

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

8:00 o'clock, Monday, March 10, 1975

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell has 25 minutes.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you. Before the supper hour, Mr. Speaker, I indicated that I wanted to deal at some length with the report of the Provincial Auditor. When the office of the Provincial Auditor was set up there were many of us had some apprehensions about the change in the nomenclature and some of the changes in the terms of reference, but basically I think every member of the House was satisfied that this office would provide a very useful service for the people of the province. There's one of the points I think that we should remember very closely, and that is that the Provincial Auditor can at any time bring forward a special report - so far we've had none, we've had an annual report - but he can if he so desires bring forward a special report. But there's something in the office that - it doesn't disturb me at all, but I think it should be reported. That is that any time he finds any trouble he reports first to the Minister of that department, and if the Minister takes remedial action that is about the end of what we hear. If the Minister doesn't, then we expect that it should appear in the report and as far as I know it does.

But in the Provincial Auditor's report he has at this time brought forward in fairly strong language, sir, some points that he feels are very significant, points that are important to the people of Manitoba, and I want to read one of them and it appears on Page 29. He says: "We have noted that there are not only deficiencies in the expenditure reporting system to the Legislature but also internally to the government and its managers." There are deficiencies in the manner and also in the internal management. Sir, I'm sure that that point had to be brought forward to the attention of the government first because of the way that the Provincial Auditor works; and if it was brought forward to the government and nothing was done about it, then he would include it in his report. And those are the assumptions that I go on. And if the government did nothing about it, why did they do nothing about it? I notice the First Minister is not in his chair . . .

A MEMBER: Neither is the former Minister of Finance . . .

MR. GRAHAM: Well those remarks go without saying, sir, because quite frankly, sir, if I was the former Minister of Finance I wouldn't want to be in the House when this report is discussed either.

Last year, sir, in the Committee of Public Accounts, of which I was not a member but which was reported, I think there was a fairly genuine concern raised on the part of the members of this side of the House, many of which were substantiated by the Provincial Auditor, that something has to be done in this province to improve the accounting systems, and the responsibility of government to provide thorough detailed analysis of its spending habits. And again I want to read from Page 19, up at the top of the page, it's titled No. 2, it says: "Having regard to difficulties concerning accounting and the availability of accounting services in remote areas in the broader context of the government's operation, consideration should be given to establishing an accounting service branch in the Department of Finance to provide satisfactory accounting capabilities for all government operations."

Sir, I think what the Auditor is telling us is that there's a shortage of staff, a shortage of qualified staff and also a shortage of good management direction from this government. Good management direction. And, sir, I will take my hat off to the Member for St. Johns who I think probably has realized that this has occurred and he says, well I'll get out, I'll move out and let somebody else take over. If I haven't got the ability, I'll move out and let somebody else do it. That's an assumption I have to make having read the report and knowing that he was fully aware of most of the things that were going on. Because, sir, if he wasn't then I will start in the Provincial Auditor's report, and I'll start right from the start and I'll start on Page 3. It says: "Records are maintained by departments for physical accounting purposes for real estate and other assets except office buildings having a lasting useful life, whether or not values are reflected in balance sheets". That's dealing with the Department of Public Works.

On the next page dealing with the Manitoba Development Corporation, it says: "The Minister of Finance has expressed an opinion that no write-off should be made until the official inquiry presents its report." The official inquiry has submitted its report in August.

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(MR. GRAHAM cont'd) "Consideration is now being given to the implementation of appropriate adjustments." Well one of the adjustments that we've seen is a change in the Ministry. --(Interjection)-- Those are one of the adjustments.

On the next page, dealing with the Communities Economic Development Fund. "The accumulated deficit of the fund for which there was no provision in the Province's accounts, increased from 93,000 as of March 31st to 688,000 as of March 31, 1974. The Fund is not organized on a sound financial basis."

Then again at the bottom of the page, dealing with the Manitoba Mineral Resources Limited. "The financial statements of the Manitoba Mineral Resource Limited for the year ending March 31st, 1974 indicate deferred expenditures of \$1,272,910 pertaining to exploration, of which \$290,000 apply to projects already abandoned.

We turn over the next page, public debt increased by \$80.4 million. That was Page 7. Now Page 8. Unexpended legislative authority for capital purposes under general purposes \$58,614,000.

The next page. Increase in National Equalization Revenue of \$33 million from \$89.8 million to \$123.1 million.

Then the next paragraph it says, "The total National Equalization Revenue received for the fiscal year ended March 31st exceeded the estimate for the fiscal year of \$79.9 million by \$25.2 million. The increase was \$33 million but it exceeded the estimate by \$25 million.

Over on Page 11, in the middle, "except for the discontinuance of accruals". That's all right. But further down it says, "records were not maintained in a way so as to preserve comparability." Consistently through this there's references made to the Provincial Employment program. Now I just wonder whether the Auditor is trying to tell us the provincial employment program should be looked into or not. Last year there was some on this side of the House that indicated the provincial employment program while being a very desirable program, may not be providing a very good return for the money that was spent.

Then we go to Page 18, where we start with Comments on Specific Organization, and it's interesting to see the Minister for Northern Affairs in here, he was very busy looking after the affairs of Northern Manitoba and I would hope that he would soon begin to do that job in a manner that deserved praise. Sir, dealing with the Community Economic Development Fund on Page 18, it says, "we should take the necessary precautions to ensure a satisfactory accounting of public funds."

On the next page, on Page 20, "The department has not been organized or staffed effectively to discharge its expanded responsibilities . . ." - this is talking about the co-operative loans and loans guarantee board. "Particularly when one considers the difficulties associated with co-op operations in remote areas arising from communications and availability of qualified staff and other resources. The departmental development officers were required to undertake responsibilities pertaining to co-operatives in the area of management, accounting, preparing the financial statements and auditing the accounts." All right I'll slow down. "Not only were these officers not qualified to perform all these functions but also this did not provide for a proper segregation of duties and responsibilities for an independent audit of the operation." Further down, it says, "The accountability for these public funds was not given the kind of attention which is normally expected."

Then we go over to Page 21 and it's dealing with the accounts of the Kee Noe Zae Co-op, says, "A decision has not been made yet as to who will review the material and complete the records for audit purposes, if that is possible." Further on down, "They are being reviewed with the Department of Co-operative Development and the Attorney-General's Department."

We go over to Page 23, South Indian Lake: "However, the Co-operatives' control and accountability were generally unsatisfactory. Sales to fishermen were either under-recorded or not recorded at all. The accounting system was not organized to produce periodic financial statements on the results of operations and therefore was inadequate for disclosing the lack of accountability."

Further on down, dealing with Co-operative Federation - and here I think the Minister has to take a major share of the blame - says, "The Co-operative Loans and Loans Guarantee Board. The aforementioned operation did not have a legal basis and the guarantee by the Co-operative Loans and Loans Guarantee Board was not in compliance with its acts."

Sir, we, members of the government . . .

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MR. PAULLEY: Members of the Opposition, not the government.

MR. GRAHAM: . . . pass acts constantly . . . --(Interjection)-- Many of the times they're passed . . .

MR. PAULLEY: Better clean up the books.

MR. GRAHAM: Many of the times they're passed at the wee small hours of the morning, but once those laws are passed . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

MR. SHERMAN: Clean up your act, Russ.

MR. GRAHAM: The assumption for the operation of those lies squarely on the shoulders of the Minister responsible for that act. And here we find that the Provincial Auditor says that the Minister failed in his duty.

