what it could in those areas, areas in which we will really have an impact on the everyday lives of individuals who are out there who are experiencing a lot of frustration.

Having said those few words—and I know the member for River Heights was wanting to speak on this bill also—I conclude my remarks, and we will see it in committee this evening.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this particular bill, because I think the passage of this bill—and undoubtedly it will pass because of the Conservatives' majority—it is a sad day for the province of Manitoba and, quite frankly, a sad day for Canada as well.

The whole concept of the Manitoba Intercultural Council was a bold concept. It was a bold concept with some flaws and some serious weaknesses, but it was indeed a bold concept that we would have a council reporting to a minister, who would advise the minister on issues affecting the multicultural dynamic of this province.

Canada prides itself on being a multicultural nation. We pride ourselves on being different from the United States. They, of course, refer to themselves as a "melting pot," where everyone is supposed to arrive on the shores of the United States of America and become somehow immediate American citizens, with all that that entails, including, in my opinion, quite frequently, blind loyalty to the flag and to the nation.

Canadians took a very different attitude. We said that immigrants could arrive in this country, and that they could, in fact, maintain some of those characteristics which they brought to this nation from their earlier nation. We even went a step

further, not too very long ago, and said that they could, in fact, have joint citizenship with their old country and with their new country as a mark of respect to their heritage, to what they had been and to now what they are.

When The Manitoba Intercultural Council Act came into being in 1983 in the province of Manitoba, its purpose and intent was to establish a group which could advise the minister of the day on issues affecting that multicultural dynamic, because we know that it is different.

There are within any nation what we call waves of immigrants. The older an immigrant population has been living in the nation, usually the easier their assimilation. By the second generation, they usually speak English or French, as the case may be, with the same fluency as those who have lived here for many generations, and so their ability to find employment, their ability to understand what their children are learning in school, their ability to get in touch with social services, their ability to practise their democratic processes, those all become easier as, of course, the language becomes easier for them.

Although Canada prides itself on being an intercultural and a multicultural country, we cannot pride ourselves on a lack of prejudice, because Canadians tend to turn a very blind eye to very blatant examples of prejudice that have existed in this society since its formation.

* (1530)

One does not have to ask the aboriginal members of this Legislature if their people have experienced prejudice. They were our first people and we talk about them with that kind of respect, but we do not treat them with that kind of respect, and they have spent generations and generations in this country subject to prejudice, prejudice on the basis of the fact they were our first peoples. We know that there has been prejudice in this land on the basis of religion, we know there has been prejudice in this land on the basis of ethnicity and we know there has been prejudice in this nation on the basis of colour.

I suspect there are very few people in this Chamber who know that in the city in which I grew up we had segregated schools until 1954. You know, when we talk about segregation, we tend to think of it as a concept for South Africa or a concept for a state in the southern United States. We had

prejudice in the Halifax school system in the form of segregation until 1954. There were black schools and white schools. It was only in 1954 that they were outlawed.

There has been prejudice in this country with respect to people of colour for many generations, but it is not just with respect to colour. Francophones in the province of Manitoba can remember very vividly when they attended schools in this province, and when they learned that the superintendent of schools was at the railway station they all quickly took their French textbooks and they hid them and they brought out their English textbooks.

So when the superintendent had made the walk from the train station to the classroom, miraculously the classes were then in English, but, of course, they had been of regular nature conducted in French, because we decided, in our lack of wisdom in 1890, that we would disallow the use of French in this Chamber and then in 1916 we would refuse to allow it in our school system. So our Francophone people can talk very personally, many of them, about the prejudice that they felt as they were being raised in this particular province.

One does not have to speak to too many Chinese people to have them talk about the Chinese head tax, that it was only immigrants who came from China that had to pay a particular head tax in order to enter Canada. Immigrants from France, immigrants from Britain, immigrants from Ireland, immigrants from Spain or any other European country, they did not pay a head tax. You only paid a head tax if you came from China, so one can only assume that the reason for that head tax was because the Chinese people had a different colour skin, a different slant to their eyes and a different quality to their hair.

