

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 30, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report of the Manitoba Telephone System for 1988.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table Partners for Health, a new direction for the promotion of health in Manitoba.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I beg to table, pursuant to The Regulations Act, a copy of each regulation filed with the Registrar of Regulations since the regulations were tabled in this House in September of last year.

I am pleased to table the 16th Annual Report for Legal Aid Manitoba for the period ending March 31, 1988. I wish to table a report for the year 1988 pursuant to The Fatalities Act.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the Speaker's gallery where we have with us today the Honourable George Shaw, who is the President of the Legislative Council and Member for Macquarie, Tasmania, Australia, and Mrs. Shaw.

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

Also with us this afternoon seated in the gallery, we have a group of Grade 9 students from the John W. Gunn School under the direction of Elizabeth Powell. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak).

We also have with us from the Isaac Brock School, eighty Grades 5 and 6 students under the direction of Ruth Hardy. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

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

* (1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD Manitoba Telephone System FAX Machine Sales

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible

for the Manitoba Telephone System (Mr. Findlay). On May 28, 1987, the Premier (Mr. Filmon), then the Opposition Leader, stated and I quote, "I know the Telephone System was into computer equipment and electronic equipment of all sorts, that it was in some cases directly involved with telecommunications, in other cases with word processing, heaven knows what in the way of office and computer equipment I have always argued the Telephone System had no business being involved in."

Mr. Speaker, in light of that quote from the now Premier (Mr. Filmon) of the province, can the Minister responsible for Manitoba Telephone System (Mr. Findlay) tell us what he believes to be the difference between sales of personal computer products and fax machines?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Clearly, there is a bit of a controversy here about where the responsibility of the Manitoba Telephone System should start and stop. The people of Manitoba have requested the Manitoba Telephone System to supply fax machines. The board has analyzed that over some period of time, the pros and cons, and have looked at the feasibility of being able to be a distributor of those fax machines to those who desire to purchase them from the Manitoba Telephone System. They are in the process of doing, I guess I might call it, a bit of a pilot project to determine whether they can serve that need without competing unduly with the private sector. The board is still analyzing the question and are going to deal with it at their next board meeting in June.

Mrs. Carstairs: You know how history repeats itself. That was exactly the reason and rationale given when they went into computer equipment.

Competition

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): On November 17, 1988, the Minister said there was no new policy direction which had come from this Government to the Manitoba Telephone System. Has this Minister not expressed to the Manitoba Telephone System in any way, shape, or form a concern that this Government had in Opposition about competition with the private sector?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Member opposite that I have expressed that opinion and I addressed it in my answer to the first question. I have said that we do not want to unduly compete with the private sector, but yet we are trying to serve the public desire to do business with the Manitoba Telephone System. So we have acted

now as a distributor for a short period of time to analyze the impact that this will have on the private business community of our province and the need of our customers for this service.

Yes, I have expressed that reservation and they are doing this in this process that I have described, a bit of a pilot project, and the board is going to deal with it again at their next meeting in June.

Manitoba Telephone System Competition

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

Mr. Speaker, with a final supplementary question, this time to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) on this issue, there are 30 private companies listed in the Yellow Pages selling fax machines. In addition, there is a corporate bankruptcy increase rate in this province of 21.7 percent. Why is this Government engaging in direct competition with small business in the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): In response to the Member's assertion about corporate bankruptcy increases, last year, bankruptcies in Manitoba decreased in our first year in Government by some 3.85 percent. We have been working very diligently to work on issues that are of importance to small businesses in Manitoba.

* (1340)

We increased the level of deduction for the payroll tax so that half the businesses who were previously paying the payroll tax were removed from the payroll tax as of January 1 of this year. This Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) voted against that. She was opposed to that. We brought in a tax holiday for new small businesses in this province. This Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) voted against that. She was against help for small business in Manitoba. The fact of the matter is that we also reduced the deficit in this province and we held taxes down in this province in our Budget, Mr. Speaker, to help small business. This Leader of the Opposition voted against it. Those are the kinds of things that she says and she does entirely the opposite.

The fact of the matter is this Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) has said that we ought not to interfere with the operations of Crown corporations. She said, on the record, we should keep them at arm's length, we should not interfere with them. Mr. Speaker, we have said publicly, and I believe that the Manitoba Telephone System should not be competing with private enterprise where there is plenty of competition in the market. That is my position; that remains my position. This pilot project that is being conducted by the Telephone System, we hope

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

Village at Portage Place Mortgage Default

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

Mr. Speaker, we learned today that Village at Portage Place has defaulted on its mortgage payments and that the North Portage Development Corporation has taken over management of the property. Not only is Portage Avenue suffering from more than 100,000 square feet of vacant retail and office space, but now a major housing project is in very deep trouble. My question to the First Minister is, when did he learn of this crisis situation and what does he intend to do about it?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, department

officials have briefed the Minister and, through the Minister, Members of Cabinet that this potential existed for this to happen. As the Member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) knows full well, it is said in today's news coverage of it that there is a tremendous glut on the market for rental housing in the downtown Winnipeg area, some 15 percent vacancy rate exists.

The people at Portage Place, running the North Portage Development Corporation, have taken over the operation to protect their interest. They believe that in the longer term, over a period of time, the market will be filled and that those vacancies will be filled and that ultimately the project will be viable. In the meantime, our interests are protected.

I think that the information contained in news reports indicated that Manitoba Housing's investment in there is protected and that they believe that the matter will resolve itself through the actions that they have taken to ensure that the public interest is protected. But, as the Member knows full well, when there is a 15 percent vacancy rate because of a tremendous expansion of new rental housing in the downtown area—she knows of Fort Garry Place, she knows of the many buildings that have been constructed over the past year or so in downtown Winnipeg—then she can understand, I am sure, that is part of the problem and part of the reason why, in this instance, that this issue has occurred. I believe that the people at Portage Place have taken the prudent action to protect the public investment and I believe that the matter will be resolved.

North Portage Development Corp. Cash Flow

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

With a supplementary question to the First Minister, what is the cash flow shortfall that now faces the North Portage Development Corporation, and will it be the policy of this Government to prop up that particular project?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will take the specifics of that question as notice and bring back those figures to the Member very shortly.

Winnipeg Revitalization Program Coordination

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

Downtown Winnipeg is now suffering from high vacancy rates, and yet we have another corporation, the Forks Development Corporation, which is also proposing a housing component as part of its development strategy. Will the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) of the province now persuade the other levels of Government in partnership to revitalize Winnipeg downtown, that it is time to create at his instigation a one-development corporation for downtown so that more coordinated and cohesive planning can be assured so that we can stop competing with each other?

* (1345)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, in order to ensure that the Member is given a full and accurate response to that, because I know that there have been discussions about the numbers of different developing corporations there, I understand that one of the reasons why that may not be able to happen is that they are under different federal authorizations and there is a legislative manner of speaking that would in fact prevent us from doing that easily. I will get the specifics on that and have the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) bring that back to the Member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) so that she has the complete answer on that.

Gold Mine—Shoal Lake Environmental Impact Study

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):

My question is to the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings). We have just received a copy of the environmental application from the mine to develop the gold mine in the Shoal Lake area and we have read the documents dealing with the Shoal Lake development. I would ask the Minister, has he reviewed this document with his officials and is he satisfied with the filing of this document in terms of the full environmental impact of that gold mine on Shoal Lake and the water supply of the City of Winnipeg?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, that information was put on the public register this week, I believe. That would be the source that the Member obtained the information from. The department has been reviewing that information, but I have said several times that there is not anything that I can conceive of that would satisfy completely concerns in the need to protect the water for over half the people of this province.

In terms of the information that is provided there, we have said to the provincial Government in Ontario that there must be a complete environmental review under their Environmental Act. We have asked the federal Government to explore opportunities and become involved under the federal jurisdiction for environmental impact studies.

Mr. Doer: I am rather disappointed with the Minister's answer. In the document that is filed, nowhere is there

mention that this is the water supply for 640,000 people residing in the City of Winnipeg. In fact, they deal with the use of cottage use in Shoal Lake and some other issues of the environment. They do not mention in their own application, which I believe is somewhat fraudulent, in terms of the people and impact on the people of Manitoba and the people residing in Winnipeg.

Environmental Hearings

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):

My question to the Minister is, has he escalated, through the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to the Liberal Premier of Ontario, the issue of having a public hearing in Winnipeg dealing with the water supply? We have raised this question in the Ontario Legislature four times now, and the Ontario Liberal Government refuses to give us an environmental impact study.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): I

concur with the need to get cooperation and positive response from the Ontario Government in relationship to this project. As recently as last Friday, I was in conversation with the Ontario Minister of the Environment on the phone. He is re-evaluating his position regarding the potential of having an environment hearing in Manitoba and I am still working to the absolute length of any levers that I may possibly use to have that occurrence come about. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in terms of a precedent, we have just agreed that there will be a Clean Environment hearing of the Province of Manitoba held in Saskatchewan regarding the Namew Lake project. I think that we have set a precedent that would allow the Government of Ontario to have environmental hearings in Manitoba.

Correspondence Request

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):

The Minister, on May 10, mentioned that he would take this issue to the federal Government. Given the fact that we have had three weeks of absolutely no guarantees from the Ontario Government, in spite of the hypocrisy of claiming that Detroit should have an environmental impact study on the incinerator with Windsor, can the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) table his letter to the federal Minister of the Environment and table the response from the federal Minister of Environment that it will not be just nice warm words, but we will have our rights for a federal environmental study dealing with the trans-boundary water that affects 600,000 Winnipeggers and Manitobans in terms of their water supply?

* (1350)

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): I will be glad to table my correspondence with the federal Minister.

I also would like to update the House because there is some consideration being given to introducing amendments to the federal environment process, that we are putting together correspondence to the federal Government indicating that in no way do we want the

Shoal Lake project and the gold mine involved there to be considered something that has not grandfathered any changes they would make in the environmental process federally. We want to make sure that every possible means of guaranteeing the safety of this water is explored.

Environmental Impact Study

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Given the fact there will be toxins such as arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury, zinc and other pollutants that will affect the water supply of Manitoba and Winnipeggers, I would ask the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), given the fact the last Minister of Environment, Mr. McMillan, promised us a full environmental impact study in the House of Commons and then reneged with the licence he granted on June 17, 1988, can the Minister of Environment table in writing a guarantee from the federal Minister that we will have our federal environmental impact study prior to any licence being granted, either in the Province of Ontario or in Toronto or by the federal Government, that we will have the full environmental impact study prior to the granting of this licence?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, when I get that response and that guarantee from the federal Minister, I will certainly table it.

Ladco Land Development Deal Proposals

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). I would like to refer to the deal arrangements with Ladco and the MHRC development agreement in south St. Boniface. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) made reference yesterday in the Chamber to the proposal call and the process of it. I have been informed that the Government put out a proposal call in June of '88 through the Manitoba Home Builders' Association. Can the First Minister inform the House if a time limit or a deadline was included with the proposal call and what form did the proposal call take?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I will have to take that question as notice. Yesterday I said that a proposal call was put out. I did not say that I had the details as to a time limit or a deadline or any of those things. I will ask the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). I will take the question as notice on his behalf and bring the response.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Premier, three years ago, the then NDP administration put forward a call for proposals and it received three: one from Ladco, one from Genstar and one from Nelson River. Can the First Minister tell the House if all three developers were asked to resubmit their proposals or were they considered if they did not resubmit the proposals?

Mr. Filmon: I can indicate all those three were involved in the proposals that we received. Ladco, Genstar and

the consortium, which included Nelson River, were the three that I am aware of and that Cabinet evaluated and made the final determination on.

Proposals Tabling Request

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

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): A final supplementary to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), considering the answer that he has just given, maybe the First Minister would be able to table the three proposals that were received by his Government.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I can confirm what the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) has confirmed publicly, and that is that he will provide the working sheets that evaluate the proposals for the edification of the Housing critic for the Liberal Party.

Steroid Use Veterinary Prescriptions

Hon. Donald Orchard (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday of last week, the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) raised an issue in the House about there appearing to be another source of anabolic steroids, that being veterinary medicine. I want to table copies of correspondence that subsequently came to me, in which the Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association are concerned about those allegations, that they were spurious, that they were unresearched. I simply table that so that we do not use unfounded and unresearched allegations, which is the responsibility of all Members to come with questions that are researched, so that we do not cast aspersions and unnecessary doubt on any professional institution.

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

* (1355)

Rural Services Decentralization

Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner). First of all, let me say I am very sorry if I offended the Minister in my comments during the Throne Speech Debate, but the Minister's record on natural resources speaks for itself. Therefore, I stand by my comments. It concerns me greatly that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) has seen fit to use rural Manitoba as an area to shove a Minister who has already clearly demonstrated his insensitivity to the people of rural Manitoba.

The people in rural Manitoba have been Rafferty-Alameda'd about this decision. This Government has been paying lip-service to the issue of decentralization for over a year now. Rural Manitobans want action, not more talk, nor more working groups as referred to in the Throne Speech. My question to the Minister is, can he tell this House which Government departments or agencies are going to be decentralized and where?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):

Mr. Speaker, the derogatory comments that the Honourable Member opposite for Springfield (Mr. Roch) makes is, I guess, an indication as to the kind of reference to either the way departments have been dealt with and/or certain Ministers have dealt with departments or issues. That is somewhat surprising to me, and it is surprising to me that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) would allow her Members to question in that manner.

I would suggest to the Honourable Member opposite that if he wants to reflect on issues that we dealt with in Natural Resources, I think he might want to reflect on the way we dealt with the land and water strategy and the issues that concerned rural Manitobans. We attempted to address very quickly the needs to conserve not only the very land that our industries, such as agriculture, are very dependent on, but also to address the water quality and quantity issues that have been plaguing rural Manitoba and, yes, even urban Manitoba for a long, long time. It was with that in mind that we initiated a series of public hearings across this province and we had 37 meetings with rural Manitobans and urban Manitobans to discuss the needs of Manitobans in soil and water. That was done in Natural Resources.

Rural Residential Development Policy

Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, the Minister never even came close to answering my question. I realize that I am not able to ask the same question but obviously there is no plan to decentralize and maybe no intention. I would like to ask the Minister this question. When will he, given the fact that there has been no policy in place for several years now on rural residential development, give his department some direction so that rural Manitobans will know exactly where and when rural residential development can proceed, assuming that repopulating rural areas is a commitment and not just rhetoric that we just heard a while ago there?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):

I want to add, Mr. Speaker, we have the Opposition talking about the surplus of housing in this province and initiatives that need to be taken to stop in some urban centres the housing initiatives that are being discussed. Rural Manitoba has some real problems and some real needs. Housing in some communities is certainly a need, and it will be discussed under the terms of rural development.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me say this to the Honourable Members opposite. There is one much greater need in rural Manitoba, and that is to recognize that we have had many, many people who have left their farms and their businesses in rural Manitoba. We have virtually shut down small towns, and it was not due to the lack of housing. It was due to the lack of initiatives of previous administrations in this province and federally. If the federal Liberals had ever taken action when the real economic crunch hit, we would have—

* (1400)

Rural Services Decentralization

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

Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, two questions, two non-answers. Let me try to get a bit more specific.

If this Government is indeed committed to maintaining viable communities in rural Manitoba, basic medical and educational facilities must be in place in order for those communities to be viable. Can the Minister assure this House that such current facilities will not only be maintained, but also be improved and enhanced so that decentralization and rural viability will be fact rather than just fiction?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member opposite asks finally a good question. Yes, we will look after the health care of rural Manitobans. Yes, we will pay attention through rural development to the housing needs of rural Manitobans. But the main point of the issue lies whether what this province should have done and should be doing to make sure that the economic viability of rural Manitobans is maintained. Then we will really be addressing the problem and that is what we are going to be paying attention to.

Meadow Portage Community Division

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). On November 4, 1988, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) decided unilaterally and without consultation and proper planning to separate the peaceful community of Meadow Portage, only 10 days after assuring the council of this community that no drastic action or hasty decision would be made without in-depth consultation with the community. He said he did this on the basis of a consultant's report and a petition.

Has the Premier asked the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) for full reasons as to why he so hastily split this community in two with so little respect for the people of Meadow Portage in terms of consulting with them? If not, will he immediately ask for a full report from his Minister on this decision?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I have received from time to time correspondence from the Member for Dauphin, addressed to the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), correspondence that has been responded to, I believe, that indicated reasons. I believe that the Minister, when he made that decision, issued a news release on it, spoke with various groups, the local community and so on.

There has been information put out publicly on it, and he is at liberty to ask the Minister here in the House to repeat his reasons for having done so. I am sure that when the Minister is here—he is currently at an urban Native planning conference—if he wishes to ask

him questions of that nature, I am sure that the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) will be happy to give him answers.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, I asked the Premier if he would ask for a full report on this hasty and ill-conceived decision by his Minister. He has not indicated to this House that he is prepared to do that.

Community Division Review

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Given the fact that the so-called "consultant's report" is filled with errors and inaccuracies, for which his Government paid \$5,000 to a consultant who did work that does not seem to be at even a Grade 5 level, will this Premier ask for a—and I want to table a copy of that consultant's report so the Premier (Mr. Filmon) can peruse it. I ask the Premier, has he seen this report, has he reviewed it and, if not, will he ask the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) to put this decision on hold until he has reviewed the consultant's report that he says he based his decision on?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to peruse the report that the Member has tabled.

Ministerial Meeting

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has consistently refused to meet with the people of Meadow Portage. Given the fact that on May 15 a public meeting was held and he sent no representative, but the regional director for Northern Affairs said that the boundaries for this community have not been worked out, such fundamental items as fire protection for this community had not been worked out, will he direct his Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) to immediately meet in Meadow Portage, as this Premier did in Portage la Prairie? When there was a problem there, he travelled there to meet with that community.

Will he direct his Minister of Northern Affairs to meet with the people of Meadow Portage, a courtesy that is deserved by all residents of this province? Will he give that direction to his Minister of Northern Affairs?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to discuss that matter with the Minister of Northern Affairs.

Women's Health Directorate Services

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): My question is for the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Hammond). May I say firstly, Mr. Speaker, that my colleagues and I congratulate the Member for Kirkfield Park on her appointment to this important portfolio.

This Government announced in the recent Throne Speech that they would be establishing a Women's Directorate. Now, we already have a Maternal and Child Health Directorate which deals with reproductive issues

affecting women. We have a Mental Health Directorate which will be looking at, specifically, women and mental health issues, and we have a Women's Directorate which is there to advise and recommend on all issues affecting women, and a lot of them are health related.

My question to the Minister is, what specific women's health issues will this new directorate be responsible for? We hope that there will not be duplication and unnecessary bureaucracy. Could she indicate to us what special services they will be responsible for?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): During the Women's Initiative, to the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), we found that women's health issues was of such a broad nature that we had a problem even covering the base. One of the recommendations we made to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) was that we have a Women's Health Directorate in the portfolio of Health that would be directed to look specifically at women's health issues. Certainly one of the issues that will be in that area would be the new technology on reproductive health.