Sir, I can carry on, go through page after page, and really in doing so I could just cite maybe 20 other instances, but everyone of them has a common basis behind it. The government is not doing its job, that's what the Auditor is saying. And when the Opposition does do its job, the government refuses to listen. We brought these things up a year ago. Would you hold a judicial enquiry? Oh no, we are simon-pure, we are the good guys, we would never do anything underhanded. We would never do anything that did not comply with the law.

MR. ENNS: Half the RCMP is up North these days, I'm told, Harry.

MR. GRAHAM: I don't know, maybe that's why the Minister came back in such a hurry. But, sir, the Provincial Auditor has indicated previously, and he indicates again, that before he puts anything in his report he reports it to the Minister, and if the Minister takes corrective measures, that is usually the last we hear of it.

What I have cited to you was case after case where the Minister has failed to take the corrective measures and has failed to do the job that he is elected to do as an MLA. He has also failed to do the job that he was appointed to do by the Premier. Now if the Premier is willing to put up with constant failures of this nature then he must assume some of the responsibility. And that is probably why he has taken over the Department of Finance, that Portfolio. I wish him well. I sincerely hope that he can clean up the mess because the people of Manitoba deserve a better accounting system than we have at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, my honourable colleague has in the audience tonight a few of his supporters from his constituency of Springfield and we really did toss a coin and we wondered who you would recognize, and my colleague said to me, "Well, old man, I'm sure that you will be recognized ahead of myself." And, of course, in accordance with parliamentary procedure you have cast your eye upon me and I want to say to my honourable colleague, I appreciate the fact that he . . . if the rabble, Mr. Speaker, would only be quiet I might go along with a few remarks that I wish to make, and I'm sure that I can say to you my honourable colleague that your constituents will be well served by coming back another day and listen to the pearls of wisdom that you do make as a contribution to this Assembly.

You see, Mr. Speaker, I do want to say again, and I want to repeat if the rabble opposite would only keep quiet for a little while they'd hear pearls of wisdom either from the Minister of Labour or from the Minister of Tourism and Recreation, because it is historic in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that we hear no pearls of wisdom from the Opposition, this is historic since we became government. When we were in opposition of course there was some contributions that were worthwhile, and as a result of those worthwhile contributions we became the Government of Manitoba and we relegated to their proper position the Conservative Party of Manitoba.

And of course I recall some years ago when I had the honour of leading the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party were the Official Opposition, I was able at that particular time to say to the Liberal Party that they were doomed to oblivion, and of course that has happened. I'm not a prophet at all, but I did predict that and I want to say to the Leader of the Official Opposition tonight and to those diminishing members that are of the Conservative Party that they are doomed to oblivion as well and that they will never again, at least during my lifetime, become the Government of Manitoba because they are so inept they have no real program for the betterment of the people of Manitoba. And I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, this was exhibited over the last weekend when the Conservative Party - and I consider them in this Assembly as being a Party, although if anybody really observed what happened

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd) over the weekend that they would not really be able to consider the PC's as a party in the Province of Manitoba, but because they were so bifurcated they had no support for their leader, they had no support for their respective policies - and I'm using the term 'policies' in its broadest sense. Those of us that were not at the PC Convention have to rely on the Press for information as to what happened at the International Inn, at the Marlborough - oh, I used International Inn because I understand according to the media, Mr. Speaker, that the present unsure Leader of the Conservative Party did entertain a number of the executive who were unprivy to many of the discussions of the policies of the Liberal Party, I understand that my honourable friend who has some connection with the International Inn did provide a breakfast so that he may nourish some of the members of the executive of the Progressive Conservative Party and endeavour to obtain from them, I would presume, some support for some forthcoming, or possible forthcoming, leadership convention of the Conservative Party.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can speak with some knowledgeability, I can speak with some knowledgeability of the difficulties that leaders have because of the fact that I was . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. PAULLEY: . . . at one time a leader of a responsible - and I emphasize "a responsible" political party in the Province of Manitoba, and I would suggest to my honourable friend, I would suggest to my honourable friend the present leader - Lord knows how much longer he may be - but to the present Leader of the Conservative Party that he has his problems. But apart from that it is as my honourable friend - I have the advantage of retrospect which my honourable friend hasn't, because he's going into a wilderness, Mr. Speaker, and he doesn't really know what type of a wilderness that he is going into.

I like the honourable Leader of the Conservative Party, the Leader of the Opposition, whether he would agree with that or not, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to him --(Interjection)-- that's right. Mr. Speaker, it may be the first time . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. PAULLEY: It may be the first time, Mr. Speaker, that I have publicly admitted that I have an admiration for the Leader of the Conservative Party. But I do say, Mr. Speaker, apart from all of that, in the years that I've had the opportunity of serving my community I've always said that I could count on the tips of one hand those that I did not like. So I do like the Honourable the Leader of the Conservative Party. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I even like his deposed Deputy Minister, or Deputy Leader of the Conservative Party, the Honourable Member for Lakeside. And this is one of the things in politics. But apart from that, Mr. Speaker, may I now get down . . .

A MEMBER: Now you're obscene.

MR. PAULLEY: Well, not obscene, I'm being seen.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: More familiarly known as the former Deputy Dog . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: And I can appreciate, Mr. Speaker, that the former Deputy Leader of the Conservative Party is in - what do we Anglicans call it? - an aura of doing penance for his sins. And one of these days, one of these days, Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend the former Deputy Leader of the Conservatives after having done his penance may go before the Bishop and ask and be given forgiveness of his sins and he may be brought into the fold, either by the present leader or by the delegates to some future convention of the Conservative Party in Manitoba, if they indeed are recognized as a party under the rules of this House for too much longer; because they're fast evading and they before too long may be in a similar position to what the Liberal Party in Manitoba is at the present time.

But, Mr. Speaker, may I say formally how much I appreciate the fact that you, once again, happen to be the presiding judge or chairman of this august Assembly. I've had the opportunity of having served under a number of speakers and I would suggest, sir, that you have been the most non-political speaker that I've ever had the privilege of serving under.

I want to say to the Honourable Member from Thompson and the Member for St. Matthews how much I appreciated their contribution to the speech from the Throne.

I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the contribution the Leader of the Opposition made when he spoke in reply to the Speech from the Throne. I thought he was more

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd) conciliatory than he'd ever been before. I thought that he was recognized in his true position as a critic of the government without rancor, without malice, but he did endeavour on that particular occasion when he spoke, Mr. Speaker, to present to this Assembly alternatives to government and the direction of government, something that my honourable friend hasn't done since we became the Government of Manitoba. So he went back to the traditional role of leaders of opposition and opposition parties in attempting to give to the citizens of Manitoba an alternative to the government of the day. And I want to say to him I appreciated that very much. Instead of being bitter he was constructive, and I say to the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, that was much appreciated by myself as one who has been around for a little while.

And I also want to say the same to the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie who gave the opinions of the Liberal Party in his contribution to the Throne Speech. And here again I can appreciate the position that my honourable friend the Member for Portage la Prairie was in; that he was not recognized as a leader of a party in this House. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, I went through that too, a difference being of course, that today the Liberal Party only has three members in this Assembly. I recall when I had the honour of being the leader of a party of 10 people in this Assembly, and that party was not recognized by the then Conservative Government of Manitoba as being a party. My honourable friend from Fort Garry says it was a wise move, and I suggest to my honourable friend maybe it was a wise move, Mr. Speaker, because we were able to point out the injustices by the Conservative Party in the forward progress of democracy here in the Province of Manitoba which has resulted, of course, in the change from the Conservatives from this side of the House to the other, because they were unfair; because they didn't recognize what was happening in the political scene in Manitoba and they, the Conservatives, at that particular time wanted to establish that the New Democrats or the CCF had no rights or privileges to represent the people of Manitoba. And today of course, Mr. Speaker, we do represent a good majority of the people of the Province of Manitoba despite the efforts of the likes of my friend as a Member for Fort Garry. We've overcome them and as I can recall one of my champions, Tommy Douglas, who was asked on one occasion, "What do you do about your enemies?" He said, "We outlive these." And that is what we have done with a government --(Interjection)--

A MEMBER: Spoken like a John Diefenbaker.