We know that in World War I, not just foreign nationals were incarcerated, but Canadian citizens of Ukrainian and of German origin were put in jails, that we went to drastic changes for example—silly ones in my opinion—but we had to change areas like Kitchener and Waterloo. We know that in 1940, when the St. Louis landed in Montreal, a ship full of Jewish people who were escaping from the concentration camps in Germany, we turned them back. We know that in 1915, when a shipload of Sikhs tried to land in Vancouver harbour, they were turned back. We know that Canadians of

Japanese origin were interned, perhaps one of the greatest shames in the country's history.

So prejudice based on ethnicity and colour and religion and language is not new to Canada. It is very much a part of our history. That is why the establishment of a Manitoba Intercultural Council was such exciting news, because the establishment of this council was to give advice to the minister, was to give the minister a first-hand ability to touch these people and their personal experiences, to learn on a first-hand basis of the experiences they had with respect to prejudice, whether it was prejudice in the workforce, whether it was prejudice in the schools, whether it was prejudice against our social system. In whatever its dynamic, they were to learn first-hand, the government of the day, from these people just what the experiences were that they were having.

I was amused when I read over the member for Wellington's (Ms. Barrett) speech on Friday. I almost had the sense that we were back in my home when my children were little, and we had what we called the not-me ghost. Not me, not me, I did not politicize anything. Well, the reality was they did politicize it, and they politicized it badly. They politicized it in two major areas, not by the appointments they made which were part of the act and which were reasonable. They politicized it by saying the minister of the NDP government had to appoint the chairperson and the minister of the NDP government had to hire the executive director.

How better to politicize an organization that is supposed to offer you free advice than to say, well, we want to listen to your point of view, but we insist that we appoint the chairperson and we insist that we hire the executive director. If you want to keep an organization independent, you do not do it that way.

So the politicization of this new wonderful act that should have been a bellwether of good news began with the very establishment of the act itself in 1983, but this new government elected in 1988 had an opportunity to change that. They had an opportunity to depoliticize and to give back to MIC the ability to appoint their own chairperson and to hire their own executive director, but what did they do? Oh, no, they decided they would politicize it even further, and now they are over there saying, not me, too, so the not-me ghost is once more alive and well in the Chamber.

The first thing they did was, of course, to take the funding from MIC. What was the basis for that wonderful decision? Well, the decision, of course, was based on an Auditor's Report that said, well, they were not handling their finances very well.

Well, you know, if we listened to the Auditor's Report, we would watch government tumble time after time after time, because year after year after year, auditors at the federal level and provincial levels across this nation keep saying, the government is not doing very well and these are all the recommendations I have.

So if we used Auditors' Reports as the basis of removing power, there would not be a government, no matter what its political stripe, in power today. All of them would be gone.

So the reality of using an Auditor's Report to take away entire funding was just, quite frankly, a bit of facetiousness. If you would really and genuinely want to tighten up the funding of MIC, then by all means do so, tighten up the funding. Make sure that the accounting principles used are far more valid, far more reasonable, far more logical.

Had that been done, then funding could have remained with MIC. But there began the slippery slope until we have before us an act today which would like to do away with the Manitoba Intercultural Council in its entirety. That, Mr. Speaker, I would say to you, is a very backward step.

What we have replaced it with, of course, is a Multicultural Grants Advisory Council and a Multiculturalism Secretariat, and we have two representatives of those groups upstairs in the gallery listening with bated breath obviously to the opposition comments about the two organizations.

The tragedy with respect to both of those organizations is that one is unnecessary, the Multicultural Grants Advisory Committee, because MIC could have been doing the work.

The second, the multicultural secretariat, has been, in fact, politicized by the present government. None of the positions at the top were ever open to civil service competition. I have said in this House before, and I will say it again, because the person in charge of the Secretariat is in the gallery, and that is, if we had had an open competition, he would have, in all likelihood, won it because he had the qualifications to be the person who got the job. But

the very fact that we did not do that politicized it, and that is the weakness.