Services Duplication

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): With a supplementary to the same Minister, Mr. Speaker, we are concerned that this Women's Health Directorate does not end up to be the fiasco that the former Seniors Directorate was. My supplementary question to the Minister is, could she indicate to us what specific steps will this Minister be taking to ensure that this new Women's Directorate does not fragment services or duplicate services that are already existing in the other health directorates? Could she please indicate to the House today?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): In that specific area, we have a committee of Cabinet on Human Services and in that area we are going to be watching all areas so we will make sure, through the Women's Directorate, through the Cabinet committee that there is not duplication. In fact, that is the very idea of that type of committee is so we would not be having overlaps.

Staff Secondments

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), with a final supplementary question.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Given that the Minister has indicated to us she does not want to see duplication in this new directorate, can the Minister then indicate to us, will staff from these other directorates be seconded to the Women's Health Directorate so of course there will not be that duplication?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): If the occasion arose that was needed, I am sure it would be looked at.

Government Advertising Community-Based Media

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): My question is to the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson). Mr. Speaker, the Minister has made it clear in this House on a number of occasions that she is very willing to meet with members of ethnocultural organizations and the media. It was clear in the meeting that my caucus had with members of community-based media about two weeks ago that a meeting has not yet taken place with members of community-based media or the ethnocultural media.

* (14 10)

They raised two major concerns in that meeting, Mr. Speaker. One is that they were not getting adequate or complete information from the Government about their press releases or their programs and, secondly, they believe they were not getting a fair share of Government advertising. In fact, they were unanimous in stating that they received very little Government advertising, and they believe the ads they do receive tend to ghettoize them by the kinds of ads that are placed.

My question to the Minister is, would she undertake to set up a meeting with members of the community-based media, some of which are community and some representing the ethnocultural community, newspaper, radio and television? Would she also undertake an immediate review of the present policy to make sure that Government advertising placement is extended to all community-based media and a review of the existing media outlets to ensure that the lists are up to date?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): I want to thank the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) for that question. We did have some discussion back in Estimates, I believe, last year specifically on advertising in ethnic media. I indicated to the Member at that time that the policy had not changed with the new Government, but obviously she felt that what the former administration was doing was not adequate, that we were certainly willing to look at improving those services.

Mr. Speaker, with the hiring of a multicultural coordinator for the Province of Manitoba, we have been actively pursuing, increasing and looking at advertising with ethnic and community media, and we will be making announcements in due course to that effect.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Speaker, I realize that the policy was in place and that the Minister did communicate to the House that policy was still intact. We just want to make sure that she makes sure the practice is conforming with the policy.

HydroBonds Placement

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): I wonder if the Minister could tell us why, when a recent HydroBond advertising was placed with a number of representatives of the community-based media, that it was not placed

with all representatives of the community-based media. What selection process would have taken place? Could she tell us why Contrast, a weekly newspaper representing 25,000 people with a circulation of 4,500, did not receive the ad?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the ad agency that was selected by the Government was requested by the managing agent of the issue, the HydroBonds issue, namely, Pemberton Securities, to use the most cost-effective media to deliver the message to the broadest audience possible. That included advertising in 50 daily papers and weekly newspapers, and 10 special and ethnic publications. It is regrettable that a publication was missed. However, the ads have been running for over six weeks and it is unfortunate the publication in question, Contrast, did not approach any arm of the Government responsible for the sale of the HydroBonds to make that oversight known, because certainly we would have included it very quickly on that list.

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

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that answer. Maybe it is another indication of why the lists—it is very important to have a review and to update the lists and make sure they are accurate.

I also have to wonder, Mr. Speaker, why with such a large communication capacity in the Government that we would have to put a media campaign like that out to a group like Wordsnorth. I wonder how much that cost, how much money that cost, why we did not place, why we did not use the in-house communication staff to do that, and who made the final decisions. My question is, was the list that was determined for the placement of ads reviewed by the Government?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, the answer to the question is no. The ad agency put into place went through all of the lists it had available to it and this particular publication, Contrast, which is published in Toronto, I understand, for national distribution was not on that list. The process in place was no different than that used by the former Government with respect to Limestone advertising.

Drought Assistance Payment Plan

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): My questions are to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) and relate to the drought programs that were available in 1988, and specifically those that were directed towards livestock producers. There were three programs: the Livestock Feed Security Program under the Crop Insurance Program and the two ad hoc programs, the Greenfeed Program and the Basic Breeding Herd Retention Program.

My question is to the Minister. Have the final payments actually all been made on the Livestock Feed Security Program and the Basic Herd Retention Program?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): On the Livestock Feed Security Program, the payments have

gone out. In terms of the Livestock Drought Assistance Program, the initial payment went out, the initial two-thirds and, for a farmer to qualify for the final third, he had to enroll in the Livestock Feed Security Program for 1989.

I can assure the Member there has been a tremendous increase in enrollment in that program, as the uncertainty of forage production in '89 is very evident to producers during the winter, and that the final third of that payment is in the process of being processed and, in fact, if I am not mistaken, the cheques should well be in the mail right now. They had intended that they would be out by the end of this month. So it is my understanding they should be out or very close to going out.

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

SPEAKER'S RULING

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

On May 19, the Deputy Speaker took under advisement a point of order raised by the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) respecting the words "who have postured and played politics with this so crucial an issue," spoken by the Honourable Minister of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery).

I have reviewed Hansard and the precedents of this House. I note that on October 3, 1988, I ruled that the phrase "playing politics" was not unparliamentary. I note also that on June 22, 1982, Mr. Speaker Walding ruled that quote "playing games" used in a similar context was not unparliamentary.

Perhaps I should again remind all Honourable Members that this is a forum in which strong and often opposing views are held and it is a forum in which unkind, but not necessarily unparliamentary, words and phrases unfortunately will be used from time to time. I would suggest to all Honourable Members that if they were to choose their words with care, the House would be better able to get on with the business before it.

To conclude, the words spoken by the Honourable Minister of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs were not unparliamentary.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the adjourned debate for an address to His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor (Mr. Johnson) and the proposed motion of the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) and the amendment thereto, the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I appreciate the opportunity to participate once again in the debate from the Speech from the Throne. I believe this is my eighth opportunity to participate in this debate. I have taken the opportunity every year to become part of

this debate because it is one of the more interesting opportunities we have as Members of the Legislature, as the Minister of Highways of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) is well aware, to address general issues, basically cover the waterfront in terms of the political issues facing this province. Certainly in my speech today, I intend to do so.

I intend to talk about power and the exercise of power and I intend to talk about what we should be doing as Members of this Legislature in the upcoming Session. I want to begin, however, by a couple of remarks.

First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your first Session. The last Session I thought you dealt very admirably with the challenges you faced as Speaker. I am sure you have no doubt learned over this past period of time the Speaker's job in this House is probably the most difficult, and I really believe that you have served us admirably. I look forward in my new role, in terms of working very closely with you, because I know you are fundamentally a fair individual, one who takes his role seriously as a Member of this Legislature, particularly a Speaker. So I very much look forward to working with you.

* (1420)

I would like to congratulate the new Deputy Speaker (Mr. Chornopyski) on his election. I wish him luck. It is certainly a position that I am sure he will find challenging.

I would also like to extend congratulations to a number of people on their new positions in this House, particularly the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns). I must say that the Member for Lakeside, as the dean of this House, is a very experienced Member of the Legislature. I do not say that I often agree with that Member politically, but despite my political differences, I will say that the Province of Manitoba is better served today, now that he is a Member of the Cabinet and—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am having some difficulty hearing the Honourable Member for Thompson. Honourable Members wishing to carry on with their private conversations could kindly do so outside the Chamber.

The Honourable Member for Thompson.

Mr. Ashton: As I was indicating, Mr. Speaker, I believe the Province of Manitoba will be well served by the presence of the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) in the provincial Cabinet, no matter what my political differences with that Member. I strongly believe in his judgment and experience. I believe he will do very well.

I would also, in my new role as House Leader, like to pay tribute to my predecessor, the House Leader, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan). I will indicate, Mr. Speaker, that I consider myself very fortunate to be in the position of being able to be House Leader with the experience and guidance of the Member for Churchill being so readily available. He has been a Member of this House now for 12 years. He has become acknowledged as an expert on the Rules of this House, and I will have a lot to learn before I can ever match his knowledge of the Rules and Procedures and his

sense of this Legislature. I look forward to working with him in my new role as House Leader for our caucus, because certainly I will be working alongside of him and asking for his advice and assistance, as I have already done in this Session of the Legislature.

Before I begin my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I want to make one point very clear in this speech, as I have done actually in my other contributions to the debate on the Speech from the Throne, and that is to make it very clear what my No. 1 priority is and will continue to be in this Legislature.

You know, when I was first elected in 1981, when I first spoke in the Throne Speech, I made—(Interjection)—by the landslide of 72 votes, as the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) reminds me. I spoke at that time of my top priority. My top priority then was to put the community of Thompson first, was to speak up at every opportunity in this Legislature on behalf of the City of Thompson—well, basically as my home community, Mr. Speaker. Since that time in every Session of the Legislature, I have not only reminded my constituents of that and Members of this Legislature, but myself as well, because I truly believe that has to continue to be my top priority.

Thompson has one representative in this Legislature. We are not like Winnipeg with 30. If the Member for Thompson does not speak up for the City of Thompson, the concerns of our community will not be heard. I always felt strongly that that was important prior to my election, that we have a strong representative in the City of Thompson.

I want to indicate once again that I will be continuing to put the City of Thompson first—and I say that with the knowledge that I know a number of people in Thompson who have been asking, well, with my new responsibilities, will I continue to have the time to be able to do that?—both in the Legislature speaking up for Thompson and also continuing to keep in touch with constituents because that is equally as important.

I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, today at the beginning of this Session that I will be continuing to not only fight for Thompson but to keep in touch with my constituents, election or no election, regardless of whatever role I may have in this Legislature, and that is my bottom line. Thompson continues to be my priority.

In keeping with that, I will be outlining a number of local concerns today which I think are very important to be brought to the attention of Members of this Legislature. You know, in recent weeks and months there have been continuing positive developments for Thompson. A number of projects, I know, which I had the opportunity to work locally with community groups, are now coming to fruition. For example, the first seniors' home in Thompson, the first ever seniors' home is under construction.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Under a Conservative Government.

Mr. Ashton: For the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), it is under construction today because of the commitment to the housing made by the New

Democratic Party Government and because of the commitment to the Community Places funding also made by the previous New Democratic Party Government, and also because of the work of the community of Thompson.

I really feel if the Conservatives are going to attempt to take political credit for the seniors' home in Thompson, they have to have another thing coming, because the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) in his new capacity as Minister for Seniors would care to talk to seniors themselves, they know full-well who has built this home in the City of Thompson, and it is not the Conservative Government. It is the community of Thompson. I am proud, as a part of that community, to be working alongside the Rotary Club and the seniors of Thompson. I really think the Minister should be careful to avoid trying to make political gains out of the seniors' home in Thompson.

Similarly I would like to talk about the development of our first museum. In this case, no thanks to the Conservative Government in most definite terms, because one of their first actions as Government was to cut back Community Places funding to the museum. I can indicate that despite that cutback and the difficulties the museum has had in obtaining a commitment from the federal Government, the museum is cutting once again because of the strong support of the local community. I want to indicate that I am proud of the work that has been done by the museum in Thompson and I look forward to its completion.

Similarly with the Juniper Centre, once again no thanks to the Conservatives, one of their first acts, in addition to cutting funding for the Thompson museum, was last year to cut funding for the Juniper Centre. I said at the time that I felt that was shameful, given the hard work that had gone into place by the Juniper Centre, but I can tell you, despite the fact that they got no help from the Conservative Government through that cutback, the Juniper Centre has prevailed. I drive by it virtually every day that I am back in Thompson. We now have under way construction of the Juniper Centre.

I wanted to indicate that because those are just three examples of the type of partnership I think that has worked over the last number of years and it is a partnership of the community working together. I consider myself to be part of that community, it continues to be my home. I can indicate that I was very proud of the contributions made by the previous New Democratic Party Government in working together as part of that partnership. I can say that I do not go around claiming to anyone that the NDP built the seniors' home in Thompson. I know that the commitment to the housing was made by the previous Minister, the Minister responsible for Housing, Muriel Smith. I know that the Community Places funding was made by the previous Government. I can indicate that I am glad the Conservatives saw fit not to cut back, as they did in other areas, in the seniors' area. I will give them credit for at least that.

I really hope the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) does not try to attempt to go to Thompson and suggest somehow the Conservatives have built this

seniors' home, because people know better in the community of Thompson. They know it is the work of the seniors, of the Rotary Club, and the Governments, yes, have been part of it, working with it, but they are part of a partnership. They are not some outside group that comes in and plunks it down.

I want to address some local concerns. I want to begin with the No. 1 concern in my constituency right now, the Northern Tax Allowance. I want to indicate to the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) here, before he makes wisecracks, that there is a lot of sympathy in the community of Thompson for the plight of Portage, a lot of sympathy for the plight of a community that is being hit by a totally insensitive federal Government, because in Thompson we are being affected in much the same way. We do not have a base that is being closed, but there is, Mr. Speaker, a Northern Tax Allowance that the federal Government has now said that we in Thompson are not eligible for. Can you believe that? The community of Thompson and also the community of Wabowden have been declared by the federal Government not to be northern. I cannot think of anything more ridiculous.

When I look at the cost of living, the climate, the isolation we face, I do not believe that the federal Government, after last year approving the allowance, now turns around and says that, well, communities like Sifton and Swan River are eligible for the allowance. There are communities on the American border and Ontario that are eligible for the allowance, but Thompson, Manitoba and Wabowden, Manitoba are not eligible.

I have said I can sympathize with the plight of Portage. In fact, I went down with a delegation from our community that I worked on with our Member of Parliament, Rod Murphy, that included the mayor of our community, representatives from business and labour, from the teachers' association, the deputy mayor of Wabowden, we went down to Ottawa. We could not get a meeting with the Minister of Finance, Michael Wilson.

* (1430)

I regret that, but we met with a representative from his staff and from the task force on the northern allowance and we put it straight to the task force that we deserved fair treatment. I want to stress what it means to our community. It means approximately \$10 million, which I calculate is the equivalent of about 400 jobs, the salaries, 400 direct jobs in our community.

More importantly than that, it is a question of principle. If there is going to be a northern allowance in this country—and I believe there should be, I think recognition should be given of our northern communities—that northern allowance has to be fair. If it is to be fair, Thompson and Wabowden should get exactly the same sort of treatment as other communities both in Manitoba and across Canada. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, in this Session that will continue to be one of my major priorities. I have a Private Member's Resolution on this particular issue and I look to the Government of the Day for support on this.

I know the previous Government, through Eugene Kostyra when he was Minister of Finance, wrote specifically to Ottawa and was part of the campaign to get the Northern Tax Allowance for Thompson and Wabowden, and I would look to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and other Members of the Government today to do the same thing that they had done for Portage, and that is stand up for fairness for Thompson and Wabowden in our fight with the federal Government.

I realize it is often difficult with them because of their political ties to the Government in Ottawa. I realize the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) did at one time suggest that they change the name of their political Party here in Manitoba to try and avoid the confusion, but you will have to forgive me, Mr. Speaker, I really believe that is stretching things. I realize they are in a difficult situation criticizing their own Party federally, but I hope on this issue at least, as they have with Portage, they will see fit to fight for Thompson and fight for Wabowden.

Now there are other concerns in the community, some concerns that relate specifically to the actions of this Government. I want to talk about health care. There are particular concerns about the situation at the Thompson General Hospital and I have been in constant correspondence with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) on this issue. There is concern about staffing and funding at that hospital. There is concern, if those problems are not dealt with, there will be more serious problems in the future.

I believe that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) does not recognize the true gravity of the problem. We have six physicians now, general practitioners, as compared to 12 only a couple of years ago. We have major problems in the hospital with regard to maintenance. There are major concerns amongst nurses, and while there has been a response from the local administration, it is going to require the efforts of the provincial Government as well to deal with the health care problems that are developing.

I do not hesitate to use the term "crisis." There will be a crisis if those problems are not identified and dealt with. Yesterday in this House we saw evidence of the difficulty that this Government has in dealing with the health crisis when they refuse to acknowledge the problem in terms of the cardiac units here in Winnipeg, and I know from specific cases in Thompson of just how much difficulty people are faced with and how difficult it is for those people personally, waiting month after month after month.

Yesterday, there was a case that was brought out—and I know about this case personally—where a person was told they would probably have to wait four months initially and ended up waiting nine months, Mr. Speaker. That to my mind is proof of the continuing problems in the health care system.

I want to talk about education as well, Mr. Speaker, because there are some serious problems with education. The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), I believe, does not have a sense of the education system in northern Manitoba. There is great concern, for example, in Thompson about the plans of this Minister

of Education to apparently centralize a lot of programs under the community college in The Pas, and there is concern this will be the first step towards eliminating the programs. The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) knows the programs I am referring to, the ACCESS programs funded under the Northern Development Agreement, the social work program, the BUNTEP program, the Northern Nursing Program, the civil technology program, they are excellent programs.

I believe they could be the basis of a northern polytechnic, a northern university, if you like, but what we are seeing from the current Minister is a complete lack of commitment to maintain any of those programs and expanding on that base. In fact, there are great concerns amongst the programs in Thompson.

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

Mr. Downey: I wonder if the Honourable Member would submit to a question.

Mr. Ashton: If there is time at the end of my remarks, I would be most willing to answer a question.

I want to indicate that there is major concern amongst educators in Thompson because program after program after program has learned that consideration is being given to taking away the autonomy that they currently have. I can tell you that is not acceptable. It is not acceptable for a Government that talks about decentralization to turn around and try and attempt to centralize these programs.

Whether it be in Winnipeg or The Pas, I believe that kind of centralization is not appropriate and, if anything, education is one of the areas where we can be decentralized.

There are so many opportunities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to decentralize education, particularly through the new technologies that are available of distance education. We can have a northern polytechnic that offers courses and programs in every major northern community, and in many of the outlining communities as well, but we cannot have that if we have a Minister who does not come to Thompson and consult with people in the education programs.

The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) here, I know, has taken the time to come to see those programs, but the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has not. He has not dealt with educators in Thompson, and he is making decisions at this very moment, considering possible changes to the education system that I consider to be totally unacceptable.

I want to indicate that the community of Thompson will fight against any effort to centralize or eliminate any of the programs that currently exist in Thompson. We want expansion of education opportunities through a polytechnic. We do not want them to be decreased.

I want to indicate as well that in Thompson there is continuing concern in areas such as the Northern Development Agreement. We are looking to this Government to be negotiating hard to maintain the current Northern Development Agreement. I believe,

without the Northern Development Agreement, we will not only lose many of the programs I just referred, but we will lose many other opportunities for economic development.

I am looking forward in this Session to seeing some real commitment on the Port of Churchill, because in Thompson people are concerned about the future of our Port. It is an important part of our development potential in Manitoba. It is an important part of the North's potential for economic development.

We want to see more than just lip-service to the Port. We want to see a concerted effort that says that it is absolutely unacceptable that the federal Government is planning to ship no wheat through Churchill this year. That is absolutely unacceptable. We have to take a stand for our Port, and we have to demand that the other provinces in western Canada do the same.

You know, much of the catchment area for the Port of Churchill is in Saskatchewan, and the Conservative Government there, instead of standing up for the Port of Churchill, has turned around and cut funding for the Port of Churchill Development Board, the one way it was able to stand up as a province along with Manitoba for the Port of Churchill.