MR. PAULLEY: Oh, of course, of course, spoken like a John Diefenbaker. But the fact of the matter is that we have recognized the contributions made by the Liberal Party albeit the fact that they're not recognized, something the Conservative Party would not do back a number of years ago. But not only, Mr. Speaker, have we outlived them, we have been able to indicate to the people of Manitoba that we are more capable of conducting the affairs of the Province of Manitoba than the Conservative Party ever was. And as I listen, as I listen to the contributions of the Conservatives here in this Assembly, as I read the alternates in resolutions that have been proposed by the Conservative Government, Mr. Speaker, I am more and more convinced of the ineptness of the Conservative Party in the Province of Manitoba. One only needs to take a look at the amendments proposed by the Leader of the Opposition to the humble address directed to His Honour in acceptance of the Speech from the Throne.

And what do they say, Mr. Speaker? "The failure of the government to deal with the cause of inflation by continuing to allow their own spending in needlessly high taxation to erode the income savings and pensions of Manitobans."

Mr. Speaker, in effect, what are they saying? And this is where I fault the opposition.

By comparison with previous oppositions nothing constructive but bellyache after bellyache after bellyache, a complaint because of taxation policies. Here we've got a presumably responsible political party saying to the government, "Your taxation policies result in high taxes but at the same time in high taxation you are not accomplishing enough." They are saying to us in effect, and this is historic and it's continuous with the Conservative Party in Manitoba, they are saying to us, "Don't tax the people of Manitoba. Reduce their taxes but at the same time increase all of the benefits that should enure to the taxpayer and the citizen of the Province of Manitoba."

How well I recall, Mr. Speaker, that when we were in opposition we said, "We will accept the responsibility for a relative higher taxation policy in the Province of Manitoba,

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd) providing you provide the services that will be beneficial to the citizen of Manitoba." And that is exactly what we have done. They rejected that, and now the Leader of the Opposition in his Throne Speech contribution the other day, in effect, said, "You reduce taxes but increase services to the people, the taxpayers of Manitoba." Now, how in the Heaven's name, Mr. Speaker, can you accomplish that in today's society? You can't do it. And I say that it is absolutely irresponsible of the Opposition to approach that type of a system in relation to today's economy and the forward thrust that we have in Canada at the present time.

Mr. Speaker, I go on to some of the tripe that the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition proposed in his amendment to the Throne Speech. And tripe it is, Mr. Speaker, and I agree with my honourable friend, I agree with my honourable friend the Leader of the Opposition that I should not resurrect the position of the Conservative Party of years gone by because he said, "I wasn't the leader then." Well I don't know whether he was a Conservative then or not either. I leave that to his judgment.

We get down to this balderdash that the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell was speaking of a minute ago about the Auditor's report, and what do we get here in the amendment proposed by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition - failure of the government to strengthen the authority and independence and terms of reference of a provincial auditor. I believe that the present Leader of the Opposition on occasions made speeches with much gusto in opposition to a similar proposition that was proposed by the Liberal Party, at that time the Official Opposition. My honourable friend shakes his head. I can hear it from here. But, Mr. Speaker, that is the case, it is a fact, and I'm sure that Hansard would establish that the position of the Conservative Party at that particular time as government was in opposition, to the similar position that the now ineffective opposition of the Conservative Party are proposing at this particular time.

And then, and here is a dilly of it all, Mr. Speaker: "In my opinion this government has failed to reduce any taxes to help reduce the impact of inflation on the people of the Province of Manitoba."

I say to the Conservative Party in Manitoba, I say to the Conservative Party in Canada that if there has been any politician or group of politicians that have aided and abetted the inflationary process that we're undergoing at the present time it has been the Conservative Party because they have not given other than lip service, and very ineffective lip service, to any program or policy that will effectively reduce the trend or the input of inflation in the province and in Canada as well. Because it was the Conservative Party, it was the Conservative Party some number of years ago when they changed the ground rules of inflation in respect of increased rates of interest on savings bonds and the likes of that, that started the whole forward thrust of inflation in Canada. And it was when their idol, my dear beloved friend, the Right Honourable John Diefenbaker, was the Prime Minister of Canada, that started the trend that no one yet has been able to find the solution. And if it had not happened at that particular time, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. PAULLEY: . . . we wouldn't be in the predicament here in Canada that we are at the present time.

I do want to say, Mr. Speaker, as I've listened to the debate so far in the Throne Speech, I want to compliment, and I'm sure he doesn't expect any complimentary remarks from me, I do want to compliment the Honourable the Member for Fort Rouge for his contribution dealing with the question of the thrust of manpower and manpower training. We surely need --(Interjection)-- Oh well you wouldn't understand what I'm talking about, but that's quite all right I can understand it. But I do want to say, --(Interjection)-- No I don't. I would admit it if my honourable friend from Fort Garry would too. But I do want to say to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, I agree with him that we have to take a new look on the forward thrust of manpower, manpower training and how we are doing it, and I only wish, I only wish that the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge would talk to his friend down in Ottawa, Robert Andras. And I trust and hope my friend from Fort Rouge would send down to Robert Andras a copy of the speech that he made this afternoon in his contribution to the Throne Speech, because I've been trying in my limited responsibility as a Cabinet Minister to suggest something similar to the Liberal Government at Ottawa without avail. So if my honourable

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd) friend for Fort Rouge would join with me in making representations for a reassessment of the thrust of manpower and manpower training, I would be glad to be associated with the honourable member.

MR. SHERMAN: . . . Come on over . . .

MR. PAULLEY: Come on over. You know, Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend says "come on over Russ". If I thought for one moment that going over there would make them a responsible political party maybe I could benefit Manitobans by going over there, but I doubt very much if even I, even if I could attempt or could accomplish penetrating their muscleheads to know that they have an opportunity of doing something for the Province of Manitoba. And I doubt it very much.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to go on. This is International Women's Year. --(Interjection)-- Yes, why not. And as the Minister designated to be responsible in Cabinet . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I do want to pay a contribution as the Minister designated for the Province of Manitoba to be involved in International Women's Year. There are those that call me a male chauvinist and I really am not. --(Interjection)-- That's correct. They may not forgive me.

But I do want to say, Mr. Speaker, it is regrettable in my opinion that when we acknowledge and realize that in the Province of Manitoba that a majority of women have the franchise that we haven't got a woman in this Assembly today, that is a woman by sex. We have some that may border that. But apart from that, Mr. Speaker, apart from that, Mr. Speaker, I do want to pay a tribute, I do want to pay a tribute to the involvement of the fairer sex in the contribution that they have made in the Province of Manitoba and to Canada. And I'm happy to be able to say that this Government has recognized to a considerable degree an involvement of women in affairs political and in the civil service.