* (1540)

If the government had had the courage of its convictions and had opened it for competition, I find it difficult to think they may have gotten anybody better qualified than David Langtry, but they have, unfortunately, emasculated his role because they politicized it. So he has been unable to be the quality of the person that he could have been because of the emasculation process that went on.

That is a tragedy, and that is what has made the secretariat not have the kind of reputation that it should have in the Province of Manitoba as a nonpolitical arm of government. Instead, it has only the reputation of being an extremely political arm of government, and that is not a good thing.

So I think, Mr. Speaker, that it is a very sad day when we as a group of legislators have before us a Manitoba Intercultural Council which is going to be cast on the winds.

The minister, in essence, brought into being a Manitoba intercultural act. What better place for a council than to be found in that act? The act itself is supposed to provide for some of the programs to do away with racism, to do with a better understanding of one another within our complex society.

And, yes, the minister and other ministers who come after her should have the advice of those people who live within those communities, advice freely given with no political linkages so that they can speak their minds and that they can speak as eloquently as it is possible to speak about those problems which they are facing in day-to-day Manitoba society, and their positive suggestions about how their problems can be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, I regret that we have this act before us. I have no choice but to vote against the act because of what they are doing to it, that there will be no council with any reporting responsibilities to the Province of Manitoba, that the minister and subsequent ministers, at least until such time as a new act can be passed, will find themselves unable to get that independent advice they so desperately need.

Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks by saying that the Liberal Party will vote against this act. We will vote against it, because what we have watched since 1983 now for 11 years is politicization from the NDP coupled with

politicization by the Conservative Party. As a result, the communities that desperately need to have their voice heard are not being heard. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Committee Changes

Mr. Speaker: Just to accommodate the House, prior to putting the question, I will recognize the honourable member for Gimli who will have a committee change.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) for the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings); the member for Arthur-Virden (Mr. Downey) for the member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay); and the member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst) for the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer).

I move, seconded by the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) for the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh); the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) for the member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst); and the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) for the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine).

Motions agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Following along the vein of co-operation, I believe the honourable member for Point Douglas would like to make some committee changes.

Mr. George Hickey (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for Wellington, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Wellington (Ms. Barrett) for Thompson (Mr. Ashton); Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), for Monday, July 26, 7 p.m.

I move, seconded by the member for Wellington, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) for Wellington (Ms. Barrett); Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), for Monday, July 26, 7 p.m.

Motions agreed to.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 28, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? The question before the House is that Bill 28, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba, be now read a second time.

All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: A recorded vote having been requested, call in the members.

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, Manness, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Orchard, Pallister, Penner, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey

Nays

Alcock, Ashton, Barrett, Carstairs, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Interlake), Evans (Brandon East), Friesen, Gaudry, Gray, Hickes, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylcia-Leis

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 27, Nays 24.

Mr. Speaker: The motion is accordingly carried.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I did not vote on this bill because I was paired with the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik). Had I voted, I would have voted in opposition to the bill.

REPORT STAGE

Bill 26—The Expropriation Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 26, The Expropriation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'expropriation), reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

* (1620)

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Justice, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance, that Bill 26, The Expropriation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'expropriation, reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in. Agreed?

An Honourable Member: On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division, Bill 26.

Bill 37—The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness),

THAT Bill 37 be amended in the proposed Section 99 as set out in Section 5 of the bill by striking out "64 years" and substituting "65 years."

I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 37—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We do one at a time.

It has been moved by the honourable Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance, that Bill 37, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois) be amended in the proposed Section 99 as set out in Section 5 of the bill by striking out "64 years" and substituting "65 years." Agreed?

An Honourable Member: On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness)

THAT Bill 37 (The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois) be amended in the heading preceding the proposed subsection 100(1) as set out in Section 5 of the bill by striking out "Victims Aged 64" and substituting "Victims Aged 65."