We have to be saying to the vested interest in this country that they have had their run of this country for long enough, and particularly on issues such as the matter of the Port of Churchill. I am sick and tired of seeing vested interests such as the grain companies being able to influence decision makers in Ottawa against the national interest. I truly believe that it is in the national interest, not just the interest of the Province of Manitoba to have a viable seaport, an inland seaport, in the case of the Port of Churchill.

I look to this Government for more than lip-service on this issue. I hope that they will take the matter of the Port of Churchill down to Ottawa in the same way that they took the question of the Portage base closing. You know, in the Speech from the Throne, they did not even mention the Port of Churchill, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

How selective, how unfair, how ridiculous can you get for a Government to stand up for Portage, and I agree with that 100 percent. But as I said before, to ignore the concerns of the communities of Wabowden and Thompson on the northern tax zones and ignore the concerns of the Port of Churchill, how selective can you get on the part of a provincial Government? I support their efforts on the Portage base closing, the efforts of all Members of this Legislature, but let us see some consistency.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, I am going to continue to speak up for Thompson and work with my northern colleagues in the New Democratic Party to speak up for northern Manitoba on issues such as this.

I recently had the opportunity to travel through many northern communities along with the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), the Leader of our Party (Mr. Doer), and the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), and I want to indicate that we went into communities, communities such as Shamattawa, for example, and Brochet. We went into communities such as Gillam and

Churchill and many more communities as part of that tour, a number of communities which I was unable to go into myself. What happened, I think, was exactly what needs to take place in this province.

You know, it is not that often that people in Shamattawa get visits from any politicians, let alone in between elections, but the Member for Churchill, the Member for Rupertsland, the Leader of the New Democratic Party, and myself went in and listened to the people in that community and I can tell you that they greatly appreciated the opportunity to have input on what was happening. That is the kind of process that I am looking to. I do not see much evidence of that from the Government. They seem to be able to charter the jet periodically to appear for a couple of hours in Thompson, then disappear. I have not seen much evidence of that, quite frankly, from the Liberal Caucus. I really think they could look in their own travel schedules which seems to completely ignore any of the outlying communities in northern Manitoba.

I want to say, I represent the City of Thompson, and we welcome visits from all Members of the Legislature, from all Parties, but so do the communities of Shamattawa and Brochet and other communities such as that. I would really suggest that both the Liberal and Conservative Parties look at their map of Manitoba and discover some of the communities that are out there and discover their concerns, because it is important for all Members of the Legislature to be speaking up for that.

* (1440)

Well, I have talked about my priorities for the constituency of Thompson. I also want to talk about the priorities of the New Democratic Party for the Province of Manitoba in this Session. I want to indicate quite clearly that as a Member of the caucus, I am 100 percent behind what is our basic bottom line position in this Legislature, and that is to make this Session of this Manitoba Legislature work. I think that is important and I am going to address that in a couple of minutes because there are some serious concerns that need to be dealt with.

I want to deal with them now. In terms of working families, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the concerns of working families were almost totally ignored in the Speech from the Throne. In fact, I would suggest they were totally ignored. There was no evidence of any indication of any understanding on the part of the Conservative Government of the situation facing working families in this province today, the need, for example, for improved protection in the workplace. There was no reference, for example, to the need to deal with the growing number of plant closures in this province as a result of free trade and as a result of the overall economic decline that is taking place in this province because of the inaction of the Conservative Government. Where is the action on that particular issue? I put a Bill in this Legislature for it on behalf of the New Democratic Party and there has been no action on behalf of the current Government.

I want to talk about the need for improved consumer legislation because that is one of our priorities, Mr.

Deputy Speaker. Once again we are finding ourselves putting forward consumer Bill after consumer Bill and getting no response, not only from the Conservatives but from the Liberals as well, who wish to sit idly by while consumers in this province continue to be subjected to various types of rip-offs, and I can detail them. If I had the time, I could outline a number of cases in my own constituency where people have been ripped off unnecessarily, where legislative action could be taken to prevent them from being subject to those types of situations.

I want to talk about the environment. That is the one thing that was in the Throne Speech, lots of talk about the environment, but I tend to follow the statement made by the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) who said, there was a lot of sustainable rhetoric in that document—maybe non-sustainable, I do not know. I think this Government has no problem on the rhetoric side, but where is the action? Where is the real commitment? Where was the commitment of the previous Minister of the Environment on the ozone layer, on CFCs? There was no commitment. Where was the commitment on the Rafferty-Alameda Dam?

You know, I could not believe after the project was blocked by that court decision and there was a requirement for an environmental impact study, the statements coming out of the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of the Environment at the time. I really could not believe it. After us raising in this Legislature month after month after month the need for an environmental impact study, where was that Government?

They were sitting back doing nothing. But once the courts came in and said, there has to be an environmental impact study, they were saying, me too, me too, me too. Now who is going to believe that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Who is going to believe that this Government had any other idea, any other political agenda, other than not to embarrass their Conservative counterparts in Saskatchewan? It certainly was not to protect the environment. They had their opportunity to speak up in Manitoba, and they did not. These are why we are going to be continuing to raise these types of concerns.

I want to talk about jobs as another concern because right now in Manitoba, we have clear evidence of the difficulties we are facing economically. In Winnipeg, the rate of unemployment currently is virtually the same as that in St. John's, Newfoundland. It is within .4 percent of that province. That is a very serious situation because it can only get worse if it is ignored. Are we going to wait till we have the same rate of unemployment? Are we going to wait until we have a higher rate of unemployment than St. John's, Newfoundland?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, something has to be done. We had an approach under the New Democratic Party. We continued to push for job creation. This Government has rejected that. Where is the alternative? There is no alternative. There is nothing in place to deal with the growing problems of unemployment in this province. Well, the bottom line to my mind with this Throne Speech is that it is big on rhetoric, and in terms of

substance there are some very major concerns, a lot of rhetoric in there but not necessarily the action. Only time will tell on that.

Only time will tell whether we were able to push this Government to act for working families, whether they will actually live up to the commitments that they are trying to make on the environment, whether they are going to do anything on jobs, whether they are going to act on the needs of the health care system and the education system in Manitoba. Time will tell because, quite frankly, I really do not know what the agenda of this current Government is. I really have no idea what their agenda is. I do know that, if they were in a majority position, we would see a major right-wing agenda. We would see that and I want to talk about political agendas in just a minute.

We are seeing now in the minority situation that if perhaps the Government is not doing that much, it is also not doing that much negatively as well. I really say that is because we are in a minority situation. I can outline time after time where the actions of the New Democratic Party, for example, has kept this Government in line, in fact not only kept it in line but resulted in initiatives. That is going to be our approach throughout this Session is to make sure that we keep this Government in line, that we try and make the current minority Government situation work and make sure this Government does not enact a radical, right-wing agenda, as perhaps they would like to do. I would say quite clearly to the provincial Government, if they attempt to do that, I really believe that will lead to an election in this province.

In this Throne Speech, I would say that despite its withdrawals, essentially it is a fairly neutral document and I want to address that in just a couple of minutes.

I want to talk about agendas. I was just drawing up an agenda of a political Party. We will call it political Party X, okay, for a moment. I think it is important here that we look at the realities, leave out some judgments that might be made if we attached a name to this Party. I want to look at their agenda for just a minute.

First of all, this Party would call for the elimination of the payroll tax totally, absolutely totally, no consideration for the impact that would have on programs and services, no consideration for the impact it would have on personal income taxes which might alternatively be decreased. They want to eliminate the payroll tax.

They want to eliminate final offer selection, legislation brought in by the New Democratic Party, a very innovative way of solving labour-management disputes that provides an alternative to strikes without taking away the right to strike.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Sounds like the Conservative Party to me.

Mr. Ashton: The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) says it sounds like the Conservative Party. Let us remember, this is Party X. We are not dealing with whether it is a Conservative Party or whatever it is, for the moment. This Party also believes in profit day care.

They do not see any difficulties in profit day care. Oh yes, and private schools, no matter what kind of school we are dealing with, if it is St. John's Ravenscourt or whatever, there should be a major increase in public funding for those private schools, okay. Pay equity, okay, that is a major concern. This is a major concern now, pay equity, no private sector pay equity, that is too draconian on business, okay? No hydro development, that is the next one, that is of major concern, that is of concern.

An Honourable Member: Liberals, Liberals, Liberals.

Mr. Ashton: Well, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) and the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) are questioning which Party this is. They are against hydro development in northern Manitoba.

No. 6, they support limits on workers' compensation. That sounds like the Conservatives but it certainly supports limits on workers' compensation.

No. 7, user fees in the health care system, this is part of the platform of this Party X in Manitoba, user fees in the health care system. I mentioned Churchill before, refusing to push for a 3 percent requirement. There is some dispute here. Home care should be subject to a means test.

Now I have gotten a nine-point platform for this political Party X. I just want you to stop for a second. I really think the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) might want to listen to this as well, along with the Deputy Speaker (Mr. Chornopyski), because what I have outlined is not fictitious.

This is political Party X in the Province of Manitoba. The reason I use that, I hate to say this but both the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) were right. They were right because this political Party X, the nine points I have just outlined, you can substitute the word Liberal or Conservative for every single one of those nine points.

I think this is important because we have the Opposition Liberals today. They heckle the NDP day in, day out, and they say put your principles into place, call an election, put your principles into place. I want to know where are the principles of the Liberal Party when it proposes an agenda for Manitoba that is no different from the Conservative Party? What are the principles of the Liberal Party saying to the New Democratic Party that somehow we should throw out Party X and put in Party Y with the same agenda. I say to you, we in the New Democratic Party know the true agenda of the Liberal Party is political opportunism and nothing more.

Let us talk about power for a moment. I want to talk about last year and what the Liberal Party said on the Throne Speech. It has been mentioned by the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) but I believe it dares repeating here. As I announced earlier to the media, we will not be introducing a non-confidence motion. It is not in my personality nor in that of my caucus to play games.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

* (1450)

Mr. Ashton: Hear, hear, they say, hear, hear! This was a statement made by the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) last year on the Throne Speech. She was not going to go and play games. What has happened is, I believe, the back-room boys of the Liberal Party nationally have told the Leader of the Opposition it is now or never. Throw away this type of attitude, play the games, try and bring down the Government, it is your big chance politically. What did I say about the agenda of the Liberal Party—opportunism. How can you explain this statement last year in the Throne Speech Debate and the statements made by the Leader of the Opposition this year? There is no explanation.

But you know, in case the Liberal Party is becoming overly intoxicated by the smell of power, I just want to read a couple of quotations to the Liberals and also to the Conservatives, if I might have their attention as well.

Quotation by George Orwell—I found this to be a very interesting quotation given the circumstances of the last year in Manitoba. "Power, power worship blurs political judgment because it leads almost unavoidably to the belief that present trends will continue. Whoever is winning at the moment will also seem to be invincible." I mention that because, if you wanted to define power in that way, there could be no better example than the Conservative Party last year.

Anyone who was in the Legislature at the time of the defeat of the NDP Government will remember the Minister of Northern Affairs leaping from his seat. He was throwing his fists around. They are out, they are out, we are in. They can remember the first week or two of the election, 55 percent polls for the Conservatives. They must have felt it and tasted it. They believed that they had a huge majority just steam-rolling because of the downfall of the NDP Government.

What happened? Compare the Conservative Party of that day to the Conservative Party of today. What power do they wield in Manitoba? They are clinging pretty tenuously if you ask me. Whenever I see the Conservatives of today, I am reminded of Sterling Lyon who used to berate the NDP Government of the time when I first was Member of this Legislature about being a temporary Government, a temporary Government. I think the Conservatives may wish to listen very closely and read those speeches by Sterling Lyon about temporary Governments, because it is a good comment on how the absolute power the Conservatives saw in their grasp last year has dissipated.

I want to deal with that now, with the situation facing the Liberal Party. I really believe what has happened over this last year, as I said, is that the back-room boys—and I say boys because unfortunately the back room of the Liberal Party is essentially that. I do not mean it as a sexist comment. It is a comment on the gender make-up of the back-room people of the Liberal Party. I think they have told the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), play the games, bring down the Government, it is now or never. You have got to have an agenda that is driven by political opportunism and not necessarily an agenda that is driven by your sense of what is good for the Province of Manitoba.

I want to say that should come as no surprise to people. The people of Manitoba over the last year have sort of woken up and you would almost believe there was no such thing as a Liberal Party in Manitoba or in Canada prior to the election of last year. I think the Liberals in the Legislature today would prefer it that way because the Liberal Party historically, both federally and in other jurisdictions, has been a Party of opportunism.

I remember the days when the corporate lawyers would join the Liberal Party en masse. Why? Because it was the Party for connections and it was the natural Government Party of Manitoba, it was in Manitoba, but also Canada. It is a Party driven by opportunism. I want to say that does not mean I do not respect the views of individual Liberals. I believe that there are some progressive Liberals who may have some ideas very similar to ideas that I hold. There are even a number in the current caucus who, I would say, I could sit down with and have some agreement with.

There are some others though who I have absolutely nothing in common with. In fact, it amazes me that a Party can be driven by nothing more than opportunism. It can have within its ranks such a divergence of different views. What can drive them—opportunism, and that is the history of the Liberal Party. There are maybe different factions within the Liberal Party, but there is one thing that history shows is clear and that is, when they form Government in any jurisdiction, it is the right-wing pro-business elements that always dominate. That is clearly the case with any Liberal Party.

I look at Newfoundland, the new Liberal Government in Newfoundland. I want to say to you that Clyde Wells, I think, is further right than the Conservatives. Clyde Wells is further right than the Conservatives.

Let us look at Manitoba. I remember the days in the 1950s talking to people who were involved politically at that time and what was the situation? What was the right-wing party in Manitoba? The Liberal Party. It was the Liberal Party, it was right wing.

An Honourable Member: Campbell.

Mr. Ashton: Douglas Campbell. Let us look at the federal situation. They tried and they did manage to change John Turner's image a bit but he was a pro-business corporate lawyer who had ties clearly to the corporate establishment of this country. He did not speak for Main Street, he spoke for Bay Street. They are trying to do it again.

We have the favourite candidate of perhaps the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), I am not sure about her caucus. We have a Party where you have Jean Chretien who is running, who talks about being a man of the people. Yet he is more closely tied to the corporate establishment in Canada than virtually any other Liberal candidate. I mean, Paul Martin is definitely tied and so is Jean Chretien.

I find it interesting that the Liberal Party, you have a situation where Lloyd Axworthy, who to my mind—and I say this quite truthfully—should be a serious contender for the leadership, but he is telling his fellow

Liberals that he cannot run because he is not sure he can raise the half a million dollars or more that is necessary in that Party to run a serious leadership campaign. That is surely a comment on what is happening.

I would say to the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) that she might do well to consider very carefully her support for Jean Chretien. I respect him for his public service in Canada, but I really do not believe that Canada needs another establishment corporate-tied lawyer. I think what we need is a true main street Government.

I am saying this because I really believe the only situation, there is an exception, I think, to where Liberals are actually progressive in Government, and it has only been when they have been in a minority Government and when they have been pushed time and time again by the NDP. I look in Ontario, the most progressive Government in that province, in the province's history was when the NDP wrote the agenda because by themselves the Liberals could not write the agenda. The ironic thing is the next most progressive Government in that province was under Bill Davis in a minority situation when, for example, he brought in plant closure legislation, pro-plant closure legislation, legislation which neither Party, either the Conservatives or the Liberals whose leader has said it is too draconian on business, has supported despite the fact it has been put forward by the New Democratic Party.

So what is the bottom line as I sit here today? Quite frankly, I do not believe that the Throne Speech has a lot to offer. I do not believe it is as negative as it otherwise might be, and I certainly do not believe that the Liberals with their amendment to the Throne Speech motion, which in the last paragraph says it all—they want an election. That is what they want. I do not think they know necessarily why or what the issue might be. They know they want an election. I am sure the pollsters have said, now is the time. If you can just get at that election, that power will be in your grasp.

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

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): I guess I have not been on my feet often enough for you to recognize who I am. I would like to first congratulate all Members for returning for another Session to the House. I would like to congratulate the Speaker and the new Deputy Speaker particularly for his new role. I know it is a little difficult at times because we are a little unruly here and there. The most unruliness is over there though, we must admit.

I would also like to welcome the new Pages to the Chambers. I think it is five ladies and one fellow. Is that not right, Candice? Welcome to the Chamber. I would like to welcome back the staff, the one new member introduced yesterday and hope that our deliberations do not unduly grey their hair in the coming months.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome two Members to our Cabinet. The new Minister of

Natural Resources from the Interlake (Mr. Enns) and the Minister of Labour from Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond). Welcome to our side and welcome to the deliberations of Government. Very clearly, the efforts that we have put forward in the past year have indicated to the public at large in Manitoba that we have been doing a reasonably good job of running a minority Government. We have operated in a fashion, as the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has indicated, that tends to accommodate the different points of view. This Throne Speech attempts to do that, attempts to do what the public of Manitoba would like to see done.

I clearly have to wonder what the Liberal agenda is when they say for any reason that we shall call an election in the Province of Manitoba. It is purely a desire for power, as the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) just said. Last year, they said the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) said this. This year, it is grab for the mantle now. It is there. If we do not do it now, it is fleeting and it is gone. I can assure the Opposition Liberal Members that their future is drifting off into the sunset. They are losing whatever position they had with the electorate a year ago. The poll that was conducted by the NDP was very revealing. I kind of liked the results: 72 percent in favour of where we are at, 18 percent against. Now the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) may want to say something about that somewhere down the road, but the figures are fairly—well, I do not mind talking about the figures.

There is no question that from our side of the House, it is our desire to make a minority Government work. I would like to see a response from the other side to try to do the same.

An Honourable Member: For a long time.

* (1500)

Mr. Findlay: For a long time. The NDP are clearly taking that responsible position. For that, I congratulate them.

I would like to spend a little bit of time talking about the farm community in Manitoba. We have talked about it to some extent, far too often in a negative sense in the past year. The farm community has gone through the 1980s. I guess, in some people's mind, it is a repeat of the 1930s, periods of dryness in a general sense across western Canada. A farmer can do a lot of things in terms of making good management decisions, but one thing he really cannot manage and for which he has no real control, and that is the weather.

I guess there is another factor that he has very little control over, and that is the actions of Governments around the world, particularly actions by foreign Governments like the United States, like the European community in terms of putting in place programs that unfairly subsidize agriculture that makes us non-competitive. The farm community has faced both those challenges throughout the 1980s, adverse weather and adverse Government policy elsewhere in the world. I think our farm community has done a very good job of adapting and trying to adapt and respond in a positive fashion to these adversities.

This past year, 1988, was certainly the worst low-moisture period we have had for a long period of time

in Manitoba and western Canada. We all know about the programs that we put in place to try to address that. The Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) asked for some details on what happened with payments under that program this past year, today. Clearly, the programs we put in place seem to work quite well.

The Greenfeed Program that was the first one in place June 29 of last year, we budgeted \$9 million, a joint federal-provincial program. As it turns out, some \$8.5 million was actually paid out, so we are fairly close to our target. In that process, some 518,000 tonnes of feed were generated last year which seemed to do a good job of having feed available for the livestock population this past winter, because it turns out we did not encounter a feed shortage throughout the winter of '88-89.