For the first time, Mr. Speaker, we have a woman who is a member of the Civil Service Commission, unheard of with previous Conservative and Liberal Government. But Mrs. Hazel Allan appointed by this Government is a member of the Civil Service Commission. We also have established, Mr. Speaker, a Women's Bureau in the Department of Labour, headed not by a man but by a woman, and this was a forward thrust. The Director of the Employment Standards Department section of the Department of Labour is a woman for the first time. We have just recently established a co-ordinator in the Civil Service Commission in the area of consideration of equal employment opportunities and for the handicapped, a woman. In many areas in this Government we have recognized the input of women. We have an ADM, Mary Liz Bayer, in the Department of Tourism and Recreation. Something that was unheard of before. Sure, Mr. Speaker, we are criticized and I particularly am criticized, particularly at NDP Conventions, because I haven't recognized the fact of women, but I do want to say that in this observance of International Women's Year that this Government in the last few years has recognized the input women are making, and if one takes a look at the statistics of involvement in the labour field in Manitoba they will see that there is a greater involvement of the female sex in our labour force than ever before and I encourage a forward thrust in this particular area. Now fault me if you will, Mr. Speaker, for not going as rapidly as may be desirable by the gals and the females and the ladies in the forward thrust, but I do say that in this anniversary year we do recognize the contribution that women are making and we will make a contribution from our department and the government as a whole to help them achieve their desire.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do want to dwell on one other aspect of concern and to me this is one of the greatest concerns that we have at the present time, and that deals with the fact that labour unrest is growing not only here in Manitoba - my honourable friend says, "hear, hear". I think that we have to recognize this. --(Interjection)-- Yes, I have to do some talking. I want to do some talking, Mr. Speaker, and I want to talk to those who are concerned with labour relations matters, and it's not dealing entirely with labour or with management or with government. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the time, in my opinion, has come when we have to reassess, all of us, government, labour and management, that we have to reassess our respective positions in the field of industrial relations and labour management co-operation. I regrettably find as Minister of Labour a type of an irresponsibility that is not good for the conduct of the economy of Manitoba and Canada.

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd)

I know, Mr. Speaker, when I mention that type of an approach that I'm not going to have a friend left in management, in labour or in government. All too frequently in my opinion government - and by government I don't mean provincial government, I don't mean federal government, municipal government or school board government - have hid behind the realization that they have to make decisions albeit that they may be decisions that are not favourable to the public that elect them to their respective offices. I hear on By-line, and B-line programs individuals who talk about you're using my money, that I'm a member of the middle income poor and who's dollar are you going to use in order to provide a reasonable and decent living for those who work for me at the school level, at the municipal level, at the provincial level, in the health fields. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that for too damn long we as politicians have attempted to hide beyond a veil of responsibility and hide behind a realization that we have to face up the facts of life.

MR. GEORGE MINAKER (St. James): We will at the next election.

MR. PAULLEY: We will at the next election. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad my honourable friend mentioned that because as I read, as I read the outcome of the Conservative Party deliberations over the weekend, they are the outfit that will create slave labour camps, they are the outfits that brought about the situation that we are being confronted with today.

I say to my honourable friend from Swan River, I know full damn well that he would like to go back to the little red school house, he would like to go back, he would like to go back to the days during the depression when a schoolteacher got \$40.00 a month. That would be lovely for my honourable friend, the Member for Swan River. And I suggest the Member for Assiniboia, I believe it is, is of the same damn temper Wherever he comes I'm sorry, I'm sorry, Sturgeon Creek, Sturgeon Creek - St. James, that's right. Forgive me, Mr. Speaker, forgive me, I think that the Honourable Member for St. James is painted with the same brush as the Honourable Member for Swan River. And so I say, Mr. Speaker

MR. F. JOHNSTON: On a matter of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member state his matter of privilege.

MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): The member was referring to somebody who spoke out in the House while he was speaking and he used the Member from Sturgeon Creek. As a matter of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I did not speak out in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, in all deference to my friend I apologize. If the hat fits wear it. And I suggest as I read what has happened in the Conservative Party the hat might fit. I am not attributing that hat to him, but what I'm trying to say, Mr. Speaker, that in the whole field, that in the whole field -- I wonder if the rabble would shut up just for a minute. What I am trying to say honestly and realistically, Mr. Speaker, is that all of us combined have got to take and make a reassessment of where we're going in labour management relations. Just the other day, as I understand it, Transair and the union concerned apparently had come to an agreement for a new collective agreement and at the last minute management turned around and said, "Oh well we didn't mean what we said and we couldn't sign the agreement". We've had this in many areas.

I say, Mr. Speaker, the responsibility doesn't just rest with management, it doesn't just rest with labour, it doesn't just rest with the politician - and I'll have more to say about this when I have more opportunity later - but I want to say as the Minister of Labour, and this is a hell of a year, to quote from John Munro of last year, "This is a hell of a year to be the Minister of Labour here in the Province of Manitoba." We are confronted with strike after strike or the possibility. We will do our utmost to have them resolved but, when we have the

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. PAULLEY: Creation of a political climate as evidenced by the Conservative Party Convention over the last week, how the hell can any reasonable person approach the subject to bring about a resolution of differences when that outfit over there are taking the stance of management to say that labour has no place in the Province of Manitoba. Because that is what they have said and I reject it completely, and I say to the spokesman of the

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd) Conservative Party in the field of labour, the Honourable Member for Fort Garry, that he has got to change his opinion. He's giving lip-service that is absolutely nonsense. Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry that I haven't got longer to really enunciate what I am saying at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Honourable Minister would accept a question?

MR. SPEAKER: Time is up. Has to be by consent of the whole House. Agreed?

MR. McKENZIE: I wonder if the Honourable Minister explained the labour relations that existed in this province during the Roblin years and during the Weir years, about strikes.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the question of my honourable friend and I only hope that I may have ample time to really answer my honourable friend because it isn't a question that can be answered with a yes or no. I would say that the labour management climate in the Province of Manitoba during the whole regime of the Conservative party under Roblin, under Weir, was intolerable.

A MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. PAULLEY: That during those years, those years management was sacrosanct, that the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell, as a small-time operator or a big-time operator, whatever he is, in his respective community Roblin . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for . . .

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege. I'm not the Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. PAULLEY: I apologize to the Member for Birtle-Russell. Mr. Speaker, I was asked a question. I recall, Mr. Speaker, that during the years -- I recall well during the years of Roblin and Weir --(Interjection)-- leave has been given - there had been established a Committee of Labour Relations headed by Professor Buzz Woods. Any time any resolution was proposed by the Opposition, then Liberal or New Democrat, calling for a betterment of relationships between labour and management in the Province of Manitoba, it was not considered by the government of the day but referred to the Woods Committee for consideration. There was not positive approach. --(Interjection)-- No strikes, of course not. The fear of hell was in everybody in Manitoba.

MR. GREEN: What year was the Brandon Packers strike?

MR. PAULLEY: '62.

MR. GREEN: Well, who was the Government? Who was the Government then?

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I can say concisely and precisely to answer the Honourable Member from Russell who asked me the question, I would say Roblin. I would say, without equivocation, Mr. Speaker, that during the Roblin-Weir administration in the Province of Manitoba, labour-management relations would be at the lowest ebb in the history of Manitoba, with one exception . . .

A MEMBER: The General Strike.

MR. PAULLEY: No, I'm not going back to the General Strike; the time when the Honourable John Bracken was Premier of Manitoba and he imposed the iniquitous 2 percent wage tax on the wage earners in Manitoba. And I fear, I fear for the labour movement in Manitoba, that if that outfit over there were ever to become the government, we would return to the era of the 1919 strike, the 2 percent wage tax, Brandon Packers, and the likes of that. The most ineffective years for management-labour relations was during the regime of the Conservative Party under Roblin.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to speak in this debate until tomorrow but I cannot sit here, Mr. Speaker, nor can any responsible person in this Legislature sit here and allow those spurious, specious, totally irresponsible accusations such as we have just heard from the Minister of Labour, to go unanswered.