Motion presented.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments at this time, very few comments. We had a lengthy discussion in committee on various ways and means that we might be able to include in the legislation. As a matter of fact, I believe our opposition group put up over 35 amendments to try to improve the bill as we saw it, and with a positive approach try and make the bill even more effective than it already is.

I am pleased to note that the minister is making this one amendment which, in effect, is increasing the benefits for seniors because we are moving the age limit up from 64 to 65. There are some other amendments we agreed to in committee stage that we were pleased to see, and the amendment was accepted by the minister and the government that MPIC must assist an accident victim in rehabilitation. Rather than making it optional, we made it mandatory.

Also, another very important amendment, I thought, was allowing a claimant to have access to his or her file being held by the corporation. This is a practice that was developed a few years ago by the Workers Compensation Board. I think it is a good practice. It is helpful to the claimant and, indeed, I think, to the whole process.

Also, there was another amendment I thought was positive and I believe was taken from one of the recommendations of Legal Aid Manitoba and that is, we ensure reimbursement of the cost of medical reports that are required for appeals. There are others, but I do not want to take the time to go into all the details.

We still have some concerns about the bill. We would like to see the appeal process strengthened. We brought in some amendments along those lines. We were not successful but we had a good debate on them. I do not know whether it is a matter of the minister being totally opposed to some of them. I think his approach is, well, let us see how this legislation works and see whether we can make some improvements after a couple of years of experience.

The other concern we had, Mr. Speaker, is with regard to the level of benefits. We thought, in particular, death benefits should be improved, and we made a number of amendments along those lines. We were not successful in getting those passed by the committee, but at least we put them on the record, and we had a debate on them. That is something I hope the minister and the government in the future will look at.

One thing we were very pleased with is the acceptance by the minister of the suggestion that there be a three-year mandatory review of the operation of the new system. That is included in the legislation, and we are also providing for public representation at that mandatory three-year review, so therefore it is definitely open to the public to participate in this. So I think that is a good move. It is something that again was recommended by Legal Aid Manitoba, and I know the minister was positive, I believe, right from the beginning with that particular suggested amendment.

Mr. Speaker, this bill ushers in a major change with the way MPIC is going to operate in the future. I am satisfied that it implements the basic recommendation of the Kopstein report, that we go to a no-fault system, abandoning the tort system that we have had to date. I believe that there are many people in Manitoba who are going to benefit in the future because of this new procedure that we are proceeding with.

I know there is some opposition, particularly among the legal profession, but basically my impression is that the people of Manitoba, by and large, are in support of this particular move by the government. At any rate, we will be watching and waiting and seeing how this legislation will work. It has been successful in the province of Quebec.

This particular bill, as I understand it, is based essentially on the Quebec model. It has been successful, and it has helped to keep premiums

down. So I think this bill will, I honestly and sincerely believe, bring about more justice among people in this province. I know I will get a big argument with lawyers, but I think basically it will.

I agree with Judge Kopstein on this. Also, I believe that it will keep the pressure off of escalating premiums. I think that is important as well, because the people of Manitoba have become very upset about seeing escalating premiums year after year.

So, with those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I again say that we still cannot believe that the minister has brought it in; nevertheless, we are pleased that he has made this particular move. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I want to stand to speak to the amendments put forward by the minister. We are prepared to support the amendments; however, not the bill. That position has been articulated in the past by our critic, the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock).

I want to repeat it here today that this piece of legislation is not a good piece of legislation for Manitoba motorists and, indeed, anyone who happens to be injured in a motor vehicle accident. The driving force behind this legislation, as articulated in the large advertisements in the Winnipeg Free Press and other newspapers, has been solely to keep premiums down. While that is certainly a good thing, and we all want to keep premiums down, that is not the sole criterion by which we should judge a piece of legislation. [interjection]

* (1630)

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) indicates that this is not third reading. I am aware of that. I have indicated that the amendments are worthy of support. I simply want to clarify and ensure that the government understands that support for these amendments, in a small way, makes better a bad bill, but does not make the bill acceptable.