The other program, the Livestock Drought Assistance Program, which was really a \$60 per head program, had targeted some \$17 million for the livestock sector, again a joint federal-provincial program. We have ended up paying out some \$15.5 million, the first two-thirds in a payment about three months ago and the final third is just going out now as I said today. The final third was contingent on producers signing up for the Livestock Feed Security Program this year.

I would like to tell you there was some adverse reaction to that position that we took some six months ago, requiring that sign-up for this year. I said at that time the reason we would put that condition in place is we did not see there was any guarantee of forage production for 1989. Clearly, it is unfortunate that we are basically in that position.

We have gone through a winter of relatively low snowfall through a large portion of Manitoba. Only the southeastern portion had any significant level of snowfall, and a bit of the southern part. We have had very little spring rains so our pastures are in difficulty because of very low moisture and a very low reserve. Our forage crops for this year are, if anything, under severe stress right now. So our forage production, it is going to be difficult to see a significant or sufficient quantity produced for this year.

Because we put that restriction in last year's Livestock Drought Assistance Program, our enrollment in livestock feed security has gone from 1,986 last year to 6,600 to 6,700 this year, more than a threefold increase in enrollment. I am sure those producers, although they may have criticized the fact they were forced into it a little bit by the carrot that we put in front of them, I am sure as the summer goes along will be quite happy that they at least have that degree of security, in terms of they are going to have some insurance money to buy feed.

It is pretty easy to say money is going to be there and you are going to buy feed. I tell you, I can say to the farm community right now and we will, in the coming weeks, advertise this to some extent that money itself is not going to feed your cattle. You are going to have to do something this coming summer to stimulate the production of feed on your farm. If your native forage or your normal hay fields are not going to produce

enough forage for you for the winter, you are going to have to consider doing something.

Consider the fact there may well be money coming from the insurance program. Do something on your farm to stimulate the generation of feed. Whether it is a Greenfeed Program or conversion of existing crop into forage is a decision they are going to have to make. We are very pleased to see the level of sign-up that has occurred this year. I think it will be very helpful to the farm community when the forage production comes up short this fall, as we predict it will. Just for your information, last year, we had around 20 percent of the beef herds signed up under that program; this year, 75 percent, so a very significant increase.

The other area I would like to touch on a little bit is the price actions or subsidy actions by other Governments. Everybody knows what the European community has done over the past number of years, of unfairly stimulating production and dumping that production on the world market. The United States has continued to use an export enhancement program where they subsidize export sales of wheat and corn to other parts of the world where we actually try to compete in selling, particularly in the wheat area.

We have seen the United States become quite upset with the level of hog production that we have in this country and the fact that we are exporting hogs in ever-increasing numbers down into the United States. They put in place a countervail on live hogs in 1985 and have chosen in the past few months to proceed towards putting in place countervail on fresh-chilled and frozen pork, which is going to have a significant negative impact on the price our producers receive for exported pork.

I find it very unfortunate that although we negotiated a Free Trade Agreement and the spirit of the agreement was not to put in place countervail action, the agreement did not in itself legally prevent countervail. I find it disturbing that the attitude in the United States is still that protective attitude of putting in place countervail to prevent free trade across their borders.

* (1510)

Certainly, the initial ruling from the Department of Commerce has put in place 3.5 cents per pound as a countervail. That ruling will not become official until some time in the summer or late fall because the Department of Commerce is going to give their final ruling in July. Then the International Trade Commission will rule on it to determine the level of damage and then I do not doubt that if it is followed through step by step and that countervail is actually put in place that it will appear before the Free Trade Agreement dispute-settling mechanism is in place.

Clearly, it is a very negative impact on our hog industry in Manitoba and we have made strong representation to the federal Minister of Trade, Mr. Crosbie, to address this issue, first, with the American counterparts, and if they do not back off, then we should take this issue to GATT and ask if they will not rule on whether this is in the interests of fair and reasonable trade, this countervail action that they are bringing upon us.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, because of the impacts that we saw last year on crop production in Manitoba and the fact that the Crop Insurance Program that was in place was criticized for not having in place sufficient insurance, consequently many farmers' incomes were severely reduced. There was an obvious need for improvements in the Crop Insurance Program and we have in this province over the past number of months been stimulating the federal Government to look at a joint review of the Crop Insurance Program. That has occurred. Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Ontario have been moving in the same direction.

We have had a major review take place which has culminated in a report coming out, a federal-provincial crop insurance review discussion paper. This discussion is now in front of the farm community. Meetings will be held within two weeks with the farm community to give them an opportunity to assess the improvements that are indicated or requested or suggested in that summary report.

Certainly 1988, as I mentioned in the House several times, we only had 47 percent of our acres signed up in crop insurance. Over the course of the winter, we made some small adjustments in the Crop Insurance Program.

First, we introduced a floating level of coverage, a third level of coverage. We now have low, medium, and floating, which gives the producer a dollar per acre coverage of somewhere, for wheat, around \$95 to \$110, a significant improvement over the \$65 per acre he had last year. Many producers have responded very favourably to that. We have had the southern part of the province go from a 70 percent level of coverage up to an 80 percent level of coverage.

Those two factors together plus probably the fear of another drought in '89 have stimulated the considerable increase in sign-up in crop insurance. In the all-risk program, we used to have around 12,500 farmers signed up. This year it is up to 14,500. As I indicated earlier, last year we had 47 percent of the acres signed up. This year, it looks like it is going to be two-thirds of the acres in Manitoba. So we have got a significant number of additional producers enrolled in the program.

There are some improvements that are in place for '89 in the all-risk program, and this review paper is going to propose additional improvements for 1990 and beyond, such as a higher level of coverage, a higher percentage level of coverage, somewhere up in the 85 percent level, and a basket of crops kind of proposal for producers to insure themselves. Right now, it is on an individual crop basis. Some producers are looking for a basket-of-crops approach. All these will be discussed with the farm public and, hopefully, the final decisions on what improvements for 1990 and beyond will be made in time for the 1990 crop year.

With regard to the Livestock Feed Security Program which I have already talked about in terms of the increased enrollment, there are some improvements suggested for it in the future. This past winter, because of the problems that existed with the monitoring process, we have identified a major need to redetermine

the monitors, to be sure that they adequately represent the municipalities, as in addition, when we offered the program, this re-offer produces the option of purchasing the insurance on a municipality basis or on a soil zone basis.

I can report to you that in the increased enrollment of some 5,000 producers, the majority, about 80 percent chose the soil zone method of determining their level of coverage. That is surprising because there was such criticism of the process of monitoring, I was surprised that they went for the municipalities over to the soil zones to such a degree.

The other thing I would like to just mention to you is that the level of coverage that they chose out of the Livestock Feed Security Program has increased tremendously this year. I said the numbers increased earlier but the actual level of coverage in terms of choosing what dollar per cow figure that the producers wanted, they could choose anywhere between 60 and 220. They chose 170, which is quite high.

Certainly what we are trying to do is produce a program on a national basis that meets the needs of the producers and put in place premiums that producers can pay so that they can take out the voluntary level of protection, voluntarily enroll ahead of time, and get away from ad hoc programs. We have had difficulty with ad hoc programs, as you well know, and the desire is to get away from them in the future, and I think what we are doing in crop insurance is a move in that direction.

The other area I would like to talk on briefly is price protection insurance. I have talked repeatedly in this House about tripartite programs and we in the province, because of pressure from producers, have enrolled in programs in the past as hogs, sugar beets, beans, most recently cattle and lamb, and also in honey.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reason we get enrolled in these programs is because producers have a lot of financial risk every year, whether they are producing cattle or whether they are producing beans or whether they are producing honey. A large amount of money goes into the production with no assurance that they will get that money back. Producers want some degree of security that a certain level of income will occur. That is why they want these programs. I can assure you the response of producers in enrolling is quite good. In hogs, it is over 90 percent, sugar beets and beans also over 90 percent enrollment. In cattle, we just had a sign-up of about 4,000 producers out of 6,000, so that is two-thirds. In lamb, we have 115 producers out of about 150, and in honey the enrollment is just going on right now.

The honey sector, it is in some way a bit unique in that they are out there producing honey, but the fact that their bees are out in rural Manitoba, they are also doing a tremendous service in pollination. We want to see honey bees remain in rural Manitoba because of that pollination role. In terms of their ability to get adequate return from the marketplace, they have been in difficulty for the last three or four years, partly because of subsidy programs in the United States which has kept the market price low. Producers here claim

that their cost of producing honey is about 55 cents a pound. They are getting in the marketplace the last two or three years around 40 cents a pound. Anybody can do that kind of arithmetic and determine that you are not going to stay in the business very long, and very clearly we have had producers backing out of the business. We had 126,000 colonies some three years ago, 86,000 last year, and we are down to about 70,000 colonies this year.

We have made some decisions in our department and in the Government that we need to support this industry. As I have already mentioned, we have enrolled in the tripartite program, but we have also put in place an ad hoc program, which we do not like to have to do but we felt we had to put some money into the industry to bridge them over for another year to hopefully get better market prices. We put in place approximately a \$700,000 special program which will return to producers about 5 cents a pound in addition to the market. The tripartite would give them another 9 cents. If you take the 40 that they are getting, plus nine and five, means they are getting about 53 cents a pound and cost of production, 55. So they are happy to have that level of additional Government support, but they also say it is not by any means going to put money in their pocket in a profit sense. It is only going to keep them going for another year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have had considerable discussion with the farm community about these programs. We have had a series of 24 meetings dealing with the enrollment in cattle tripartite program. Part of the meetings were dealing with the future of the stabilization program, the tripartite program. We also dealt with the winding up of the Manitoba Beef Plan which has been in place in this province since 1982. The consensus of those 28 public meetings was to wind it up at the end of June and that is the direction we are proceeding in.

At that time, any producer who is enrolled in the plan and is in good standing will have his deficit written off approximately a year and a-half prior to the end of his actual contract. If he has any surplus in his account, that will be returned to him. Producers seem to be reasonably pleased with that approach and the level of enrollment in tripartite is quite high. All provinces have joined those plans with the exception of Quebec, who have desires to have even richer programs in place than what those represent. Those programs in general, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are set up to give producers what we call stop-loss kind of stabilization. It is going to guarantee them 80 percent to 90 percent of his production costs. It does not guarantee him a profit, and I gather the Province of Quebec would like to go even further.

* (1520)

We also have in place a Western Grain Stabilization Program, which is run by the federal Government to help the grain industry stabilize grain incomes. That program has paid out a lot of money in the past few years. In '86 and '87, it paid out about \$1.4 billion. It does not look like it is going to pay out very much this year because of higher grain commodity prices.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we have a whole series of programs that I have touched on briefly here, there is always somebody who sits back and says, "well, is it really meeting the needs, really doing the job that was intended?"

By and large, in terms of stabilizing incomes, I think it is doing a respectable job. But now we see a heightened awareness under GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, about these kinds of programs existing in this country, and there is some concern in the present round of GATT that there may be a challenge brought to the table with regard to these programs that we have in this country. So we have had a development of some other methods of delivering income stabilization to the farm community.

This past winter, a group of farmers took around a discussion paper on "Grains 2000" looking at ways and means of supplying individual income protection to farmers for all the commodities they produce. It is a reasonably complicated process, it involves producer and Government participation. This process had a considerable amount of discussion in the farm community this past winter and will continue to for some period of time. It would involve winding up all the existing programs and moving into this one program, which I think we will be seeing some difficulty to do that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this past winter, the Department of Natural Resources and Agriculture got involved in what we call a land and water strategy, a very major initiative to address the shortage of moisture in Manitoba and the problems we are having with erosion. The Minister of Natural Resources conducted some 10 meetings on water strategy and my department conducted some 24 meetings across rural Manitoba on land conservation. The idea is to see if the public attitude is right to look at programs that will stimulate, particularly in agriculture, significant improvements in the methods of conservation.

What we are talking about is really nothing new in terms of conservation. It is retaining the soil where it should be, where the resource can grow crops, prevent wind erosion, prevent water erosion. It means leaving cover on the fields, it means planting trees, it means water retention structures on farms and in municipalities to slow down the rate of water removal from the municipality and from Manitoba. Many farmers realize that it is not any good to have water in the spring particularly drain off their farms and into the rivers and up into Hudson's Bay and gone into salt water. Come around about July, it is not doing them any good, so there is an attitude that maybe we have been stimulating some of the wrong practices in farming over the past 20 or 30 years, where we have—and I will say that I am as guilty as anybody else—gone and we have large equipment and we move all the trees and make it convenient to work the fields. We want to get rid of the water in the spring so we can work through all the low spots, so we drain the fields. That works okay in high-water years, but we have been in low-water years now for some time.

I can assure you that we went around and talked about these principles. I tell you what we were saying

was almost a reversal of that attitude. Let us have some trees, let us maintain some water on our land. I expected some farmer to stand up and say, hey, you get the heck out of here. You are telling me to do something that is opposite to what I believe is right for farming. Not one soul got up and said that. Everybody agreed in principle that we have to be more conservation conscious.

We have had the announcement of the Centre for Sustainable Development and clearly agriculture can play a major role in sustainable development. What we are talking in conservation is really sustainable agriculture, a method of being able to maximize the utilization of our resource today, the land and the water, and to be able to retain that resource in a maximum productive way for the coming years. The coming years are 10, 20, 200 years way down the road.

The attitudes of the farm public and the urban public in the meetings that we held were very positive in that direction. But how do we achieve that is the big question. We have attempted in the past to do it through education, and I think education is a good route, but we have not proceeded fast enough because we have seen the kind of wind storms of the past few springs, and we had another one this spring that put a lot of dirt into the air and distributed some where it should not be.

So we have to find ways of stimulating people in a more constructive sense to practice conservation. We, hopefully, will be signing a Soil and Water Accord with the federal Government in the coming weeks that will put in place some money in the province that will be used to stimulate different attitudes and conservation. We want to use the federal-provincial money to work with local associations like soil water associations or conservation districts, to use that money to work as a group in the community to do some of the right things in terms of water retention, promoting farmers to use conservation tillage, promote the utilization of marginal lands for wildlife as opposed to farming.

I am sure that all people in a responsible position in the agriculture industry realize that we have to continue to move in this direction. If we reflect back on some of our policies that we have had in place in this country over the past few years, some of those policies have been negative to agricultural conservation and negative to sustainable development. One I will just throw out is the quota policy under the Canadian Wheat Board. That quota policy allows you to sell grain on the number of acres you have cultivated. So it stimulates you to cultivate acres whether it is marginal land or not. Take poor producing acres and try to produce crops out of it, that is negative to conservation. We have to look at those kind of policies in the light of conservation and direct them or change them so that they do a better job of meeting the need of orderly marketing and at the same time be conservation conscious.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one other area that we are going to become increasingly aggressive in, in my department, is the marketing area. We produce high quality products, high quality oil seeds, cereal grains, and meats in this province. We have the grading standards that do a

good job of guaranteeing that quality to our customers, whether it is a domestic person or whether it is somebody outside of the borders of Manitoba or outside the borders of Canada. We have a very good reputation in the quality of product we produce and those grading standards that guarantee that quality.

I had the good fortune of going on a marketing mission to Japan where we looked at—really focused on red meats—selling red meats into Japan. We also dealt with such issues as wheat sales, canola sales, buckwheat sales, honey sales to that area of the world. They have such a high opinion of us. I mean I felt good at being a Canadian and a Manitoban and a farmer and an agriculturalist before that. When I came back, I felt even better because they have such a high regard for our ability to produce high quality food. We come from an area of the world that they deem to be environmentally clean. We do not have a high population density, we do not have a high industrial density, we do not have nuclear reactors. They look upon our ability to produce clean, high quality food as being first and foremost.

We have done some work in the past through the private trade, particularly in trying to penetrate that market. But we have to continually work with that country, with other countries in southeast Asia if we are going to increase our sales in that direction in the coming years.

We will probably see real opportunities in the pork sector in the future, particularly for processed pork. We will also see real opportunities in the beef area because in the next year and a-half import restrictions on beef going into Japan are going to be lifted, and the prediction from Japan is that the amount of sales of beef into that country will probably double in about two years.

* (1530)

The Japanese consumer is very particular in the quality of food that they buy. We visited many retail stores and we saw all the foods on display and they do a marvellous job of displaying foods and making it attractive to the consumer. In the meat sector particularly, they really do a good job of presentation. They presented their pork as being lean meat, the same sort of product that we produce here in this country, but their beef is quite a different story. They like very fat and heavily marbled beef. It is about half fat, half lean, and when you saw it on the counter it was very attractive, but when you cooked it, it was called shabu-shabu (phonetic)—and you dipped it in boiling water, is really what you did, and it just shrunk. All the fat went out of it and you ate it very quickly. It was very tasty. It is a ceremonial meat for them.

They are wondering themselves what the consumer of the future in Japan will eat in the way of beef. They think there will be the traditionalists and the ceremonialists who will want to eat the very fat beef that they produce. I will tell you when we went to the slaughterhouse and saw the carcasses hanging, there was that much fat over the back of those beef. I mean, it was pretty thick.

The retailers and the wholesalers and the trading companies do believe that the Japanese consumer will move towards a leaner product in the future because they are health conscious or cholesterol conscious. They will still want some of that traditional ceremonial fat beef, but they will probably want some lean beef. So we have an opportunity to penetrate that market. I know that the United States has been very aggressive in that market, Australians have been aggressive in that market, and we will have to be aggressive in that market.

Another little message they gave me while I was there is that they do not want beef produced with hormones, which is something we do. It is an issue we are going to have to address with that kind of marketing if we are going to penetrate it much in the future.

While I was in Japan, I had the good fortune to visit the Minebea Corporation. Basically, they produce ballbearings, they produce computer chips and they took us through their two plants, very impressive plants. They are really world leaders in both areas, but as you saw the announcement not too long after we had returned, Minebea has also formed a food division and have invested in Manitoba in terms of a hog breeding farm, with the idea that they are going to produce breeding stock here and ship those breeding stock into southeast Asia, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, where there are fairly extensive commercial hog-producing operations, but they want high quality breeding stock and they want it as disease-free as possible. That is why those hog-breeding farms are located in this province.

So we hope that we see the expansion that is predicted for that industry. We hope that it will stimulate the swine-breeding sector, the swine breeders in this province. We understand that they are going to use four different breeds to create the final cross that they want. I hope that we also have other breeding stock from other breeders in this province who will also go directly into southeast Asia because of the presence of that company here.

I am very pleased to see them locate here because I can assure Members of this House that there was other provinces and other states that aggressively pursued that investment, and they are still attempting to get some portion of that investment in their direction.

Another area that we have acted on and as was announced in the Throne Speech was an increased tax relief for farmers in terms of the education tax the farmers are paying on bare land. It has gone from 25 percent up to 35 percent. I think it will be well received by the farm community.

Another area that we have made some action in, or proceeded to try to develop opinions on, and the Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) is here this afternoon and I know when he commented in his speech the other day about the Red Meat Forum. He said, well it is good enough to sit down and talk but you need action. I can tell the Member that this Red Meat Forum was formed as a result of the Manitoba Agriculture Services Coordinating Committee requesting that this forum be put in place so that the various players in

the whole red meat industry could get together and talk about the problems that they face. It is not just looking at trying to stimulate processors in this province. That is one major issue that needs to be addressed, but it brings together all the players from producer organizations through packers and university people to try to work together for the good of the industry.