My first words, Mr. Speaker, must be in deference and salute to you, sir, and congratulations on your reappointment as the arbiter of the affairs of this House.

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd)

Secondly, I want to join with those who have recognized and congratulated the new members of the administration. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I want to pay my compliments to the officers of the House, the officers of this Assembly, who are charged with the day to day and week to week mechanics of keeping our Assembly in order, and thank them from all of us in this caucus for the job that they have performed in past sessions and will now be doing again for us.

Mr. Speaker, I had a number of things I wanted to say about the Throne Speech and about the directionless area of policy in which this Government now finds itself floundering and awash, and about some of the things that I think are necessary and desirable in the months ahead in our provincial community, but before I come to those let me just revert to the diatribe that has been foisted off upon members of this Assembly for the last 30 minutes by a man who styles himself apparently as the John Diefenbaker of Manitoba, by a man who said that he didn't want to go down in history as the John Diefenbaker of Manitoba. I think we can assure him, both those of us who have been with Mr. Diefenbaker and those of us who have on occasion been opposed to Mr. Diefenbaker, that he will not go down in the history books of Manitoba as the John Diefenbaker of Manitoba. He will be lucky, Mr. Speaker, if he even goes down in the history books of Manitoba as the Russell Paulley of Manitoba, although he made a good attempt at imitating that gentleman tonight, sir. I must say that his remarks . . . the latter gentleman.

His remarks tonight were in the classic historic tradition of the speeches delivered by him since a large number of our caucus came into this Assembly. We have learned to look for that kind of speech from the Minister of Labour. He never lets us down. He indulges in complete inaccuracy, such as is evidenced by his inability even to identify proper constituencies represented in this caucus when making reference to individual members who have had something to say. Those inaccuracies in identification of constituencies are typical of the entire content of the Minister's remarks, I suggest, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister talked about the fact that in his opinion we, meaning the Progressive Conservative party, are those who are chiefly responsible for the labour unrest, or the labour-management unrest that he so fatuously deplores in the Province of Manitoba today. Mr. Speaker, he's the Minister of Labour. He's the Minister of Labour. What is this fatuous hogwash? If there is unrest, if there is difficulty in the labour-management area in the province today, it's squarely the responsibility of that man, the Minister of Labour. And he's got the unmitigated gall to stand over there and suggest that the people in the Opposition in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker, are responsible for his mess, for his morass, for the debacle in the labour field in this province, which he has created and this Government has created.

Mr. Speaker, this has got to be the classic example of fatuous foolishness since I came into this Legislature, that speech tonight by the Minister of Labour. And I think that's typical of this Government, Mr. Speaker. Duck their responsibility. Duck their responsibility. They can't rule, they can't govern, they can't think, they can't direct, they can't conceive, they've got no imagination, they've got no ideas, so they duck their responsibility and say, "Look, we can't think of anything so you guys are to blame in the Opposition." My God, Mr. Speaker. I must apologize for perhaps becoming emotionally wroth in dealing with that topic, Mr. Speaker, but I'm sure that I represent the feelings of Manitobans in general in my response to that kind of a posture, because it's totally spurious and unacceptable and irresponsible, and, sir, I suggest that even his colleagues know it. And I think the Minister himself knows it. He's talked about resigning. He's talked about throwing in the towel. That means one of two things, or possibly two of two things: either that he can't hack it and cope with the job and the responsibilities in front of him, or he has a suspicion, Mr. Speaker, which I suggest is probably more likely the case, he has a suspicion that that gang isn't going to make it next time and he doesn't want to be around to pick up the ashes.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister alleged that Conservatives in our convention just completed, took a position that said in effect that labour has no place in the Province of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the Minister got his information from. I don't know what newspapers he reads. If the newspapers don't report things precisely the way that he and his colleagues like, they're the very first to scoff at newspaper reports. If we ask questions

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd) based on newspaper reports from either of the two daily newspapers in this city, they're the very first to repudiate the newspapers as reliable sources of information. They're the very first to say, "Well, that's a bunch of nonsense if you read it in the newspaper." Suddenly, however, the newspaper reports have become the gospel, not only for the Minister of Labour in his diatribe tonight, but for the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge in his diatribe this afternoon. Suddenly the newspapers have become the gospel. Well, Mr. Speaker, I didn't see the Minister of Labour as a delegate at our Convention. I don't know where he got his information from. But I'll tell him this, Mr. Speaker, that this party, the Conservative party, is making a concerted, conscientious attempt to develop policies and programs for this province, and that's more than can be said for that government as witnessed in the Throne Speech.

Now he may not like our policies, he may not like our policies, but he does not have the right, as a responsible Minister of this Government-- and I question the validity or veracity of that, but I'll give him the benefit of the doubt for the purposes of these remarks -- he does not have the right to charge us with positions that are untrue, that are false, that do not exist. He does not have the right to make that kind of accusation and leave that kind of falsehood and leave that kind of innuendo on the record, and that's why, Mr. Speaker, I rose at this time rather than waiting to speak somewhat later in the debate, because I don't intend to allow him to go into the record books and into Hansard and into the reports in the media tonight, as the authority on what happened at the Convention, the policy convention, my party just concluded this weekend.

Mr. Speaker, there are two or three other things that happened this afternoon and that have happened in debate today that have persuaded me to speak at this time rather than waiting for a later point in the rotation. One of them was the nonsense spouted by the Minister of Labour, to which I've just referred. The other one was the nonsense spouted this afternoon by the Member for Fort Rouge. I don't want to confer on the Member for Fort Rouge or his party any more status than they either deserve or enjoy, so I don't intend to spend very long on his remarks. But I say this, Mr. Speaker, that his remarks were a fatuous attempt to make a lot of noise to cover his own party's complete and utter inconsequence in the affairs of this province. Let me say this to the Member for Fort Rouge, Mr. Speaker: his sound and fury do not matter. The battle in this province is between the New Democratic party and the Progressive Conservative party, and the member for Fort Rouge, like a snapping terrier, is not even involved in the main event, so we're not that particularly concerned about what he had to say. He alleged, totally irresponsibly, Mr. Speaker, that the style of the Progressive Conservative party has been and is to forego policy and indulge in personal attack. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is similarly without redeeming feature of any kind. If the member for Fort Rouge has followed the affairs of this Legislature and the previous Legislature, if he's paid any attention at all to anything that's going on outside his own urban planning classroom at the University of Winnipeg, he would know, he would know that my Leader, that my colleagues, that this party, have advanced over and over again, for six years, programs, principles and policies for this province, and that this party of all parties in the House has probably been the least, has probably been the least guilty of indulging in personal attack. Most of the personal attack has come from that side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, leaving the Member for Fort Rouge where he belongs, and that is behind, let us move on to look at the Throne Speech, which had, I suggest, a message of disappointment par excellence for the people of Manitoba, a message that contained no evidence that this party, this Government, has anything left in the way of gas or steam or imagination for the remainder of the term to which it's been elected. Mr. Speaker, that government, in its Throne Speech, comes nowhere to grips with the main issues of the day in this province. Nowhere does it mention the number one issue - the cost of living. Nowhere does it mention the related issues, inflation and the future prospects of the economy. Instead of that, we get a cop-out, Mr. Speaker, in which a smoke screen argument is developed to try to excuse the follies and the ineptitudes of the Manitoba Development Corporation. We get a cop-out that says, "Well, up till now, the Manitoba Development Corporation has been acting as a lender of last resort." Well perhaps it was, but nobody ever ordered that it be a lender of last resort with a gun in its belly. Nobody was ever holding it up and forcing it to make loans to enterprises that were not worthy of those loans. That,

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd) Mr. Speaker had to be a classic kind of a verbal foot dance by this Government in order to cover up its ineptitudes and to hide from the main issue of the day.