This is a retreat from the position which was fought so hard for by the New Democratic Party so long ago. It is, indeed, ironical and, I think, quite sad that the New Democratic Party today has capitulated to the point that they are turning their backs on the very principles of universal coverage in The MPIC Act that was put forward by, I think, their most respected Premier, the former Premier Mr. Schreyer. Their former leader Mr. Pawley

quarterbacked this bill through this House through a lot of adversity.

I have heard many times a member say that they have never seen committee hearings as hard fought as those in which all of the private insurance agents showed up to object to this piece of legislation, but they persisted. They went through that, and they put into place The MPIC Act and the Autopac scheme, and it has proven a very successful program.

Now, to see the New Democratic Party jump into bed with the Conservative government and the private insurance industry in this province and turn their backs on the universal coverage and the whole principle behind universality in motor vehicle coverage is indeed sad. I think it gives some indication as to why the New Democratic Party is where it is in this country and in this province.

I do not think they need to look any further than this bill in this province, Mr. Speaker, to understand why they are where they are. They set out principles which were correct. They fought hard for them. They achieved them, and now 20 years later they are letting private industry back into a business that they do not deserve to be in, that is not good for the Manitoba motorists and, in effect, letting them win the battle that they had fought so hard to win themselves many years ago. It is sad.

This bill is discriminatory, I believe, on the basis of age alone. This amendment makes slightly, marginally better a basically discriminatory piece of legislation. It cuts off benefits based on age and age alone. No matter what the loss was, your age and age alone will detract from your ability to collect loss-of-income benefits. That is wrong. That is wrong for all of those people out there in our community who still do earn a living at 64 or 65 or 68 or whatever their ages, who still will have income loss if they are in a motor vehicle accident.

How this government can unilaterally, arbitrarily cut off benefits based on age and age alone is beyond me. To see the New Democratic Party supporting that takes this bill, in my estimation, Mr. Speaker, into the realm of a truly unholy marriage in this House between the Conservatives who are now letting private industry, private insurers back into this market, and the New Democrats who, for who knows what reasons, are standing behind a bill which is wrong and turns their back on the principles that built Autopac in this province.

An Honourable Member: Read the Kopstein report.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I have read the Kopstein report. The Kopstein report said nothing about cutting people off on age and age alone. That is what this amendment is about. He did not and never would say that because you are 64 or 65 you should be cut off benefits. That is what this bill says.

You, the New Democratic Party, are supporting that legislation. It is pathetic, Mr. Speaker.

There were lots of ways to reform this system, not the least of which was to put a cap into place to deal with the 89 percent of personal injury claims which fall under \$10,000—89 percent.

I challenged the minister at the time, and I say again, even if you had taken that to \$15,000 you would have been well over 90 percent of the claims that you could have covered without the tort system and with the administrative tribunal that they have put in place, putting that cap into place, which is what Ontario did. What they have done is, quite frankly, to throw the baby out with the bath water here.

All of those seriously injured individuals in this province in the motor vehicles are now going to be subject to bureaucrats, bigger government, similar to the Workers Compensation Board.

We all know the problems that facility has in client satisfaction. Bigger government, bureaucrats of whom there is no guarantee of their neutrality are now going to be making lifelong decisions for people, affecting their ability to maintain any quality of life. It is wrong, and tying the entire Autopac scheme to the level of the premiums is wrong.

This is insurance. Would people go out and buy their fire insurance for their homes and say, the only criterion for me is the cost? It does not matter what the cost is. If it does not pay for your house when it burns down, it is not worth it. When this insurance does not cover you for your loss, no matter what the premium is, it will not be worth it. You buy insurance for the worst-case scenario, and the fact is that they are selling this plan on the premium and the premium alone.