The other area that we have made an announcement in—I believe the press release went out yesterday indicating the members of the Minister's Agricultural Agri-Food Advisory Council. I would like to tell the Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) who was a little sceptical about whether we would include the Pools, if he looks at the list, the Pools are included along with UGG, along with the university, along with the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, and four producers at large appointed by KAP, one the president, one representing the red meat sector, one representing supply and management, and the fourth one representing the grain sector, to try to get an overall perspective on how we should address any change to the method of payment which we all expect the federal Government will lay in front of us as a proposal in the coming weeks.

The idea of this advisory council is to address the issue in totality with regard to what is good for the Province of Manitoba, what is good for the agricultural industry of Manitoba, and to see if we can, amongst all those groups, come up with a consensus position that we can proceed with. I do not guarantee that will occur but we are attempting to achieve it through this process. We are going to be moving as quickly as we can to look at all the issues that need to be looked at in the process of deciding how to address the proposal when it emerges from the federal Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, approximately three weeks ago, there were some fairly serious fires in rural Manitoba. I went up to Ashern and saw the impact that fire had up there. It was very devastating to see how a fire could just burn everything in sight. It even burnt out on top of black land, as far as I could see from the air. I mean, it was incredible. It went through and took out homesteads; it took out entire farmsteads. I think some 22 people lost their houses and some 35 farmsteads lost some of their buildings.

I was amazed at how quickly the people responded up there. I was up there about five days after the fire and already the insurance companies had been in and settled with the majority of people. One couple who I talked to had lost their home. They had gone out to fight the fire and two hours later they heard that they had lost their home. They did not even know the fire was moving in the direction of their home. Within two days, they had the settlement and on the fourth day they were already over in Portage buying a trailer. It was being moved onto the site on the sixth day, so they were getting hooked up and getting back into life fairly quickly.

I met them at the rink in Ashern where they were picking up some clothes that had been donated. This was a curling rink and the entire curling rink was full of clothes that had been donated from people all over Manitoba. There was food in there, there was furniture

in there, and there was still a truck coming loaded with furniture. The guy who was donating the furniture was also donating the truck. I mean, that was the kind of good-natured attitude, the giving attitude of people in terms of helping people in need.

The Mennonite Central Committee moved in a few days later and are assisting the farmers in building fences. Some 320 miles of fences have to be rebuilt. We have seen prairie fires and we have had farmers, they burn the ditches and that. It never burns fence posts, but that fire was so hot it just burned everything, old posts, new posts, it just cleaned them out, so we had thousands of cattle up there with no control, no fencing.

In my department—and I will congratulate the staff members who got involved—they went out and assisted the farmers in corralling the cattle. They obtained two weeks of feed and the municipality, working with my department, ordered in thousands and thousands of fence posts which they were distributing to farmers. There was a little bit of a record keeping going and some day they will balance everything out.

The Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) has made an announcement on disaster assistance, and it is going to be very welcome in that area in terms of getting the dollars there to help them to pay for trying to recover from losses that were non-insurable.

The other thing I was very pleased about when I was up there—and I said 22 houses were burnt—I was very pleased to find out that of the 22 houses burnt, 20 people had insurance of some level. I was surprised and relieved to find that to be the case. One of those individuals who did not have any insurance had also lost his house to fire 10 years ago, had no insurance that time, has no insurance this time, an extremely unfortunate situation.

* (1540)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see my light flashing. That means my time is probably close to up. I would just like to say that I am pleased to support this Speech from the Throne. I am pleased to see the support from the New Democratic Party and I would just ask the Liberal Party to reassess their position and look at the positive initiatives here. We are here in this Chamber to represent our constituents and do what is good for the Province of Manitoba. Seeking power for the sake of power, I do not think should be on anybody's agenda, and I do not like the comment. I am sure that the Members opposite do not like to have it read to them that Sharon Carstairs does what Sharon Carstairs thinks is right for Sharon Carstairs. I think that is very negative and I hope that you do not believe in that sort of position. Thank you very much.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): When we look back on ancient civilization, we are reminded of the many philosophers and poets who did pay tribute to the knowingness of man. One such philosopher, Sophocles, spoke of man in an ode in Antigone and he said, and I quote, "There are many fearful and wonderful things but none is more fearful and wonderful than man. He makes his capital

in the storm-swept sea and he harries all earth with his plow. He takes the wild beasts captive and he turns them into his servants. He has taught himself speech and wind-swift thoughts and habits that pertain to Government. Against everything that confronts him, he invents some resource. Against death alone, he has no resource."

Now these philosophers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, paid tribute to man for his difference from other primates, for his ability to understand that law and order was necessary, and for man's ability to understand that there needed to be orderly change in society, and in order for that to occur there must be some form of what is called Government.

These thoughts of ancient philosophers come to mind as we enter the second Session of the 34th Legislature. One quickly recognizes how significant a parliamentary system such as ours is. It is part of the significance of the parliamentary tradition and the parliamentary right which compels me to respond to this Government's Throne Speech here today.

Before I do, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me first welcome all my fellow MLAs back to the Legislature, and may I specifically congratulate the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond) in her appointment to her new portfolio and the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) in his appointment to his new portfolio. I also congratulate the new House Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Ashton) and also the new Deputy Leader of the New Democratic Party (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis). I am sure that they will do honour and integrity to those positions.

I do welcome back Mr. Speaker as well. When I was looking at the maiden speeches from the last Session and having perused them, it was quite interesting to note that many of us lauded the appointment of the Speaker to the Chair and we all had very, very high expectations of what his performance would be. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can say that Mr. Speaker certainly has exceeded all those expectations, and we look forward to his continued guidance and leadership, his tolerance, and particularly his good humour.

It also gives me pleasure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to congratulate you in your appointment to the position of Deputy Speaker (Mr. Chornopyski) and I can assure this House that my honourable friend from Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) brings with him not only knowledge and experience but, more importantly, integrity and gentility to this important role.

Politicians should be renowned for their oratorical skills and abilities, and we know that many books have been written on the subject and that the profession of politician should be synonymous with statesmanship. I would be pleased to share any of these readings on statesmanship with the Tory Government, but particularly I would like to share those particular readings with the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

The Premier's Office, one would think, should bring with it a decorum and the Premier should be setting an example for all colleagues in the Legislature, for his staff and for all of Manitoba, but time and time again this particular Premier resorts to personal attacks and

innuendoes rather than addressing the real issues. The Premier cannot seem to be capable of fighting my Leader on issues and facts, so rather he resorts to vicious attacks, attacks about her personal appearance, her I.Q. and her voice. I suggest to you that is not very becoming of a Premier of Manitoba. Perhaps to gain insight into the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) thinking, he himself said it best when the other day, May 29, he quipped across the floor, "ask a low-road question, receive a low-road answer." So the Premier is incapable of rising above what he considers low-road questions.

I think the Premier has yet to reconcile, in his own mind, how one Leader who is a woman can be so popular with Manitobans and not just Liberal Manitobans. He cannot reconcile in his own mind her credibility with the public with the fact that she is a woman. I certainly will not go into the many sexist comments that have come across the floor from Members on the Government side because I do not feel they are worthy of repeating in this House.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Oh, poor, poor, poor girl.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have just noted that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has noted "poor, poor, poor girl." I would take objection to that statement. I certainly feel that all women in this Legislature should be called "women."

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): A point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would concur with the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray). I think it is only appropriate that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) indicate the new commitment on behalf of women and not degrade them by terms of youth in this manner.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to add my words to that. I think it is about time that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) was called to order on this particular question. He does this repeatedly in this House.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I agree. I realize my honourable friends do not have anything in substance to debate and I apologize to my honourable friend, the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray).

Mr. Alcock: Well done.

Ms. Gray: I thank the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) for that apology.

Mr. Orchard: You are welcome.

Ms. Gray: I feel, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) should probably take some lessons from a couple of his colleagues in terms of what statesmanship is and decorum in the House. Those two colleagues would be the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) and the Minister responsible for Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). I can honestly say that those two individuals do carry out their

responsibilities in this House with decorum and statesmanship. I certainly hope that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) can take a lesson from his colleagues.

I did listen with amusement to the Government Members and the Members of the third Party in their attempt to ridicule my Leader (Mrs. Carstairs). It would appear, as one reads through Hansard and listens to the comments in the last few days, that as you read between the lines it is very, very obvious that in all their comments there is pure unadulterated envy. These two other Parties are envious of our Leader, who always maintains integrity, who has the highest principles and who is tremendously admired by each and every one of her caucus.

As we were listening to the comments the other day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by the Members of the third Party and particularly by the Members of the Government, many child-like comments and this on-and-on business about "silly." I think as usual the point was missed by the Government. There was exception taken to the phrase "silly and cute," which is a sexist comment. As usual, this particular Government has had difficulty in understanding that particular issue.

As we listened to these comments the other day from the Government, I was reminded the other evening by a particular book, the Book of Job, and there were words that were well worth repeating, I think, in this House today. I particularly direct these comments to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). In the Book of Job it was written, and I quote, "Wrath killeth the foolish man and envy slayeth the silly one."

I have listened with amusement as the two Parties, as well, have feebly attempted to quote the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) totally out of context. I was somewhat surprised by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) who also used that phrase today, but nevertheless the quote is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, "Sharon Carstairs does what Sharon Carstairs thinks is best for Sharon Carstairs."

My Leader was referring to her decision as one Member of the Liberal Party, as one delegate, as one individual who would be supporting her particular choice in the candidate, Jean Chretien, in the upcoming leadership race. I do not feel that our Leader has anything to be sorry about in those particular comments. I would suggest to you that these two Parties, these other two Parties in the House, are very, very desperate indeed when they must resort to taking comments so totally out of context in order to try to make some type of points with Manitobans.

* (1550)

The third Party, Mr. Deputy Speaker—and the ex-House Leader speaks of my Leader's arrogance. Well, what is their record? Are they voting on this particular Throne Speech on principle? Are they voting according to their convictions? They sit in this House and they stand in this House and they talk about this Throne Speech and all the deficits of this particular Throne Speech, yet they have decided to support the Government. Even Members of their own Party are

concerned about the actions of this particular Party in the House. Is it really arrogance of my Leader? No, it is arrogance on the part of the New Democratic Party, for they have lost their convictions and their principles. They have used the guise that Manitobans do not want an election. They believe that Manitobans do not want an election. That is probably true, many Manitobans do not want an election in this province.

We have just had a couple of elections and we know we have heard comments back, but is it not up to Opposition Parties to stick to their convictions and their principles when they believe that a particular Throne Speech is not good for Manitobans and not to base their vote on a Throne Speech based on how they think they will do or not do at the polls? Let us let the Manitobans decide on that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we reflect on the past year, and I recall many campaign promises by this Tory Government and promises to the people of Manitoba that their way of Government was a better way, a better alternative, and they attempted to indicate to the people of Manitoba that they were good managers. Good managers, what does one think of when we think of good managers? We think of qualities such as leadership, ability to negotiate, supportive relationships with staff and the public, communication skills with staff and the public at large, and problem-solving skills. Can any of us here in the House honestly say that this Tory Government has met the criteria of being good managers?

When we look back over the past year—and I will not dwell too long on this issue—we see issues where certainly their ability to negotiate, to communicate with the public and to problem-solve are sorely lacking. We look at the fiasco with the Foster Parents' Association. We look at the fiasco with the psychiatric issue in Selkirk and Brandon. We look at the difficulties and inability to create and have a Seniors Directorate that actually functioned. My Honourable Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) talks about the Seniors Directorate, and we will get to that as we discuss the Throne Speech.

We talk about good managers having the ability to deal with staff. Well, although the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) does not want to believe this, he and the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) have a crisis on their hands in the Department of Health and Community Services in relation to the services that are being delivered and the poor staff morale. I recall the Minister of Health when he was in Opposition, indicating to the then Minister of Health, Mr. Desjardins, indicating that to him in Estimates that he had grievances on his hands, he had legal action being pursued, he had Human Rights Commission issues, and that he had very low staff morale indeed. We could take those very same quotes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and apply them to this Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), because they apply as much today as they did two years ago.

The other day we heard the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) say that her Government had done some things right in the past year and I must agree with her, they have. They removed an ineffective Minister responsible for Seniors and they gave two other Members of that Government portfolios

who were deserving. So, yes, we can agree that there were some things this Government did right.

Let us move on to this document that is called the Throne Speech. Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us look at the department which is now called Family Services. This Government chose to rename the Department of Community Services and amalgamate it with Economic Security and Employment Services. Now you can change the name of a department very easily, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but you do not change the types of services and programs that it delivers, so as much stigma possibly that the name Community Services had with it, that stigma or those concerns are not going to go away just by renaming a new department.

Now if they had asked me to name this particular department, I might have suggested that, given the past record over the past year of Community Services, we rename the department the Department of Study and Stall, for we have seen this Government and the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) do study after study, conduct review after review, and then little or no action.

When we examine the Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we hear the Throne Speech quoting, "The new department has a series of initiatives that will be pursuing over the next year," and there are 10 points which follow along this statement of intent in the Throne Speech. Let us examine those 10 points.

The Government promises to release the report of the Child Care Task Force and this Government, yes, did release the report. There is no ministerial statement that accompanied that particular report but there was an indication that 37 recommendations within that report were being implemented or acted upon immediately.

Now this may sound good but, when you review those 37 recommendations, you see that the majority of them are fairly operational, internal types of procedures or changes that could be made within the department, and then you look at the news release accompanying the release of the task force and you see where the Minister has correctly identified key areas that need to be addressed, staff salaries, more training for child care workers, an increase in day care spaces, but do we see any action or implementation on these crucial areas? No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do not.

This Government also states its intention to address spousal abuse and the abuse of children. Well, my question is, how? Will we see programs in the women's shelters strengthened? Will we see services for male batterers? Will we see a comprehensive province-wide coordination and training program through Family Dispute Services for the training that needs to be carried on in these shelters? I hope that we do but, to this point, we have not seen anything. I believe that it is important for the grass-roots organizations across the province to participate in developing training modules, but that coordination and the resources for training must be the responsibility of the Government. We have seen literally nothing from this particular department over the past year in this area.

We are pleased, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Government has finally recognized that abuse is a crime.

The Liberals, however, and women's groups and other groups across the province have recognized this fact for years, but I suppose we are certainly not surprised that the Tories as usual are lagging a few years behind everyone else in the province when it comes to human service issues.

We see a statement that the federal Government will be urged to consider family violence as a crime. Well, given the unprecedented relations between this Premier (Mr. Filmon) and his Government and his federal colleagues, my faith in that comment is somewhat lacking.

We are told in this Throne Speech that we will be seeing legislation regarding the reporting of third-party abuse. We welcome this legislation. We welcomed that particular legislation in the fall but we noted that particular legislation was so poorly drafted in the fall it had to be withdrawn from the Order Paper. Certainly there are a few of us on this side of the House who would be glad to assist the Government in redrafting this legislation, should they ask.

* (1600)

We also note within the Family Services purview that pension legislation changes will be announced. We have not yet heard what these particular changes will be, but we certainly hope that there will not be any regressive legislation and that this particular Government recognizes that pensions are to be used as future income and are not to be used as bartering tools at the time of marital break-up. We will await that particular legislation.

We hear a statement about sole support parents receiving social allowance and that now they will have access to Legal Aid. Yes, that is fine, but where is the rest of the information or initiatives in the whole area of social allowance in this Throne Speech? There is not any. We had a promise last year from this Government that we would look at the one-tier welfare system. As yet, we have a committee struck. There is no firm commitment on the part of the Government to make changes that are required, which particularly affect women to a large extent, and there is no commitment for them to make changes in the area of social assistance.

Then we have a statement about the Seniors Directorate. How this Government could actually write in black and white that the Seniors Directorate will continue to inform is beyond me, when the whole Seniors Directorate has been a fiasco from Day One. We had a situation where the Seniors Minister actually distributed supplements of his department in this House, which indicated the functions he and his department would be carrying out. They were the exact functions that were under the purview of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and it was quite obvious that the Minister of Health was not aware of what was being done in the Seniors Directorate.

So we have an example where the Tories get this bright idea and think that is a good idea—we believe in seniors, we are going to create a directorate—but then they go no further because they do not know what

to do with it. That is why I asked the question today in the House to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Hammond). They talk about a Women's Health Directorate. The idea may sound nice, but they have to really look at what that directorate will do, what the responsibilities of the directorate will be, what authority they will have, what accountability they would be, and how they will relate to all the other directorates within the Department of Health. We do not want to increase bureaucracy for the sake of a name, Women's Health Directorate. We want some services and some action and some coordination. I do wish the Minister responsible for the Status Women luck on that particular issue.

I noted with some disappointment and sadness, actually the other day, when the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) asked some very valid, legitimate questions to the Minister who is now responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) about the Seniors Directorate. I was very much disappointed in his shallow rhetoric answers. I actually had expected more from that particular Minister. I was even further disappointed when, in the Minister for Seniors' Throne Speech response, he indicated, "I am very proud of my colleague's activities," very, very much concerned that the Minister would feel that there were some accomplishments in the past Seniors Directorate. I do hope that the Minister who is now responsible for Seniors will take a close look at the issues affecting seniors, will communicate with them and will be up front in answering questions which are valid questions and not just playing politics and mixing words around.

Mr. Downey: Are you serious?

Ms. Gray: The Minister responsible for Seniors asks, am I serious. Of course, I am serious. I am serious on behalf of all seniors in Manitoba.

Then we have in the Throne Speech a paper on elder abuse. We have been waiting for this paper for some time now. There was a shell report that was done in 1982. There are certainly enough experts in the Province of Manitoba. We have a gerontologist who is world renowned, we have a centre for aging at the University of Manitoba, we have a lot of experts and very involved people who are internationally known and this Government, with all those resources, cannot even come up with a White Paper on Elder Abuse—very shameful, Mr. Deputy Speaker, very shameful.

This Government talks about new abuse treatment, registrations and support programs to assist child abuse victims. We hope that we will see such information and such programs in the future, as indicated by the Throne Speech, but we do remind the Government that we hope that they are consulting and communicating with the various Child and Family Services Agencies and other community agencies in this particular area. We do not want a repeat scenario where the Government comes up with all these programs and says this is the way it is going to be and yet they forgot to consult with the very agencies who will be delivering those programs. We do encourage this Government to work with those agencies in furthering along treatment programs in the area of child abuse.

This Government talks about a first step for implementing training for staff providing services to the

mentally handicapped. I found that statement in the Throne Speech quite interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I do recall asking that very question in Estimates last year in the fall. At that time, the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) indicated to me, yes, we have some of those training programs in place, we have some staff available. So I was assuming this had been happening since last year. I am not quite sure why the Government decided to put this in as an initiative in this particular Throne Speech.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): We will have to find out when we have a Budget.

Ms. Gray: The Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) says we will find out when we have a Budget. We heard those statements from her last year all the time. It was wait and see, wait and see. When we get the Budget, we still will not know and we will have to wait until the Estimates process and by that time the year will be three-quarters over.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Family Services commissioned a Wiens Report which cost the taxpayers of Manitoba \$75,000.00. That Wiens Report, and I give credit to the author, was well written but basically the recommendations that were contained within were recommendations that you could find within Hansard Journals, because they are questions and comments that have been on the record by this Opposition. You could find that information as part of recommendations by various community groups as well, who have met with this particular Minister.