The weakenss in their position was underscored, Mr. Speaker, very vividly for everybody in this Chamber, for everybody in the Press Gallery, and for everybody in the public galleries, by the fact that the remarks, the address made by my Leader was not allowed to remain on the record during the day that it was made, which has been ordinary practice and tradition in this Chamber since I've been in it - which I admit hasn't been all that long but nonetheless covers a few years - and further to that there was additional participation in the debate following the address made by the House Leader of the Liberal Party one day later. That, similarly Mr. Speaker, has been a break with past practice and procedure, and could only underscore that this government felt tremendously insecure in its utterance in the Throne Speech, tremendously insecure in the kind of non-program that it introduced, and it therefore decided to fight that kind of emptiness with noise. It decided to try to fight the kind of criticism that it knew it was inviting with that non-program by catapulting itself into debate, in elephantine fashion in most cases, in an attempt to cover up its own inadequacy.

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd)

I think there has been very little evidence in the past five or six years in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, where a government has felt so vulnerable on its own program, where a government has felt so naked and so inept with respect to its position. To see the government hurl the Honourable Member for St. Johns and the Honourable Member for Wellington and the Honourable the Minister of Public Works into the debate unnecessarily to blunt the criticisms made by the Leader of the Conservative Party and the House Leader of the Liberal Party I think was a very vivid example, Mr. Speaker, of the awareness on the part of the Government of its own non-program, of the barrenness of its own ideas.

Mr. Speaker, a number of disaster warnings with respect to the economy of this continent, this country, this province and this community have been sounded by experts on all sides of the economic spectrum. This government apparently considers itself to be more skilled in the expertise of economic and financial management than any of those. This government has decided to ignore those warnings. This government has decided to go its own merry way in the hope that none of the difficulties now confronting economies and societies across the length and breadth of North America, if not indeed the western world, are going to touch this little island of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, those warnings deserve better thrift, better attention than they got from this government in the main pronouncement of its legislative program the Throne Speech delivered in this House a few days ago.

Mr. Speaker, a day or two ago when my leader was speaking he mentioned the fact that many people in this province, among them erstwhile followers of the New Democratic Party, had become disillusioned and disenchanted because this was the government that was going to lead them to the New Jerusalem. Well, Mr. Speaker, some New Jerusalem. What's happened in six years under this government? Many of those erstwhile followers have now left the New Democratic camp, have now joined other parties in the province; frequently at regular intervals former New Democratic Party members come to me and others of us in the Conservative Party and say they've had enough of that gang; they tried them and they found them wanting. They are the disillusioned and the disenchanted to which my leader referred earlier this week when he talked about that high hope and that high promise that this government was going to lead them to the promised land and the New Jerusalem. What has happened, Mr. Speaker, in fact is that after six years of sputtering effort this government instead of leading them to the New Jerusalem has really led them to the Old Chicago, has really led them to the old kind of "Cook County Illinois" type of politics.

A MEMBER: Right.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, all around us is clear evidence of government mismanagement. All around us is clear evidence of incompetence and fumbling. All around us is evidence of slick political slight-of-hand like the arguments of promotional pieces, folders, issued on behalf of Autopac. All around us is backing and filling. All around us is the kind of emptiness and rhetoric that we got in that innocuous Throne Speech, and this government expects to be able to make its appeal and its pitch to the people of Manitoba by saying that we on this side in the opposition are responsible for that kind of fumbling and mishandling of the provincial affairs. Mr. Speaker, this is a laughable situation. If it weren't so sad, if it weren't so serious and critical for the Province of Manitoba it would indeed, sir, be ludicrous.

The catalogue, Mr. Speaker, is formidable and almost too long to go into at this juncture of the day. It begins with MDC and all its ill-fated stumbling, and all its ill-fated excursions in the business and industrial area, including Flyer Industries and Saunders Aircraft and Misawa Homes, and the list goes on. It includes the using of those enterprises to hide the true unemployment picture in Manitoba, to make the Minister of Labour look good with tax and padded work rolls so that it appears that we don't have a job or employment or skilled or semi-skilled labour shortage or labour problem in this province. And probably the worst example of all, Mr. Speaker, the kind of anxiety that is still being spread among the people of the province by this government through such excursions and exercises as the land-use committee and the whole policy and field of government land use and land ownership.

Five years ago, Mr. Speaker, there was concern and worry on the part of Manitobans when this government was moving through its first few months of office because of what was happening and what people feared was going to happen to this province. That anxiety, that

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd) concern, that worry was there five years ago. This government promised that there was nothing to worry about, that if we put our hands in theirs and went along with them Manitoba would enter a glorious and golden new decade.

Well, Mr. Speaker, nothing this government has done in the past five years has done anything either to usher in that decade or to diminish the fears and the anxieties of the people of the province; the fears and anxieties which they held in 1969 and which if anything have spread to wider segments of the communities today. By their actions this government has intensified the level of worry on the part of Manitobans for their province. By their actions they have led Manitobans, in general, to be deeply concerned about the kinds of things that are going to be available for their young people in the ten years ahead in this province in competitive terms with the rest of this country, Mr. Speaker.

Sir, there are indeed, as the Minister of Labour has pointed out, serious problems and crises confronting the Minister himself, the government in general, the whole Legislature in the area of labour management relations right now. I think that in the weeks ahead probably the kinds of legislative proposals that we envision as forthcoming from the Minister will be among the items in this session that will be given the most attention and will command the most interest not only of the opposition but of the public at large. We are looking for this minister and this government to make some initiatives in the labour relations field that will tackle the problems that the Minister himself has pointed to, that will help to bring labour peace and will help to bring industrial harmony and efficiency to the province.

I think I can say, Mr. Speaker, and I promise to hold myself to it, that we will support the Minister in legislation directed to that end within the parameters of the kind of philosophy that we think is in the best interests of all Manitobans generally. If it's legislation that is geared only to serve one specific, private individual section of our economy and our community then, sir, we will challenge the Minister to justify it and we will not accept it until he does justify it. We will accept it if we are satisfied that he has so justified it. But, sir, we will be, we will be prepared on this side of the House to await with all our conscience and enormous interest, I think I can say, sir, the legislative proposals in this area that we hope the Minister is going to be introducing in this session. And we will do our best in the posture of the constructive opposition that this party has always maintained since 1969, to rebuild that proposed legislation where it needs rebuilding, to support it where it deserves supporting.

There are, Mr. Speaker, there are improvements needed in the operations of the Workers Compensation Board in my view and in my colleagues view. There are improvements necessary in the wage area where a number of professions including the nursing profession are concerned. There is the whole question, sir, of amendments to the Manitoba Labour Relations Act of 1972 in a number of areas which we have touched in previous debate and previous sessions, and I have no doubt in my mind that the Minister knows some of the specific areas to which I'm referring.

There is the long-mooted proposed legislation on First Agreement Arbitration in collective bargaining procedures, and we'll be interested to see what this Minister and what this government intends to do in that field; if indeed it intends to do anything other than fly a kite and try to get a reading and a feedback from the labour communities generally.

There are beyond the field of labour, Mr. Speaker, a number of areas in which I think our community and our province cries out for some initiative and direction; and its initiative and direction that is not coming to date from the government and has not really, in essence, been delineated in the Throne Speech.