They are not telling people what they are covered and what they are not covered for, Mr. Speaker. It is a bad bill. It is bad for the motorists in this province. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness),

THAT Bill 37 be amended in the proposed subsection 100(1) as set out in Section 5 of the bill by striking out "64 years" and substituting "65 years" in the section heading and in the subsection.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Cummings: I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness),

THAT Bill 37 be amended in the proposed Section 101 as set out in Section 5 of the bill by striking out "65 years" and substituting "66 years" in the section heading and in the section.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Cummings: I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness),

THAT Bill 37 be amended in the proposed subsection 102(1) as set out in Section 5 of the bill by striking out "65 years" and substituting "66 years."

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Cummings: I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness),

THAT Bill 37 be amended in the heading preceding the proposed subsection 104(1) as set out in Section 5 of the bill by striking out "from age 65" and substituting "from age 66."

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness),

THAT Bill 37 be amended in the proposed subsection 104(1) as set out in Section 5 of the bill (a) in the section heading by striking out "age 65 to 67" and substituting "age 66 to 68" and (b) in the subsection (i) by striking out "65 years" and substituting "66 years," (ii) by striking out "66 years" and substituting "67 years," and (iii) by striking out "67 years" and substituting "68 years."

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Cummings: I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness),

THAT Bill 37 be amended in the proposed subsection 104(2) as set out in Section 5 of the bill

by striking out "68" and substituting "69" in the section heading and in the subsection.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Cummings: I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness),

THAT Bill 37 be amended in the English version with proposed subsection 111(2) as set out in Section 5 of the bill (a) by striking out "64 years" and substituting "65 years" and (b) by striking out "age 65" and substituting "age 66."

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Cummings: I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae),

THAT Bill 37, The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'assurance publique du Manitoba et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois), as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Economic Development, be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister responsible for MPIC, seconded by the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Bill 37, as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Economic Development, be concurred in. Agreed?

An Honourable Member: On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division. Agreed and so ordered.

* (1640)

Bill 43—The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Downey), that Bill 43, The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Fondation manitobaine des loteries et apportant des modifications corrélatives à une autre loi), reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 45—The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Bill 45, The Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les armoiries, les emblèmes et le tartan du Manitoba), reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, seconded by the honourable Minister of Justice, that Bill 45, The Coat of Arms, Emblems and The Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les armoiries, les emblèmes et le tartan du Manitoba, reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division. Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 46—The Criminal Injuries Compensation Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 46, The Criminal Injuries Compensation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'indemnisation des victimes d'actes criminels), reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Justice, seconded by the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, that Bill 46, The Criminal Injuries Compensation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'indemnisation des victimes d'actes criminels, reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: No. On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division. Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 51—The Municipal Amendment Act (2)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by

the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), that Bill 51, The Municipal Amendment Act (2) (Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités), as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 54—The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act (2)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): I move, seconded by the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), that Bill 54, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act (2) (Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale), reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you would canvass the House, and with unanimous consent of the House, revert back to Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees, so that Bill 55 could be reported back to this House.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to revert to presenting the reports by Standing and Special Committees? [agreed]

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

(continued)

Mr. Jack Reimer (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the Fourteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Law Amendments presents the following as its Fourteenth Report.

Your committee met on Friday, July 23, 1993, at 1 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.

At the July 23, 1993, 1 p.m. meeting, your committee elected Mr. Reimer as Chairperson.

Your committee adopted at its July 23, 1993, 1 p.m. meeting, the following motion:

MOTION:

THAT the Committee on Law Amendments on July 23, 1993, set a 20-minute time limit on presentations only—with unlimited time for questions.