What has happened? We had a Minister of Family Services who indicated, yes, we have increased the monitoring to residences. That was news to the residences and it was also news to the staff in her department, because they had not seen one piece of policy that had come down to their level that had indicated there had been an increase. Now they are working on it but she already announced it six weeks ago. So somewhere along the way we have got the cart before the horse.

This Throne Speech speaks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to opportunity for all. Now I thought that was an interesting statement because I do find it somewhat hypocritical and contradictory since no way in this particular Throne Speech is there the mention of poverty. We talk about access to education and equality of education. Let us talk about equality of education to people who live in the Inner City of Winnipeg and many of those constituents I represent. We certainly know the risk of poverty as outlined by the National Council on Welfare is clearly linked to education. We know that 4.2 percent of families who are headed by a person with a university degree live below the poverty line, compared to 14.4 percent with only high school education, and 16.7 percent of families led by those with only elementary schooling.

We know that education and access to education and equality of education can very much be linked to issues that relate to poverty, that relate to the social assistance system and the transient nature of individuals who live in the Inner City, who feel they must move

from poor housing conditions to other poor housing conditions and whose children move and do not remain in schools for a long period of time. Yet we heard no mention at all in this Throne Speech about the issues of people who are on social assistance, who are on unemployment, who are in the low-income level, absolutely no mention at all about the issues of poverty, no mention of all the homeless youths and individuals, no mention at all about the problems and the concerns that are in the Inner City of Winnipeg. I found that rather disturbing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that an entire group and population of individuals would not be referred to, and there would be no programs or concerns that would be outlined for those particular people.

We were pleased to see there was some mention of some job opportunities for women in the area of small businesses. We are pleased that we will see some of those initiatives but there has to be a lot more. I get numerous calls every week from women between the ages of 35 to 55 who may have not had the education and now are faced with trying to find jobs. They are now widowed or on their own and their skills are very limited. What opportunities are there for these women? Very few. If you look at the existing programs available for women, they are oftentimes for younger women or they are for immigrant women, specifically, or they are for Native women. No one seems to take into consideration that group of women from the ages of 35 to 55. They too are finding themselves living at a subsistence level. There are a lot of good years of work and contributions to the community that they could make, if only someone would give them an opportunity. We very much hope that this particular Government will look into some programs or job opportunities that will specifically deal with that group of individuals.

* (1610)

You saw this Throne Speech talk about initiatives for the disabled. We were told there would be a Speakers' Forum on the Status of the Disabled Persons in Manitoba. We certainly support that particular forum. But the forum which will increase awareness to Manitobans still does not do anything for the barriers to employment that these disabled people face in our society today. I know the Minister responsible for Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) and the Minister responsible for Health (Mr. Orchard) have heard stories time and time again about the barriers that the disabled people face in the Civil Service and without the Civil Service.

I think it is incumbent upon this Government not just to have speakers' forums regarding the disabled, but to actually look at the programs that they do not have in place within the Government system that need to be in place to support the disabled people gaining in employment areas. Being an ex-civil servant, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know the difficulties that it is for a disabled person to try to break into the Civil Service system with the systemic barriers that are in place. There has to be some concerted effort for the Minister responsible for Affirmative Action (Mrs. Hammond) and the Minister responsible for Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) to deal with these special issues.

One thing which I have told the two Ministers of Health and Family Services last year, one of the things they

need to do in regard to the disabled is, first of all, figure out who is going to serve that particular population. There are constant disagreements between the Department of Health and the Department of Family Services about who is going to provide services to some of these disabled. So what happens is the two departments fight and argue with each other for weeks on end, and meanwhile the person is out in the community not receiving service from anyone. I think that is shameful, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There was a committee that was to be established last year and we have not heard anything yet as to what the results of that committee are. Someone needs to make a decision on that issue so that the needs of the disabled can be much better met.

We also did not hear a lot about affirmative action in this Throne Speech, but then we still really have not seen an implementation policy from this Government after a lot of rhetoric and wonderful thoughts and long sentences strung together from the former Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission. He talked a lot about what a wonderful job was being done—

Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, may we have a little quiet and decorum from the other side of the floor, please?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Thank you.

Ms. Gray: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We still have not seen an affirmative action policy or implementation plan from this particular Government. The Minister who is now responsible for Corporate and Consumer Affairs (Mr. Connery) said yesterday in his sexist comment about my voice being shrill, he indicated that I had come out with shallow thoughts and no good suggestions in the area of affirmative action. I beg to differ with the Minister. I feel that if he does read back on Hansard he will find that in fact myself and my other colleagues on this side of the House came up with some very good suggestions in the area of affirmative action. We have further suggestions in the area of equal employment opportunity in the Civil Service. The Civil Service Commission needs to look at better educational leave policies for its staff, more flexible hours of work which would affect women in particular, and needs to look at job-sharing and job-splitting.

Now we have a policy from the Civil Service Commission that says they agree with it in principle, but that does not trickle down into the management level and it does not translate into actual job-sharing and job-splitting positions. So he needs to put some teeth into that particular policy, and I leave that as a suggestion with the Minister now responsible for the Civil Service Commission (Mrs. Hammond). Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could probably talk for another 40 minutes on the whole area of health but my colleague from Kildonan did an admirable job of that the other day.

I find with interest the news release that we have just received indicating that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) will be committing \$10 million of Lotteries funds to health promotion programming. Now I would assume when you see health promotion programming,

one assumes that is programs and services on an ongoing nature which will be carried out by the Government. One would also assume that since directorates are responsible for program content, evaluation and developing of policy and that the services are delivered at the district level in the communities, that in order for those services in these new initiative areas to be delivered properly it will require further resources in the area of money, but particularly in the area of staff allocation.

Is the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) then suggesting that out of Lotteries funds we will start paying for staff salaries? My question then would be to the Minister of Health, what happens when those Lotteries funds flatten out? Do we then let go the staff? Do we then disband the programs that have been started? We certainly do not want to have a scenario where we begin some good programming in the area of health promotion in the community, only to find out that the money runs out. Of course, that would be the first program that would be cut because it would not be considered a statutory program. It would be considered a luxury program which, I think, is very unfortunate if that happens.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to make a comment, since my time is running short, on the area of home care. I know the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) would be very upset if I did not at least put a few comments on the record. This particular Member of the New Democratic Party, I would assume, has an understanding of the elderly in the community, I would hope, and their vulnerabilities.

What the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) attempted to do was to fearmonger among the elderly in Manitoba. I am not sure he realizes the increased number of calls that the Home Care office has received from elderly, who are literally terrified that their home care was going to be cut off because of this fearmongering by the Leader of the New Democratic Party. I frankly find that very, very upsetting that someone would use our vulnerable elderly in the Province of Manitoba for cheap political gain. I did want to put that on the record because that very much concerned me.

Having worked with the elderly people, they oftentimes read the papers and they look at something and they think, oh, it is in the paper, that means my home care is being cut off. I think the extra work it created on the staff, but more than that, the fear that it created in the elderly was unforgivable from the Member for Concordia.

I see that my time is running short, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I would like to finish by saying I fully support the amendment put forth by my Leader in regard to this Throne Speech. It is not what has been in the Throne Speech so much but what is not in the Throne Speech. Certainly, my other colleagues have talked about the lack of employment opportunities, the lack of programs and services, and really there is a lot of rhetoric in this Throne Speech but very little action. In fact, I thought it was a typing error when it said, "My Government has set out an active agenda." I was sure that they must have meant "inactive" but, be that as it may, I thank you very much for your time.

* (1620)

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): I wish to begin my comments on this Throne Speech Debate first by extending my personal congratulations to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) for your elevation to that particular post. I know that I have passed you in the hallways many times and in caucus meetings and over dinner, you are one of those fair people who truly, truly extends to others the kind of understanding that you expect all people to have for each other. I think no better person in this caucus, on this side of House, could have been chosen for this position, and for this I extend my congratulations.

Mr. Downey: I hope that is not a reflection on your colleague who was there before.

Mr. Herold Driedger: No, it is not a reflection on my colleague who was there before. The Minister for Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) tries to impugn a little bit of competition here and I think that is not correct. The Member we had there before chose to wish to become a little bit more combative and that he could not do from the Deputy Speaker's position.

I would also like to extend some congratulations to the new Ministers on the other side of the Chamber, particularly the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) and the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond) and the Ministers who have adopted new portfolios. I would also recognize the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) who is now the new New Democratic Party House Leader. I feel that the more people on this side of the Chamber and on the other side of the Chamber who take some concern for the rules and workings of the House probably would do a good deal to improve the conduct of how this House operates. The more Members who can do this, the better it will be.

I would also like to extend some congratulations to our own House Leader, the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), who came to his job one year ago, and I feel has done a superb job—

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Exemplary.

Mr. Herold Driedger: —learning on the job—exemplary, as the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) says—rose to the challenge. I wish to simply say, a job well done. Also I would like to extend congratulations to the Deputy House Leader from this side, the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), who is going to learn to do exactly the same kind of work.

I wish to also acknowledge the new critic responsibilities that we have here on this side of the House adopted. I believe it has changed the face of the Opposition somewhat. It added a change in face, besides to which we add the year's experience, a very obvious change—Opposition that is scrappier, more aggressive. It is this desire to do battle, I believe, that the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) misconstrues as being, and I think he used the term "arrogance." It is

not arrogance when you know that you are ready to do a job. It is not arrogance, for example, if we can simply refer to some of the people who are engaged in competitive sports such as Donny Lalonde, the boxer, or a racer. A person who is asked before a race, how do you feel you will do? They do not say, I am running to show; they do not say, I am running to stand up; they say, I am running to win, I am fighting to win, I am basically going to win. That is not considered arrogance. That is something considered the adrenalin rush and it is that adrenalin rush that we, on this side of the House, have and that we will deliver when necessary.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Are you ready now?

Mr. Herold Driedger: Absolutely. The Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) asks me if I am ready. The answer is yes, unequivocally yes.

For me personally, this is the second opportunity that I have to debate a Throne Speech and it gives me a chance to reaffirm my personal commitment to my constituents. It has only been one year since the election, when we on this side elected many novice politicians. We were faced with monumental challenges and also with unprecedented opportunities. I would like to indicate, in case the Members opposite have not yet come to realize this on their own, the challenges were met and the opportunities have been taken.

I think we here will be -(Interjection)- I think the comment from the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) being thrown across the floor suggests perhaps that we were a little bit too quiet in the past Session. I think what happened is that we essentially did some learning. The quality and the calibre of the Liberals who were elected, the MLAs, I believe, made the Government realize in the last Session, even though we were quiet, that there was quality and calibre elected to these benches. Even though the newspapers and the television reporters may not have picked it up at the time, we are a force to be reckoned with. I believe that when you are a force to be reckoned with and when you realize you are ready, you criticize and you oppose from strength.

We took a year to study the issues. We took a year to develop alternatives. Yes, we were quiet, we were not timid. We were quiet but we were effective nevertheless.

The Tories seemed to be surprised at the energy of the new Liberal Opposition. They cannot seem to get over it. What we hear now and still see tossed across the floor constantly, because they cannot seem to find a better term, a better epithet is the term "adult day care centre." I suggest that perhaps what they should be looking at is to consider that the past year was more what you do in school, you learn and you develop the ability. Perhaps what we have here is secret envy, the Tory Government perhaps looking forward to or looking back to their halcyon years, their years on the opposite benches, the Opposition benches. Halcyon, for those Members who are not aware of the term, means "calm and untroubled." It is their stress, their disbelief the Opposition has some teeth here to which

I feel I can only attribute to envy. Basically, I think what they should be watching for is that their choice of words in epithet does not become their epitaph.

At any rate with that, let me begin to make some comments with respect to the Throne Speech itself. I would like to begin my comments by perhaps referring to the comment made by the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), the Member from Arthur when he first spoke his defence to the Throne Speech. He said and I quote, "The amendment is pretty weak gruel. The amendment that was put forward by the Leader of the Liberal Party. It was pretty weak gruel." I suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is not the amendment that is weak gruel but rather it is the Tory "agenda" and I put the term "agenda" in quotation marks that is weak gruel. It is a weak agenda, it is a document with no vision.

In fact, the Member for Arthur, the Minister for Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) had difficulty in actually defending the record and defending this particular Throne Speech. They finally utilized the words, not my own now, but the words of the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) who stated that all we heard from him—and he is referring to the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs—was some "rather transparent puffery for which he is well known and a lot of bravado and bluffing and even a bit of blustering."

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Well, Sir, I do not particularly feel that it was bravado. I think perhaps it was just simply weak, weak defence of a weak Throne Speech. We hear very frequently in this House, Mr. Speaker, the word rhetoric. It is banded about in this Chamber as if it is some sort of Rosetta stone of analysis, so I will avoid using that term. Instead, the Throne Speech and its defences, to my mind, are like a dry and dusty wind, devoid of any content, any moisture content, desiccating, holding little promise but of the drought to come.

The Government claims, Mr. Speaker, that Manitoba's deficit is under control. It certainly is better than it was under the NDP, but why? There are two reasons for this statement: No. 1, the NDP tax grabs of the defeated Budget which is still on the books, I might add, which has not been reduced. They have not been taken away by this particular Government. The other reason for the good showing why the deficit is in a better situation is the windfall mining revenues. Well, taking credit for the fact that the situation is now a little bit better is not bad in itself. I would do the same in your position. Let us not delude ourselves into thinking that all this is a result of good management. It is not. Accidents are accidents, windfalls are windfalls and fate can be capricious. So in recognition of this fact that fate can be capricious, we have a tentative, timid, wishy-washy, weak-kneed, do-nothing-but-hold-on-to-the-status-quo Government, afraid to make decisions.

One would think that after years in the wilderness of Opposition the Tory policy makers would have developed policy platforms that would be creative, original and fraught with promise of good management and good Government for Manitoba, but do they have a legislative agenda? No, Sir, Mr. Speaker.

We heard in the first term reviews, studies, and audits while they sought to find out what it was they should have been doing while they were in Opposition. Well, all the problems have been studied and we know the answers to most of them, and nothing has been done. The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) says they know the answers, but do those answers get reflected in the Throne Speech in an agenda? No, they do not.

* (1630)

In the first term, there were many answers that could have been introduced. They did have the chance to develop policies and you also had—and it has been referenced in this House by several speakers already—that there was on this side of the House the support, the decision to vote with the Government's agenda in the previous Throne Speech. When you had the spirit of cooperation and good will, did you use it? No. You had the chance to be bold. Did you use it? No.

So what happens in the second term? The second term's Throne Speech speaks about more reviews and more studies and workshops, and I have not heard the term to be used yet, but I suspect more audits. We hear directorates are going to be established, directorates whose mandates are still to be determined. I just simply think, shades of the Seniors Directorate which was announced in the same way and still essentially leaves us hanging, waiting for some sort of announcements. We hear of discussion papers still to be produced. They were asked to be produced in the previous Throne Speech as well.

Well, it seems to me that all of this is simply a way of postponing the necessity of making a decision, the postponement of having a legislative agenda. I say if you are in a position of leadership and that is what you are supposed to be because you are Government, then lead. If you are bereft of original, creative ideas, then do the honourable thing—step down, follow, let someone else lead. Do not postpone. I mean, you have a chance. Use the fact that cooperation is a watchword and utilize skills of cooperation rather than this business of simply holding the line.

Instead of doing this, what do we have? We have a Government that seems to feel that lottery funding should be developed into some sort of magical source of Government revenues. It suggests to me though that we have a Government that should be put in touch with Gamblers Anonymous. They are gambling on the future. They have no plans, they have no vision, they just hold the line and hope or, if I may put that into the gambling phrase, hold the line and dream.

We are told also by the Conference Board forecasts, and it is also referenced in the Throne Speech, that a 4 percent growth is anticipated in Manitoba in 1989, but why? Four percent growth sounds very impressive. Well, that 4 percent actually simply means investment, but it does not tell you what kind of investment. Is it new investment? Is it investment in something that has not been here before, or is it replacement for what has been allowed to deteriorate?

We all know what happens when machinery is allowed to run down. Eventually dollars are needed. If I may

refer to the Investment Dealers' Association Report, they actually indicate when they reference the same business that there is going to be this increased investment activity in the province, that this increased spending reflects needed replacement investment which has been postponed in recent years. If it is replacement investment, it does not indicate new investment, it does not indicate new jobs, it does not indicate a new direction.

I am reminded that several years back, listening to a conversation by somebody saying that when the universities capital spending budget was released that no money was being allocated for the repair of the plant, and they were not referring to the heating plant or the air-conditioning plant. They were referring to roofs that leak, floors that collapse, walls that no longer were basically holding out the elements. That kind of replacement, when you permit a situation to develop where your infrastructure is allowed to decay, actually means that you are postponing the inevitable. The postponement is like mortgaging your future. It is pay me now or pay me later, and it is this Government, in gambling on its ability to skate into another election before the—and I put in quotes—"troubles begin" and it is skating along on gambling profits, on windfalls and on unanticipated transfer payment increases which were brought on by an economy that did not perform as well as the Canadian average.

So, to help them in the interim, their active agenda—and I heard the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) actually reference the term "active agenda" as well—the active agenda of the Throne Speech counts on studies, on reviews, on discussion papers, anything to delay the necessity of decision.

This Opposition is doing the same in Opposition. We are also studying and reviewing and developing papers, only we will have our policies and programs ready when we sit on the other side. I have heard us being called "arrogant," Mr. Speaker, because it is simply the fact that we are ready to do what they said they were going to do but, instead, when they crossed over, they were not ready and now, because recognizing we are, it comes across the floor, arrogance, Mr. Speaker. It is not arrogance, it is simply being ready, the adrenalin rush. If we are a little bit passionate, a little bit enthusiastic in this, I ask for your indulgence.

The Throne Speech states that the Tories have adopted an approach to economic growth which recognizes the interdependence of our economic, environmental and social well-being, which they reference in the Throne Speech as being sustainable development, and what is more, Mr. Speaker, it is maintained that this is the cornerstone of the Tory agenda. With that, let me look at this cornerstone.

We have heard referenced in this House that people do not really understand what the term "sustainable development" means, and I know that the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) did attempt to try and define that. I am going to try and do it differently. I will actually read into the record the three objectives of the World Conservation Strategy, which are often referenced by the Members opposite as the Brundtland Commission.

The first objective is to maintain the essential ecological processes and life support systems of this planet; second, to preserve genetic diversity and; third—and it is this third one that is the Tory focus most of the time because this is where the term "sustainable" first comes in—is "to ensure the sustainable utilization of species or ecosystems." It is this last definition where you have "species or ecosystems," and the last term "ecosystems" that is your critical term.

The Tory definition of sustainable development is synonymous with responsible management. Now the two terms are not synonymous but this is how they are used and they use them interchangeably. The resources that they focus on, the resources that they actually pick upon are agriculture, forestry, minerals and hydro-electric generating capacity.

If we just take into account the downplay of the research centre on the environmentally sustainable development, which was—and I still hear is going to come to Manitoba, not knowing where—but when I take a look at the number of dollars that have been committed to it, only 3.5 percent of the promised amount that was committed, only \$5.2 million of an amount that was supposed to be \$150 million, I feel very strongly that there is no chance that definition can change in the minds of those Members opposite. It is going to stay at responsible management, and that is not what sustainable development means.