The Government referred this to an urban renewal program in the core area of the city in its Throne Speech. I think, sir, that this city is crying out for what in fact would be a program and concept for rebuilding downtown Winnipeg, particularly the commercial core of the city. A program that would blend the requirements of economic efficiency and environmental aesthetics and that would give this city a kind of image, a kind of appearance that would truly be the envy of other cities in North America. I think that the core area along Portage Avenue, almost along its entire route from the corner of Main all the way out to Polo Park is an area, sir, that has been allowed to decay regrettably in appearance; and that this city in keeping with its importance in the Canadian society and the Canadian economy could be a city that shone as an example to others in the country and in the continent if some imaginative approach could be developed and initiated by this government with assistance and

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd) input from other parties in terms of downtown design. And I'm not talking simply of housing problems, although those are paramount, but I'm talking of downtown designs, sir. I think that there are areas in the social field that demand immediate attention and it will receive some immediate attention from this party in debate on the estimates, in debate on major pieces of legislation and in resolutions which we propose to bring forth.

We are still concerned in this party, Mr. Speaker, with the slide to violence in our society. We're still concerned with the breakdown in the respect for law and order in our communities generally, I'm not talking just of Manitoba here, I'm talking about our North American communities. I believe that there are measures and efforts being taken in certain areas and in certain associations aimed at reinforcing support for our principles of law and authority and order that deserve commendation and deserve acknowledgment and deserve support from this Legislature.

One of them, sir, and this is not a miniscule problem, one of them is in the area of violence in the game of hockey. And I'm concerned particularly with violence in hockey at the minor level. I think the Greater Winnipeg Minor Hockey Association should be recognized, Mr. Speaker, for the effort it has made in the last one or two winters to try to curb violence in games and leagues under its jurisdiction. The worst offenders, Mr. Speaker, are the adults. The worst offenders are ourselves, not the boys and girls playing hockey, and the most vulnerable targets are the referees. There have been, sir, more than two dozen documented cases of referees in minor hockey activity in Winnipeg who have resigned from their jobs this winter because they were no longer able or equipped to withstand the kind of verbal abuse and sometimes physical abuse that was coming to them, not from players but from fans. And most of these referees are 15 and 16 years old. They're young boys who have agreed to take on the onerous chore of refereeing in minor hockey circles. I think that part of the problem exists really right at that basic level and it may seem unimportant to many members of this House, sir, but I submit that it is not unimportant. That that is where characters are, in many cases, largely formed. That is where life-styles and patterns are set and ingrained, and that is where much of the violence is taking place. That is where much of the disrespect for law and order is being spawned, now. And I would like to salute the officials of the Greater Winnipeg Minor Hockey Association who have acted to curb that growing cancer.

Mr. Speaker, we will be dealing at some point, at least in resolution form, with the immigration policies that are practiced both in this province and in this country generally. We will be dealing with our Party's stand on the Green Paper, on immigration advanced by the Honourable Robert Andras. I want to say only briefly what I and my colleagues feel is the important kind of direction that this House should take in our view on that subject at this juncture, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to go into it at length because we will be dealing with it at length later on. But I want to say that in our view the society which we enjoy and which we all share here in Manitoba is the product of a relatively free, unfettered and liberal program of immigration and of infusion of skills and energies from all round the world into this province for seven decades, and we, sir, do not want to see that program abridged in any way. Admittedly, there are social and economic problems which have to be taken into account on any program with as many ramifications as an immigration program, and I think of course that the posture and direction we take and advocate must be consistent with the social and economic conditions of the day, but keeping in mind the employment situation, keeping in mind the desirability of social harmony, I say, Mr. Speaker, that I am opposed to any attempt to cut off the inflow or the infusion of skills from round the world, from the racial and ethnic spectrum into the Province of Manitoba, and I defend that position against anyone who wishes to challenge me on it.

I think that it was that kind of philosophy that built Manitoba and it's that kind of philosophy that will continue to build Manitoba and Western Canada. And should people say that there are employment problems at the present time that preclude that kind of a philosophy, or the continuation of that kind of a philosophy, I ask the Government, the Ministers sitting opposite, to prove to me that that's the case, sir. I believe, as I said last Session, that there are industries in our midst that still require skilled and semi-skilled labour which is not available in the province of Manitoba.

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd)

I know that the Minister has taken the initiative for upgrading programs, for re-training programs, attempting to utilize the talents and skills of our native peoples and our non-native peoples, and redirect them into some of those industries who are crying out for manpower, and I give them full marks and full credit for that; but I say, sir, that there still are requirements in various industries in this province, the construction and building trades industries among them.--(Interjection)--Well, certainly up until very recently - at least very recently in the garment industry too, for skilled and semi-skilled labour that is not available, apparently, even through our re-training programs here. And I would ask the Minister to look again at that whole area of his responsibility, and I would ask my colleagues in this House to look again at the people of all backgrounds who've built this province and who opened up western Canada. And we're not finished building yet, Mr. Speaker. If the Federal Government has got itself into a difficult corner because of the disorganized immigration policies that it has pursued in the past, that, I suggest, sir, is a problem that the Federal Government can solve for itself without hindering and without inhibiting the growth and development of Western Canada. We have needs and requirements here that are served by proper immigration policies and programs, and we need those programs.

Mr. Speaker--well, my friend the Member for Fort Rouge, Mr. Speaker, says I haven't read it. I want to tell him this; I want to tell him this, Mr. Speaker. I have read the Green Paper, and no defence that he can try to manufacture in this House for the veiled racist position that the Liberal Federal Government takes in that Green Paper--(Interjections)--is going to cut any ice with me, sir. He can do all the manufacturing and fabricating he wants. I say the Green Paper is a racist document and I'm against it, and if he says I haven't read it, I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I have read it, and he has read it but not listened to it. He has tried to obscure it, he has tried to ignore it, he has tried to sugar it over the way his colleagues in Ottawa are trying to sugar it over. So the Member for Fort Rouge can sit down and rearrange the Green Paper and perhaps derive some kind of insight into the subtleties contained in it . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. SHERMAN: . . . if he makes another effort at it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to see the way the beleaguered New Democrats come to the aid of a homeless Liberal who really is looking for a political future and can't find one in the rump on the left side of this part of the Chamber. And it's interesting to see the way the Liberal Member from Fort Rouge rushes to the defence of a Government in Ottawa that is splitting and dividing this country. These are the political facts of the day, the political facts of March 10th or 11th, whatever it is, 1975. (It was March 10th when I started, Mr. Speaker; it may be March 11th now.) Those are the political facts of the day, and I conclude my remarks, sir, by saying they are repugnant facts to me as a Conservative, and the Conservative Party of Manitoba will fight them all the way down the line.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister in charge of Public Insurance.

HON. BILLIE URUSKI (Minister for Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation) (St. George): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.--(Interjection)--Well no, I can begin, Mr. Speaker, and at least get 15 minutes in, in contrast to the Member from Fort Garry, that the warm air that flowed across the aisles from the Member for Fort Garry, I thought that if his warm air was music that he'd be a brass band standing there in the Opposition ranks.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see you in your position for this Session. Your capabilities and your guidance will prove your - I hope not in great necessity - but I'm sure that your capable guidance will be much appreciated by all members in the House this Session.