Your committee heard representation on bills as follows:

Bill 55—The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative et apportant des modifications corrélatives à une autre loi

Water Kucharczyk - Private Citizen

Sandip Dholakia - CUEW (Canadian Union of Educational Workers)

Herb Schulz - Private Citizen

Diane O'Neil - Private Citizen

Your committee has considered:

Bill 55—The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative et apportant des modifications corrélatives à une autre loi

and has agreed to report the same without amendment.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Mr. Reimer: I move, seconded by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

REPORT STAGE

(continued)

Bill 55—The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, with the leave of the House, I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that Bill 55, The Legislative Assembly Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative et apportant des modifications corrélatives à une autre loi), as reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable government House leader have leave? [agreed]

Motion agreed to.

Messages

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I have a message from His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. Speaker: The Lieutenant-Governor, Yvon Dumont, transmits to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba revised Estimates of sums required for the services of the province for Capital Expenditures and recommends these revised Estimates to the Legislative Assembly.

Signed by His Honour, Yvon Dumont, Winnipeg.

Please be seated.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that the said message, together with the Estimates accompanying the same, be referred to the Committee of Supply.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Downey), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair.

SUPPLY—CAPITAL SUPPLY

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

We have before us for our consideration the resolution respecting the Capital Supply bill. I would remind members that as the 240 hours allowed for consideration of Supply and Ways and Means resolutions has expired, pursuant to Rule 64.1(1), this resolution is not debatable.

The resolution for Capital Supply reads as follows:

RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$293,145,000 for Capital Supply, for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1994.

* (1650)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Madam Chairperson, I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that the Committee of Supply concur in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1994, which have been adopted this session by the two sections of the Committee of Supply sitting separately and by the full committee.

Motion presented.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Chairperson, I have a couple of questions for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson), if I may ask a couple of questions in that category.

In the Objectives under the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council in the Estimates book this year it states that the main objective is: "To advise the Government, through the Minister responsible, on matters relating to the status of women, with the objective of advancing the goal of equal participation of women in society and promoting changes in social, legal and economic structures to that end."

I have a question about a particular conference that I have a bit of a concern about that I would like to ask the minister about. That is a conference called Damsels in Distress that is sponsored by the Women's Advisory Council, the Junior League of Winnipeg and the Manitoba Women's Institute. It is a conference that is going to be held in November.

I have no quarrel about any of the content of the conference as outlined in the introductory statement that was given to me. I think it is called The Manitoba Sequel Strategies for Empowering Young Women in Manitoba. I think it sounds like an excellent, excellent conference.

I do, however, have a real question about the title, Damsels in Distress, in the context of the objective of the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council and of, I am assuming, certainly the minister, and that is—and it may seem on the minister's part to be a small item but I think that it is important—the phrase Damsels in Distress connotes women, young women in particular, who are unable to function in an equal manner. It is an old-fashioned expression that connotes young women who need to have the assistance of others and more powerful people in order to have the

assistance of others and more powerful people in order to be able to function.

I am just wondering if the minister can explain, in the context of what we all want to see, which is women, and particularly young women, being empowered, along with the fact that we all want to see attitudes change so that that will enable women to become more empowered and to take their rightful position in our society, how that fits in with this particular heading of this conference.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): Madam Chairperson, as I believe the critic of the official opposition does know, the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, yes, by legislation is appointed by government, but from time to time they undertake certain initiatives in partnership with—they have done other things in partnership with the Junior League, working with the Women's Institute and other organizations.

I know just recently they have been working very closely with women's organizations dealing with the issue of midwifery. So there are different partnerships that are developed from time to time based on the issues that the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council feels are issues that are pertinent to the day.

As far as the title of the conference goes, I cannot indicate to my honourable friend who exactly chose the title. I know that it was not a conference that necessarily had to be approved by government or by my ministry. It is a title that was chosen by the Junior League, by the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council and by the Women's Institute.

I know that the conference is targeted toward adolescent women and targeted toward those who work on a regular basis with adolescent women such as educators, guidance counsellors, parents and so on. I suppose, hopefully, and I would imagine some of the expected results they would have is a heightened awareness of some of the problems that our adolescent girls have in socialization which has become very topical, and it is something that ministers responsible for the Status of Women across the country discussed at our last ministerial meeting when we got together.