* (1640)

The questions that need to be addressed in the light of those three objectives of the World Conservation Strategy are, and I am going to refer to those four resource areas: No. 1, farming or agriculture. How can our mechanized farming methods continue to support the agricultural requirements of an increasingly populated world?

In contrast, we can take a look at the agricultural practices of China, a highly labour-intensive, a highly productive husbandry of soil, concern for the environment, which has permitted the same soil to produce abundantly for over 2,000 years. Contrast that to what happens here in Manitoba or, not necessarily singling out Manitoba, but essentially in North America.

Our agriculture is characterized by soil erosion brought either through water runoff or through dust erosion, through salinization, through the fact that herbicides and pesticides run off into our aquifers, and land that is to be drained for efficiency so that you can get onto it more quickly in spring. This actually, in the end, undoes the need for slower runoff. Marshes are drained and we have undone the natural drought-proofing that was here.

All this has happened in fewer than 50 years. So it is this kind of a question that needs to be addressed by the Centre of Sustainable Development, and it is this kind of thing that must be addressed by a sustainable development policy. We need to start looking at how we can change things to guarantee for the future, not by simply managing what we have now in a better fashion.

Secondly, on forestry, how will turning over the control of 20 percent of the province's forest resources to one company or, if you want, one man's control guarantee a sustainable forest resource for future Manitobans? In this instance, we have to refer to the second objective of the World Conservation Strategy, which is to maintain genetic diversity.

We have heard in the Repap deal that the harvest or that the cut will be 100 percent replaced. Now that is not going to be replaced with an abundance of different types of trees as we have now but rather with single crop silviculture, single crops which are very susceptible to single kinds of devastation.

Furthermore, the bottom line for a corporation, which is to make money, means to cut your forest and leave as quickly as possible. In this area where we are going to allow a company to cut and cut and cut, whether it is clear-cut or strip cutting or whatever you want, the end result will be that after 15 or so years there will be little left except 15-year-old seedlings which need to wait another 65 or 70 years before they will be allowed to be harvested again. By that time, I think the situation will have changed considerably.

Besides which, when you start talking about single crop silviculture you are also going to start talking about spraying for pests, perhaps spraying for containing weed species of trees, so essentially the second criterion fails again with this particular deal.

The third objective of the World Conservation Strategy speaks about sustainable utilization of species, about utilization. I would like to draw the opposite Members' attention to the Swedish model of forestry just for a moment. Now, mind you, I recognize immediately before a comment is thrown across the floor that the Swedish model cannot be adopted in Canada because we have a much larger country. The Swedish model looks at small plots of privately owned land. I said this will not work in Canada. However, we could have in the Repap deal, we could have looked at large community resource areas, managed and operated by local people practising a form of social forestry with a chance to tie in the economic, the social and cultural aspects of their land, of their ties to the land.

We often hear of farmers with their particular affinity for the land while in the North, in our northern region, particularly in this area where the forest resource was committed we have the aboriginal people who have the same sort of affinity for their land.

Before we forget, it is not just simply a concept here for how to use the resource but also we are talking about a massive company, a large company whose motives are generally different than the social welfare of the state, the same company that operates as a good corporate citizen in Sweden, in New Brunswick, where it got a cutting area, simply applied a let us cut and run and leave behind nothing but clear-cut devastation philosophy. It is this aspect of the corporate will as opposed to the aspect of what people's attitude actually is that determines how our resources should be utilized.

The third focus on the Throne Speech focuses on our mineral resources. The very act of utilizing our

mineral resources contradicts the term "sustainable development," yet we happen to need these minerals. So how can we accommodate this multiple use, environmentally sound, culturally and anthropologically cognizant development and allow it to take place at the same time while we are utilizing mineral resources?

This is not addressed simply by the term "responsible management." Responsible management implies minimal damage. Sustainable development stresses the utilization of the resource while respecting alternate multiple uses to take place. There are many different people in many different parts of the world who live in mutually antagonistic lifestyles. I take, for instance, the pastoral lifestyle and the industrial lifestyle, the traditional lifestyle and the mainstream lifestyle.

Sustainable development research would bring these two dissimilar uses together and harmonize them. Where in this Repap deal, which I referenced earlier with forestry, were our aboriginal people involved? Multiple use is not always defined as what mainstream society sees as a use—resource management, recreation, employment. Other people's needs need to be worked into the equation, need to be considered too. I would like to consider these terms in that particular aspect: the word "spiritual," the word "lifestyle," and the word "quality of life."

Lastly, on the four areas chosen in this Throne Speech as to be developed or as part of the environmental cornerstone is hydro-electric generating capacity. When Hydro first looked North to those mighty rivers flowing untapped to the sea, the catchword, the watchword was "develop a clean, environmentally safe, renewable energy." That was the watchword. We know better now, do we not?

Hydro-electric development creates damage to the land, to the habitat, to the water regime, to animals. It causes flooding and it has social costs, economic costs which take away livelihood, which flies in the face of the term "sustainable utilization of the ecosystem." Yet, in the Throne Speech, we hear again the term "developing our natural resources as an engine of growth for rural and northern Manitoba" and all couched in terms of protecting the environment. Mr. Speaker, this bespeaks an attitude that is reminiscent of the '60s and the '70s. This bespeaks an attitude that says "conservation not sustainable development." This bespeaks an attitude that is paternalistic, and I maintain it is not appropriate for the '80s and it is not appropriate for the '90s and it will be even less appropriate for the first decade of the 21st Century.

The Government's stress on the environment simply acknowledges the reality that today being an environmentalist is socially acceptable. Today it is a motherhood statement. It has almost a biblical turn of phrase. If I may quote a biblical phrase, "by their deeds shall you know them." Is this Government really committed to the environmental consciousness necessary to guarantee the first objective of the World Conservation Strategy, to maintain the essential ecological processes and life support systems? I think we can. It probably has been stated in this House many times already by other speakers that in this particular area the Government has failed specifically in

addressing environmental needs. There is the willingness to sacrifice southern Manitoba without an adequate environmental impact assessment regarding the Rafferty-Alameda situation. Drought-proofing is more than just digging a few holes and damming a river. It requires an entirely different attitude.

* (1650)

Determining it was a commercial agreement, a full environmental impact assessment of the Repap deal was not necessary. Both of these indications go far beyond the short-term environmentalism we have heard from in this House and in committee.

If I can continue just a little bit further, the Throne Speech goes on to say that despite this, an agreement to provide more and better monitoring of water quality within Manitoba is being negotiated with the federal Government. Trans-boundary water protection continues to be a concern.

I am not reassured by this statement because we have similar indications of either a Government overlooking or a Government putting its priorities in different baskets. What negotiations, I ask, are now under way with the Saskatchewan Government regarding the water quality of the Saskatchewan River? Not only is it being used as a sewer, its flows as well are being cut, are being curtailed.

Where is Manitoba's trans-boundary water protection in this instance? We do not need trans-boundary protection only from the South or, as we heard in the House today, from Ontario. Before we became environmentally conscious in the late '80s, the former Government in 1969 signed the Master Agreement on Water Apportionment which allows Saskatchewan and Alberta to hold back two-thirds of the water normally flowing down the Saskatchewan River. The Saskatchewan River is five to six feet low, Mr. Speaker. When you lower the flow of a river by five or six feet, that causes drops in water tables. It causes drops in water levels in marshes, it causes marshes to dry up, it has severe impacts. In this area of Manitoba, we do not have shield country and consequently we need to have a position by this Government in that instance.

Further to the North, a similar instance where trans-boundary downstream impacts are being felt in Manitoba are experienced in the Island Falls Dam on the Churchill River. Here we have had a 15-foot impact downstream affecting Pukatawagan in northern Manitoba. Now, another dam by Saskatchewan Power is being constructed downstream of the Island Falls Dam. We have already had severe impacts. This particular dam is not going to cause any change in those impacts. However, the dam will probably cause more impacts. Where is the Government in this, because these impacts, which are ecological impacts, have economic results which affects social, affects how people live, it affects society? When you take the livelihood of people away from their traditional way of living generally, if there is no other alternative, they are forced to resort to welfare, and that is hardly a proud way to allow people to live.

I do not know how much time I have left but at any rate let me speak for a while . . .

An Honourable Member: How many minutes have you got left.

Mr. Herold Driedger: Minutes, only? Okay, all right. Let me speak more quickly then, Mr. Speaker. My critic portfolio is Northern and Native Affairs. In this particular instance, I noticed the Government's agenda for Northern and Native Affairs for the northern development was very thin indeed. I could read the comments in the Throne Speech of 1988 which referred to northern development, which were left untouched. The record shows nothing about them. I could read the comments in the 1989 Throne Speech which simply indicate they are going to build on this. There was nothing to build on, so what we are left with is simply a training program, a commitment to obey the law and another promise to bring forward a strategy. This is thin gruel, indeed.

I am disappointed, like other speakers in this Chamber, that there was no mention of Churchill by this Government in their Throne Speech. Now, this particular port is strategic in importance. It is an inland port on the third ocean. It has national significance and its survival depends upon the federal Government to make some sort of commitment. We have heard that the NDP has a proposal to put pressure onto the Wheat Board. What they wish is to have the federal Government pressure the Wheat Board into guaranteeing 3 percent of the country's exports to be shipped through Churchill.

I suggest that in addition to this proposal there is another option as well, and this is the one that I have initiated. I have actually introduced a Private Member's resolution which calls upon the federal Government to consider Churchill as the port through which Canada will ship its humanitarian aid. It will not cause any reduction in any other port because the total shipment in humanitarian aid, tonnage wise, is the same as what would normally be shipped through Churchill in a good year. I think perhaps, if between the two Parties we decide that some pressure upon the federal Government can be maintained, and if the Members opposite were perhaps to support us in the same kind of thrusts, we could get some kind of commitment to the federal Government which would overcome their centralist type of thinking and centralist kind of objectives.

Lastly, before I am completely shut off here, I would like to mention to the House that the Throne Speech has an impact on my own constituency as well. Although I had some comments to refer to, some of the comments previously made by speakers, I will pass them over to rather take a look at what it is they are focusing on with this Opposition. They are saying that the Opposition is now opposing and they resent that. I think that is what we have to do. Our role in Government is to—and I view the Government advisedly—oppose not only how Government is delivered, not so much oppose but to criticize how these are delivered, and also to criticize policies that may be made.

In debate, we are frequently called temporary custodians. Well, we are all temporary custodians because it is not so much we who remain, it is because politicians by their nature are temporary, are illusory.

They are passing fancies as voters vote this way, or voters vote that way, so we are all temporary custodians. The part of Government that endures is the bureaucracy, the whole system. It is my suggestion that only through strengthening this Public Accounts Committee, which evaluates how well the system of Government works for the taxpayer of Manitoba, can we ensure as legislators that the people of Manitoba get value for their money.

This committee has the responsibility to determine whether the bureaucracy in Government departments, the public service—and we must remember we all work for the same master—is actually doing what it is mandated to do. We are all here to do what is best for Manitoba. Our watchword should be principle and ideals, not political expediency. The Public Accounts Committee can be a very effective vehicle to guarantee good Government for all our constituents.

Is that it now, Mr. Speaker? I cannot read my conclusion which I had drafted? I will have to insert it differently then. Thank you.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by commending you on your performance during this past year as Speaker. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my congratulations to the newly appointed Deputy Speaker, the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski). At this time also, I would like to congratulate the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond) and also the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) on their appointment to the Cabinet.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Helwer: I am pleased to have the opportunity to add my support to the Throne Speech at the beginning of this Session of the 34th Legislature. I am especially proud of the foundation we have laid and our commitment to continue along the path of responsible, responsive Government. Over the past year, we have laid a solid foundation for building a better, stronger Manitoba.

* (1700)

In our first Session, we shared our vision for a competitive and a diverse economy which provides increased job opportunities for our citizens and creates the wealth necessary to pay for quality health, education and social services. We have made significant progress towards these goals, and I believe the Throne Speech presented at the beginning of this Session outlines our commitment to continuing our agenda.

As a Member representing a rural constituency, I am especially pleased with the progress made and our Government's commitment to agriculture and diversifying the rural economy, but our Government knows its first priority was returning responsibility and accountability to the management of this province.

As a businessman, I know that any planning for the future, any new initiatives, any increased spending must be preceded by having a sound handle on finances. Our Government promised to return good management

to Government. We promised fiscal responsibility, and you only have to look at our success in reducing our deficit, the lowest this decade, and our reform of Manitoba's Crown corporations, to recognize that we are making great strides in meeting that commitment.

There is no other choice for a responsible Government. We have to control our debt because we have to control the taxpayers' dollars which flow out of Government coffers simply to service our past overspending. Each and every day, we pay \$1.5 million to service that debt. That is \$1.5 million every day that is not available to pay for health care or education or other real services to Manitobans.

We have been and we will continue to be responsible in reviewing our management practices, in reviewing our spending so that we receive more value and better service for every dollar we spend.

Our plan includes not only measures to improve our fiscal position, but also measures to stimulate the economic growth which will secure a prosperous future for Manitoba and initiatives to ensure that Manitobans receive quality health care, education and other social services.

We have the natural advantages, our land, our forests, and our minerals, our lakes and our rivers. If properly managed, they can continue to provide much of the base for our prosperity.

Our Government has been actively encouraging new businesses to locate here and existing businesses to expand. We recognize the importance of creating a positive economic climate. We want to work with business, create the wealth and jobs necessary to secure a bright, prosperous future for Manitoba.

We recognize the importance of economic growth, but we also recognize that any development today should not threaten the use of our resources and the enjoyment of our environment by future generations. Last year's drought, the recent forest fires, remind us just how vulnerable our environment is. That is why our Government has adopted the principles of sustainable development, an approach which recognizes the interdependence of our economic, environmental and social well-being.

Our Government, Mr. Speaker, has a plan, not just for today, but one which will lead Manitoba into the future. We know that future relies on all Manitobans. We know that business and the private sector have a role to play in building that future. We are encouraging them by removing barriers to growth.

We have reduced the payroll tax in jobs. We are encouraging small business through a tax holiday. Individually, the number of jobs each small business creates may be small but, combined, small business offers are our greatest potential for creating new, meaningful employment. Small business today creates over 80 percent of all new jobs created. We are committed to creating opportunity, to making the best use of our people and our resources.

I am pleased to see, Mr. Speaker, a specific reference in the Throne Speech to tourism as a major economic

opportunity. Certainly it is an important industry in the Interlake and in my constituency in particular. My constituents were glad to see words turn into action earlier this month when a \$2.1 million tourism initiative was announced. For years, Gimli has been promoting its Icelandic heritage and some of the funding announced will result in further development and promotion of Gimli's Icelandic fishing heritage.

Some of the money will go toward working with the private sector in developing a major multi-million dollar resort. When completed, the 77-room facility, which includes a restaurant, an indoor-outdoor pool, a meeting room and banquet space, an 8,000 square foot indoor commercial mall, will employ upwards of 90 people during the peak season.

This tourism initiative is expected to generate an estimated \$2.9 million annually in additional tourism revenues and create over 290 direct-indirect jobs during construction. That, Mr. Speaker, is creating meaningful jobs and spurring on economic growth in the Interlake.

We are helping communities and regions build on their natural strength. Again I have a solid example of that in my constituency. In early April, our Government announced a multi-million dollar swine-breeding project being undertaken by a Japanese firm, Minebea. A site in the Interlake will be the location of the first of a number of stations. This operation not only provides a much welcome boost to our local economy, it also provides an example of how we can build on our traditional agricultural base.

I know farmers in my area are anticipating supplying the newly created feed grain market and that other local businesses, from contractors to livestock equipment companies, are looking forward to the opportunities this new venture, Northern Manitoba Breeders, will provide.

This particular project is very important to Manitoba. It is the type of development the province wants to see happen as it will benefit other local industries. To me, this is an example of the investment to our province we should be attracting, investment which helps Manitobans build on its natural strengths.

Our Government is continuing to work with the private sector, communities and their leaders in identifying priorities and pursuing natural mutual goals. In Gimli, for example, the air base has been turned over to the private sector. Just last week, I was talking to the people involved in the project and they are very optimistic, having received many inquiries about the property and locating there. This community and private sector involvement is very important, especially in the face of our declining farm economy. The effects of the severe drought, rising input costs and low commodity prices on farm incomes have been felt throughout rural Manitoba.

As the outlook on farming becomes bleaker, businesses suffer and young working-age people leave the rural for better prospects in the city. The shifting population puts additional pressure on maintaining social services, local services and retaining the life of a community. One of the greatest challenges we face

is strengthening our rural economy through diversification and developing our agricultural base.

As a representative of a rural riding, I am especially proud of our Government's support for the traditional backbone of our rural economy, the farmer. We are easing the tax burden on farmers by reducing the education tax on farmland. We are committed to reforming and improving crop insurance and income stabilization.

* (1710)

Our Government recently joined the National Tripartite Stabilization Plan for red meat, honey and beet producers. This move not only helps stabilize farm incomes, it also helps Manitoba farmers compete on a more level playing field with producers in other provinces. We recognize the future of farming lies with the young producer. We know that young people are discouraged by declining farm income and the prohibitive start-up costs.

As such, we are committed to expanding our support of family farms through the Young Farmers' Rebate Program. Our Government also reacted to assist farmers facing severe drought. Last year, it provided \$18.3 million in immediate drought relief, including programs to help livestock producers maintain their basic breeding herd.

We are also developing long-term strategies to protect ourselves against future drought and flooding and to preserve our land and water resources for generations to follow. We are looking at ways to ensure water quality and supplies during a 10-year drought-proofing plan.

We are committed to soil conservation and to managing our rivers, lakes, and wetlands for the best environmental and economic benefit.

Our Government has been consulting with the people of Manitoba at public meetings across the province over its water policy strategy.

Mr. Speaker, our Government has an overall plan for addressing the challenges facing rural Manitoba. We recognize the importance of ensuring that all residents of Manitoba have access to Government services.

We also recognize that as the rural economy suffers and people move from the farming communities to urban areas, there is extra pressure placed on rural life, on social services, and on the infrastructure of rural Manitoba. This is why rural Manitobans are applauding our commitment to ensuring that quality Government services are available to them.

Our Government has moved seven Government positions to Boissevain to replace those lost when the Land Titles Office closed under the previous administration. Our Government has also moved ahead on its decentralization thrust, establishing a working group to continue the process of identifying Government operations which can benefit through decentralization. This visible act of commitment to rural Manitoba is important to all our communities.

Last month, for example, I attended the opening of a new Government office in Teulon. From talking to

the people there, I realized just how important it is for rural people to know that if their communities face tough times the Government is strengthening its commitment to programs and services to the rural area.

We have to ensure that Manitobans, regardless of where they live in Manitoba, have access to quality health care, education, and other human services. In my constituency and throughout Manitoba there is concrete evidence of that commitment.

In Gimli, construction is under way on a new 80-bed personal care home to replace the turn-of-the-century Betel Home. In Teulon, Gateway Manor, an addition of 14 suites to the senior citizens' home, a 31-suite co-op housing is being built to provide housing for seniors and those on fixed incomes.

We have increased spending to health for programs like home care and personal care homes. We are correcting the dismal history of underfunding to our ambulance services across Manitoba. We are more than providing for the needs of today. We are planning for tomorrow.