To the Member from Thompson and the Member from St. Matthews, I would like to congratulate both of them on moving and seconding the Speech from the Throne. To my recently-elected colleague sitting down on my right, the Member for St. Boniface, I would like to welcome him back into the Legislature. I think his short vacation or holiday was--really, I don't think we really--we missed him but it seemed that he really wasn't away for that long, and I'm certainly glad that he is back. I would like to also share my sentiments with other members on this side to my colleagues the Minister of Rehabilitation and the new Minister of Forestry and Renewable Resources.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. URUSKI cont'd)

Mr. Speaker, in about two or three weeks I'll be tabling the Annual Report of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation for the fiscal year 1973-74, and I might indicate that the books are in the final stages of being prepared for the Annual Report and the preliminary figures indicate that the insurance fund had to pay out approximately \$10 million more than it received in premiums and investment income in 1974. I don't think it should surprise the members opposite that this would be the case. I don't think it should surprise the members opposite that this would be the case. I have indicated before that we would be in a deficit position based on the claim situation, and I indicate that it's unfortunate that the income and expenditures did not balance, but I would think like many other segments in our business community, the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation felt the crunch of inflation as well as other businesses. Claims rose to approximately 179,000 last year from 170,000 the previous year, and the cost of settling these claims also increased from an average of \$255 per claim in 1973 to an average of \$282 in 1974.

But, Mr. Speaker, the loss picture of Autopac fared no worse, I would say, than the private sector did right across the country. In fact I would say, Mr. Speaker, it fared much better, and I will demonstrate to the honourable members.

In 1974, Mr. Speaker, the most optimistic projections of the private sector across Canada indicate that they will have a loss picture in excess, or approximately \$250 million. Mr. Speaker, this comes on top of a deficit of last year in 1974 of about \$150 million. Mr. Speaker, in reality, private insurance figures indicate that they have shown a loss every year since 1969 with a total loss picture of over half a billion dollars. Mr. Speaker, last Session the Leader of the Opposition indicated to this House, he said the private insurers didn't lose money, they made money. They made money. I don't know whether they lost money on the insurance and they made money on the total picture on the volume of premiums that they wrote or on their investment, but, Mr. Speaker, if they made money last year then they certainly didn't need two premium increases in one year. They didn't need two premium increases in one year.

Mr. Speaker, during the last two months we have witnessed a vicious campaign to discredit Autopac, by innuendo, distortions, and outright lies. Mr. Speaker, this filthy campaign has been conducted by certain segments of the media . . . --(Interjections)--

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. URUSKI: . . . notably, notably, Mr. Speaker, by the two Winnipeg daily papers and a local television station. And this was helped, Mr. Speaker, by two insurance executives in Winnipeg who hold themselves out as responsible businessmen, who, by their actions, discredit not only themselves but also shame the very industry that they are trying to protect. And, Mr. Speaker, there's also several members of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition and the Member from Minnedosa, who isn't here this evening.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I wonder if the honourable gentlemen in this Assembly would like to co-operate. Order! I believe we're supposed to be parliamentarians. Let's behave like that. Those who don't like to be parliamentarians can take their troubles outside, but I wish they would behave like parliamentarians in here. Thank you. The Honourable Minister.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Oh, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what power the insurance companies have, but every time they pull the strings those gentlemen opposite, they say, "How high shall we jump? How high shall we jump for you?"

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to indicate for you some of the examples of what really has transpired. The recent rate increases, for example my press release on January 3rd, indicated that the general rate increase on basic insurance was between 14 to 19.5 percent, and vehicles moving either downward or upward in rating groups would experience a lower or higher rate increase than the general rate increase. Not only was the possibility of a higher rate increase clearly spelled out, but it was underlined for easy reference.

On January 22nd, I issued a further press release which explained in detail the vehicle rating group restructure, and also clearly stated once again that the general increases could be lower or higher if the rating group of a vehicle was revised. What did the Winnipeg papers do? Having initially failed to really take cognizance of this rate restructuring, they attempted to whip up public hysteria by alleging that Autopac had not disclosed the full rate increase. You know, that's hogwash and they know it.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. URUSKI cont'd)

These newspapers, Mr. Speaker, were constantly informed that the general rate increase of 14 to 19.5 percent would apply to the majority of vehicle owners, but that didn't help. Mr. Speaker, every day we would be faced with rate increases of 45 percent, 60 percent, 75 percent. Mr. Speaker, there are vehicles owners whose premiums increased by these percentages, but did the media try to place these in their percentages in their proper perspective? I want to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, what really--and I think the Member from Minnedosa has an Order for Return and I think this will answer his Order for Return adequately if he reads Hansard.

What were the increases and the number of cars in each category percentage increase? For example, Mr. Speaker, did the media indicate that approximately 640 vehicles would have an increase of basic insurance over 60 percent? 640 vehicles out of a total of 439,000 vehicles, which excludes trailers. This is approximately one tenth of one percent of the vehicles over 60 percent. Between 50 to 59 percent, Mr. Speaker, 1,173 vehicles, approximately a quarter a percent. Between 40 to 49.9 percent, 2,060 vehicles, approximately one half of one percent. Between 30 and 39 percent, 13,674 vehicles - that's trucks and cars that are the statistics that I am reading; it does not include trailers in all territories - approximately three percent for those vehicles. Between 20 to 29.9 percent, 39,384 vehicles in the 20 to 29 percent, approximately 9 percent of the vehicles. In the 14 to 19.9 percentage rating group, 361,634 vehicles, approximately 82 percent of the vehicles in the province. Increases below the 14 to 19.5 percent, 20,678 vehicles, 5 percent of the vehicles had increases less than the average rate increase. Mr. Speaker, at least 87 percent of the vehicles were in the rating group of 14 to 19.9 percent or lower.

As I've indicated, the Honourable Member from Minnedosa, when he receives the Debates and Proceedings, the Hansard, he'll be able to have his Order for Return answered in that area.

Mr. Speaker, realizing that the newspapers failed miserably in trying to raise a public outcry, they decided to do a survey. So what do they do? They called it an objective survey. You know, Mr. Speaker, can you imagine holding a survey on a price increase? You know, no matter who raises--anyone who raises prices, no one is happy with a price increase. Even I'm not happy with a price increase whatever it may be. No matter how justified it is, no one is happy. But, Mr. Speaker, how many people replied to that survey? Approximately 4,000 people, or about one percent of the vehicle owners in this province. Yes, Mr. Speaker, only one percent replied to that survey.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out another instance - I think I have a few minutes - the example of the press. Yes, the press' criticism of this Corporation by actually putting over half-truths, untruths, and actually monstrous lies. And I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker: for example, you will recall the circumstances leading to the awarding of a towing contract by Autopac. Mr. Speaker, the media were fully aware that the Towing Association made certain demands on Autopac and then categorically stated that their demands were not negotiable; and I'd like to quote from a letter that the Corporation received, and the media had this letter. I'll just quote one, two paragraphs - the first two paragraphs of the letter that we received from the Automotive Trades Association, the Towing Division: "At November 5th meeting" -- and this was to Mr. Carl Lawford, Director of Claims, Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation; the letter was dated November 8th. "The Towing Division. The main topic of discussion was the rapidly rising cost of operation including the needless delays in payment, resulting in large Accounts Receivable. After considerable discussion, the following rates were set, to be effective 12:01 a.m. December 1st/74, also the proviso was added that the rates set are not negotiable."

Mr. Speaker, the industry themselves indicated in their letter of November 8th: "The Winnipeg Free Press of December 3rd in their article quoted this letter and indicated Autopac received a letter dated November 8th from the operators, stating the non-negotiable new rates would be effective as of Sunday." That was in the Winnipeg Free Press December 3rd. Well, what did the editorial writers of the Winnipeg Free Press say on January the--(Interjection)--I know.

A MEMBER: Has Cleverley written . . . ?

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MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it was written by the one and only Mr. FredCleverley.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I believe the honourable gentleman will be able to continue on the next day. The time being 10 o'clock, the House is now adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow afternoon. (Tuesday)