There was a paper, indeed, that had been worked on. It is one of those areas, I think, that we want to ensure that our young girls and our young women are on an equal playing field with boys and

men. Education and training, of course, is an area that we need to focus on.

I think targeting a conference working with or doing workshops with educators, with guidance counsellors within our education system who deal and have a major impact and a major influence on how our young girls and women grow up, the choices that they make at the career options that are presented to them are extremely important.

The name of the conference, I suppose, is something that I could go back and ask whether there was specifically a reason why that name was chosen. I think what we are still looking toward, and what I do not think we are seeing, and we would all agree today we are not seeing that our young girls and our young women are having the same opportunity in many instances.

Maybe it is a matter of working very closely in community partnership with education and with parents to ensure that we are in fact channeling our young girls in the same directions and encouraging them to pursue the same options and opportunities as our young men do, will hopefully have a positive impact on continuing to ensure that we end up with our ultimate goal of equal opportunity, equal access and equal options.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chairperson, I agree with the minister and stated in my earlier question that we were not disagreeing at all on the content of the conference.

I would like to say just that one of the three elements that this conference is to look at is a positive self-image, and I am quoting from the brochure talking about relationships, power, control and role modelling.

I am just suggesting to the minister, I would appreciate it if she could check back and find out where this title comes from because I think, frankly, the title Damsels in Distress does not fit with a positive self-image that talks about role modelling.

I think that there are a lot more '90s kinds of titles that could have been used, that would have been more positive in identifying what this conference is going to look at.

I appreciate the minister's taking the time to check that out. I mean it in the most positive kind of constructive way. I think it is a good conference, and I just think the title is unfortunate.

I would just like to ask the minister when she thinks she will be able to get back to me with that information on the conference title and, frankly, if there is an opportunity at this point to maybe change it.

Madam Chairperson: The honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, for a very brief response.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I do not know how broadly the pamphlet has been

circulated. I take the suggestion very seriously, and I agree with some of the comments that were put on the record by the member for Wellington.

I will certainly ask those questions, and I think that we could have some dialogue. I do not think it should take too long.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. As previously agreed, the hour being 5 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that this committee will reconvene at 7 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, July 26, 1993

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Solvent Abuse Treatment Facility for Northern Manitoba Hickes	5896
Improvement of Highway 391 Ashton	5896

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Law Amendments, 12th Report Rose	5896
Law Amendments, 13th Report Rose	5898
Law Amendments, 14th Report Reimer	5928

Ministerial Statements

Red River Valley Flood Watch Enns Doer Edwards	5900 5900 5901
---	----------------------

Oral Questions

Social Assistance Reform Doer; Filmon	5901
Student Social Allowances Program Doer; Filmon	5902
Red River Community College Friesen; Vodrey	5902
Student Social Allowances Program Edwards; Filmon	5903
SOSAR Program Martindale; Gilleshammer	5904
Education System Reform Plohman; Vodrey	5905
Public Schools Act Plohman; Vodrey	5906
Manitoba Mineral Resources Edwards; Downey	5906

Red River Valley Penner; Enns	5907
ARCOR Storie; Stefanson	5908
Barley Industry Wowchuk; Findlay	5909

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Debate on Second Readings

Bill 28, Manitoba Intercultural Council Repeal Act Lamoureux Carstairs	5911 5919
---	--------------

Report Stage

Bill 26, Expropriation Amendment Act	5923
Bill 37, Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act Cummings L. Evans Edwards	5923 5924 5925
Bill 43, Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act	5927
Bill 45, Coat of Arms, Emblems and the Manitoba Tartan Amendment Act	5927
Bill 46, Criminal Injuries Compensation Amendment Act	5927
Bill 51, Municipal Amendment Act (2)	5927
Bill 54, Municipal Assessment Amendment Act (2)	5928
Bill 55, Legislative Assembly Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act	5928
Supply—Capital Supply Committee of Supply	5929