Unlike the Official Opposition, we do more than propose to throw millions of dollars at a multitude of problems. Instead, we seek responsible solutions. We examine the problems of today and the challenges of the future. We address our options, seek creative alternatives and plan to spend wisely.

That is where the Health Advisory Network fits in. With the help of health professionals and laypeople, we are addressing issues facing our health care system and developing an action plan to ensure quality health care for Manitobans throughout the '90s.

Mr. Speaker, our Government also recognizes the role education plays in building for the future. That is why school building programs like the ones announced last Friday by the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) are so important in any community, but especially in rural Manitoba, schools are a central focus. They provide a place for our children to grow and learn and they often serve a larger purpose as a community gathering place.

As an example, East Selkirk Happy Thought School is overcrowded. The gym is too small; they need extra classrooms. We have a commitment to that area where the population and the student base has grown considerably over the past number of years. But while schools are important facilities, the education they pass is an investment in our future. That is why all Manitobans, whether they live in northern Manitoba, rural Manitoba, Brandon or Winnipeg, must have access to quality education.

* (1720)

Of course, there are many challenges to providing quality education. We have been reviewing such diverse issues as literacy programming and funding formula for public schools. We have recently announced increased funding to our universities and we are looking at ways to provide education opportunities through long distance technology.

As well, we are working with communities and education institutions to provide local learning

opportunities. Last fall, for example, I participated in the official opening of the Joint Continuing Education site in Gimli. The opening included the announcement of a diploma course in professional flight management which is especially appropriate to Gimli for aviation has been such a part of this community's identity. Other programs have recently started in Riverton and in Arbog. Program facilities and infrastructure are all-important to rural Manitoba. Perhaps one of the most visible components of infrastructure are our highways. They are the tie that binds our rural communities.

For too many years, the maintenance and new construction of our highways has been neglected. In the past year, we have placed a high priority on new construction. In my riding, for example, work has been done on Highway 8, Highway 7, and across the province our Government has given roads they attention they so desperately deserve.

Another highway or provincial road that we will be building is PR 415. This is a very important road to the people of Woodlands and the people living along this road. This area has been neglected many years by the former Government and it is time that this road has been constructed.

Certainly communities are the foundation of rural Manitoba. The people who live there work hard providing for their families and contributing to the life of their communities. We have been working with these community groups and organizations and building community facilities. Our Government recognizes the importance of these facilities and, as such, was committed to specifically designating lottery funds for recreation facilities in rural and remote communities.

We are working with Manitobans in pursuing mutual goals and priorities. We realize that quality of life is more than brick and mortar, it is in part measured by the pride we have in ourselves and in our province. I think that pride is reflected in the overwhelming response we have had to our first issue of the Manitoba Hydro Savings Bonds. Manitoba wants to take advantage of the opportunity to building our province.

When we look at the quality of life we enjoy here, we have to pay tribute to our forefathers and those who came, and continue to come, from different corners of the world to settle here and call Manitoba home. Our Government recognizes that the fabric of Manitoba life is woven from various different threads. We encourage, and are committed to the principle of multiculturalism.

Certainly my area is rich in cultural diversity. In Gimli, the Icelandic Festival is celebrating its 100th Anniversary this year during August 5, 6 and 7. The President of Iceland will be visiting Gimli and visiting Manitoba. We will have hundreds of people coming by charter from Iceland to Gimli to take part in this 100th Anniversary.

A little further south, the Rusalka Dancers, a Ukrainian Dance Troup, are celebrating their 15th anniversary this weekend. The Festival's coordinator, Beverley Shymko, says the purpose of the Veselka Ukrainian Festival '89 is to promote Ukrainian culture.

One of my constituents, Leslie Bond, was also recognized as a premier highland dancer, becoming

the first Canadian to win the British Overseas Highland Dance Championship. The quality of our lives, as individuals and communities, and as a province as a whole, is measured by more than bricks and mortar.

Manitobans have said that a better quality of life includes more security for them and their children. Our Government has reacted to their concerns about drinking and driving, introducing some of the toughest measures for suspended and drinking drivers.

Our Government also has taken steps to reduce the backlog in our court system. Government cannot be all things to all people, but what we can do, and what our Government is doing is putting the people of Manitoba first. We are prioritizing spending and reducing the tax burden. We are listening to Manitobans to deliver our services and those who are served by them.

Of course, a minority Government presents its own challenges and limitations, but that is why it is so important for all of us to respect our responsibility, and to work in the best interests of all Manitobans. Certainly that was the wish of the electorate just over a year ago, and I think it is incumbent of all of us to respect their wishes and work together in delivering responsible Government. It is a responsibility I take seriously, as I know my colleagues on both sides of the House do, and I am proud to be a part of this Government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity.

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): It gives me great pleasure to take part in this debate again. I have debated a number of times on the Throne Speech. I have been here a number of years and I have heard many of the people speak in this Legislature. I am proud to be here. I feel very honoured to represent my constituency of Rupert's Land, a constituency that is unique, a constituency that is mostly populated by Native people.

First of all, before I start going into the substance of the Throne Speech or the lack thereof, I want to wish you, Mr. Speaker, the best of health, and also wish you that you will have the wisdom and the knowledge to have the House running. Also I would like to congratulate the Mover of the Throne Speech and also the Seconder of the Throne Speech. As I have been a Member of the Government before, I have had the opportunity, I believe, to Second the Throne Speech and it is a great honour to be a part of that process.

I also would like to congratulate the new Ministers who have been appointed. The Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond), and as you know, we would be looking toward her for support for many of the aboriginal women in our society in Manitoba. As you know, it is very difficult for aboriginal women, especially in Manitoba and the city, to receive some attention and the notice that they deserve.

I also would like to congratulate the Member for Lakeside, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns). I do not know whether I should congratulate him because within the last while that he has been Minister we have had half of a forest burned, I believe. But I would not attribute that personally to him.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that my constituents in Rupert's Land look to this

Government for ratification and being able to resolve many of the issues. One of them, of course, is the whole question of controlling our own destiny and the issues of self-government. Over the many years that I have been involved as a Member of the Government and also as the chief of the Red Sucker Lake Band, we have always stressed the need for our own Government. Self-government is the term that is used now.

Unfortunately, many of the provinces and Governments have not or are reluctant to recognize Indian people for themselves to be able to control their own affairs. We have had many discussions at the national level during the constitutional discussions on this whole issue, and I hope this Government will also embark on that course and also try to achieve self-government for the aboriginal people in this country.

* (1730)

The other issue that I want to deal with is of course the whole question of the outstanding Treaty land entitlement. That is still outstanding from the federal Government to the Indian people. We have many acres, square miles of land that are still due to the Indian people in this province, a promised Treaty that was signed many years ago to fill that promise. The federal Government has not moved on that issue. I must say that, when we were in Government, we did sign an Order-in-Council to accept the Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement in principle.

Unfortunately, the Minister of Indian Affairs did not move on that issue. Of course we are dealing with the federal Minister responsible for National Defence right now, who is Mr. McKnight. At that time, he was the Minister of Indian Affairs and we did not get anywhere with that particular Minister.

It appears that Manitoba has been singled out, not only the aboriginal people but the public as well in the Province of Manitoba for the lack of support of the federal agenda, mainly to support their agenda to have Meech Lake endorsed by Manitoba.

I believe Indian people, aboriginal people, have supported many of the people who have come across to this country, including Quebec. Aboriginal people have never said that Quebecers or Quebec should be a distinct society. Aboriginal people have said that recognition is also due to the First Nations of this country who are the aboriginal people. We demand that the federal Government, that Governments across this country, that provincial Governments recognize the aboriginal people as the first citizens of this country. We do not at this time have the recognition in the Constitution, the supreme law of this country.

We are very disappointed that only two peoples are recognized in the Constitution, the English and the French, as the founding nations of this country. Aboriginal people in this country, I must say, have been involved in the development of this country since the first arrival of the Europeans. We have developed throughout the country and have not been recognized for the recognition that is due to us both politically, morally and legally. We need that recognition to be part of society, the fear that we are not strangers in our own land.

We feel that we have had a tremendous contribution to make in this country and have made that contribution. We have signed Treaties so that other people may be able to live in the country. We have welcomed many people from across the world to come to live in Canada, a place where people are welcome, a place where people can thrive and a place where people can prosper, a place where people can feel secure and live a good standard of life, a good standard of living. Unfortunately, Native people have not had that benefit to reap from those resources and lands that we have given up.

Just to illustrate how dismal and appalling the relationship has been of Canada, child welfare has risen to more than five times the national rate. Education, only 20 percent of Indian children finish Grade 12. That means that 80 percent do not even finish the secondary level of education. Housing, 19 percent have two or more families living in them, so we do have a tremendous housing shortage on reserves. Unemployment on some reserves, it is well over 90 percent. The death rate amongst the Indian people is two to four times the rate for non-Indians. Suicide rate, it is three times the national rate. Infant mortality, up to the age of four weeks, it is 60 percent higher than the national rate. That is the kind of appalling rate, our relationship that we have had with the federal Government.

I must say the federal Government has miserably failed with the aboriginal people of this country. It is a national disgrace. I think Indian people, if they were to control their own destiny, if they were to make their own decisions affecting their lives, and also the federal Government to live up to this promise to the Indians, that they have made in the Treaties.

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

Education is one of the Treaty rights that the Indian people obtained. It has not been fully understood. As a matter of fact, the federal Government has said that post-secondary education is not a Treaty right because it is not mentioned in the Treaties. Education and schooling for children is mentioned in the Treaties but it does not say up to what level of education should be provided to Indian children. There seems to be a unilateral decision by the federal Government to cap or to limit the education that should be provided to the Indian people.

It is ironic that the interpretation is interpreted and limited to the Indian people. On the other hand, when you are talking about Treaties, land and Treaties, land and resources, there is no mention of the depths of the resources that were given up. On one hand, it seems to be the Treaties are interpreted broadly to favour the Government rather than to favour the Indian people. The whole question of Treaty rights and their intent must be fully understood and also has to be understood in today's situation.

The Throne Speech has not mentioned anything about resolving those things in the speech that was read by the Lieutenant-Governor, and under those directions and the settlement that the people are looking for. I know that there is mention about the Northern Flood issues, but there is much to be done in the whole

area of Treaties and also outstanding obligations. We need some direction from this Government and also from the Minister responsible for Northern Affairs and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey).

When you are talking about developments in the North, the Repap deal that was made, I want to know what this Minister has done to help those communities, because in that whole area that the cutting rights were given to Repap, those are areas that are affecting the aboriginal communities. We have outstanding obligations to many of those communities. We have communities that were flooded in the Forebay area. We need to develop some sort of economic opportunities for these communities, Easterville, Forebay, Moose Lake, Cormorant. Those areas should have been part of that Repap deal to secure some economic opportunities, also those communities that the whole cutting areas involved into the Northern Flood areas—you would be looking at Cross Lake, Norway House, other communities, Wabowden—that would be affected by the cutting areas of Repap. We have obligations to those communities for that employment and also economic opportunities for those Northern Flood communities.

Also in those areas, we also have outstanding Treaty Land Entitlement for a number of bands and it affects the cutting areas that are going to be given away to Repap. So we need to be assured that this Minister and this Government have secured some security, some jobs and economic opportunity for those communities. Those lands that are still due to Indian people should be protected by this Government or else set aside for Indian people so that they can create their own cutting areas. We do not want lands that have been depleted or resources that have been depleted and given to Indians after they have been used up and there is nothing to gain from the lands that have been depleted.

So you want to make sure what kind of opportunities the Government has provided. I know that there are provisions in the agreement to provide some sort of job opportunities for The Pas area, but it does not cover the other areas, northern communities like I mentioned, Wabowden, Cross Lake, Norway House, some of those communities. Some of those things should have been negotiated by this Government. So there are a number of issues that need to be addressed by this Minister and by this Government.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Also there needs to be an issue of environmental concerns that are a direct threat to the livelihood of the Indian people in those areas. They are fishermen, they are trappers, they do not know what kind of impact that the whole cutting will have on their livelihoods, so I hope this Minister and this Government will address a number of those issues.

* (1740)

The other thing that I want to address is northern development that has taken place in the North. We have had two agreements in the North. One, of course, is the Northern Development Agreement that has been in place for a number of years. I believe we have spent

close to \$300 million, around I believe \$276 million, in the Northern Development Agreement. That agreement has expired as of March 31, 1989, and this Minister has had the opportunity for over a year to convince the federal Government that those agreements need to be implemented. The other agreement that has expired, of course, is the Special ARDA Agreement that expired as of March 31, 1989.

This Government has also neglected to pursue that agreement, to provide a number of opportunities for many of the northern people, the aboriginal people, to pursue their traditional livelihood. Also, the Northern Development Agreement affects the budget of the Northern Affairs Department and they have not secured any additional dollars. I think it is a direct loss to the Province of Manitoba, a revenue that came from the federal Government. As you know, the federal Government is practising restraint and deficit control and, as a result, Northerners have been cut. I mean their programs have been cut, which have benefited, many of the programs that were initiated under the Northern Development Agreement.

We have the Brandon University Program, the BUNTEP Program, under which many of the Native teachers were trained; we have the Northern Nursing Program which offers an opportunity for many of the Northerners. We also have the Social Work Program that was provided under that agreement. I understand, now that the program is coming to an end, people who want to take that course cannot take that course because the funding is limited. The simplest course that people were willing to take on this fall are told they would not be able to be accepted because it is a four-year program. There has only been a commitment to carry on the program until the end of one year.

-(Interjection)- So this Minister who talks from his Chair and he has not had an opportunity to talk to his federal counterparts. As a matter of fact, when we were in Government, we had set up the negotiations with the federal Government and as a result the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) has not succeeded in protecting the interests of northern Manitoba.

I mentioned that the Minister has had the opportunity to pursue that Northern Development Agreement. There have been some recommendations made by the people affected by the advisory group, by the agreement committee to secure some recommendations that would be implemented by the federal Government. Those recommendations have been forwarded to the Minister and they have not been listened to by this Minister of Northern Affairs.

So the Minister of Northern Affairs has a tremendous responsibility to ensure that the job opportunities, the development in the North received the attention that it does. Because we have had the Northern Development Agreement for a number of years and we were to build a number of facilities in the North, unable to build airstrips in those communities under that Agreement. This Minister has failed to secure an ongoing agreement with the federal Government.

The Minister of Northern Affairs has ample opportunity to straighten that issue but so far he has

neglected to address the needs in northern Manitoba, and he says he would be doing that. He does not have very much leeway or the money to set a program. He talks to me about the success ratio. You know, as aboriginal people in this country, it took us many years to get into this Chamber. We were not even allowed the right to vote until about 30 years ago. We had many years of Tory Governments in Ottawa and Liberal Governments in Ottawa to straighten the situation out with respect to the Indian issues. We are just beginning to address those things here in the Legislature of Manitoba.

I hope both Parties will also help and support the Indian people in trying to secure education for their children and their future. I hope that they will speak in favour of education as a Treaty right, because it was one of the rights that was contained in the Treaties, and it is an absolute and necessary tool in rebuilding our nation. We need to instill pride amongst ourselves. We need to build our nations. We need to be part of this society. Like I mentioned before, it is very unfortunate that this rich country of ours that we gave away our land and resources, that we are not part of that, able to benefit from the lands and resources that we were able to give away to other Canadians.

So the Throne Speech, when I look at it, does not have very much substance except for a bunch of rhetoric that has been said by the Government of Manitoba.

* (1750)

I also wanted to say that the people in the North deserve the attention much more so because of the cutbacks and the programs that have been initiated by the federal Government. We are not able to focus or provide special attention to the North like it was before because of the lack of initiative by this Government, because it took away the focus we have in the North and was able to provide specific programs for people in the North.

Also this Government needs to be fair and just to treat everybody equally across this province. When I talk about the Disaster Assistance Board providing emergency measures, compensation to farmers, we need to apply that to the northern people, people who have lost their livelihood, people who have lost their trapping cabins, their boats, their nets, their snowmobiles. The equipment is uninsured, but also the Minister had announced that the farmers were not able to claim the uninsured equipment.

I would hope the Minister would be able to apply that to the northern residents because the northern residents, I mentioned before, have a harder lifestyle than ordinary people because they do not have access to some of the luxuries of the South like electricity and things like that. Also the price of commodities, the price of food is greater in the North than in the South. Sometimes when you raise the price of sugar by 1 cent or 2 cents in the North, it jumps practically to a dollar, so it is a tremendous burden and a tremendous hardship on these families.

I wanted to address some additional things. The other thing I wanted to mention is this Government on the

whole process of the aboriginal justice system. As you know, we have had the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry going on to have hearings in many of the communities, and many communities have been heard from many of the people on those reserves. It provided an excellent opportunity for aboriginal people to put their concerns about justice. As you know, many of our Native people are in prisons. I think it has been said that 40 percent of the prison populations in Manitoba are Native people and yet, here in the Province of Manitoba, we are a small population—I think we only represent 7 percent, maybe 8 percent of the population of Manitoba, but our population in jails are higher, much higher than normal than any other group in society. So there is obviously a problem with the whole justice system in respect to aboriginal people.

As many of the people have found out, many of the aboriginal people do not understand the justice system or value of incarceration. I think there are going to be some recommendations made by the aboriginal justice people, whoever conducted the meetings, would be one of them would be to have some sort of a tribal or custom courts in which culturally appropriate sentences are more meaningful. Sentences are done by the communities or elders or a system that will be recommended by the commission. I know that right now we seem to be hung up on the question of whether the justice system is valid or not, because the Order-in-Council was not written—entrenched, I believe—so I think that question needs to be aired out. I do not know whether I could make comments on it but - (Interjection)- it should have been in Cree. I do not know whether the Order-in-Council appointing judges was entrenched either, so we will have to wait and see.

The question of that language issue respecting the authority and the legality of the Justice Inquiry will probably be put to rest. I believe that the recommendations will be valid. After all, the aboriginal people if they view the justice system and if they view the justice system as not being valid, the aboriginal people I think will be more confused or more astounded as to why their concerns would not be valid. I think there is an obligation on the part of Government to ensure that the justice system and the hearings are valid. I think that needs to be reinforced and also the aboriginal need to have confidence in the justice system to resolve many of the issues that are confronting the communities and reserves.

I just wanted to say a few words on the Throne Speech. I know that the Liberal Party wants us to vote

against the Throne Speech. I have always looked at the different systems of Government, especially the parliamentary system here in Canada, and to be part of it in the traditions of this House. Now I am looking at the traditions of this House. One of them is, of course, the Throne Speech and usually the Throne Speech is a statement by the Queen, usually read by the Queen's representative, the Lieutenant-Governor. In a sense, to me, that is a vote against the Queen. That is what her Government wants to do.

I see some opposition would be in terms of voting, that would be in the Budget. I do not see the Throne Speech as a way to defeat the Government. I feel that it just merely says the intention of the Government, but when it comes to the crunch is where actually the dollars are going to be, where the cuts are going to be made, where the revenues are going to be generated. It will be interesting to see that on Monday when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) presents the Budget for the Government. We will make that determination that day when it comes - (Interjection)- The Member chirps, do not make a hasty decision. You know, I am for many years in this House and also watching from the back benches and being involved in this whole process. Indian people are very patient people, but it comes to a point where we need to move forward, so we are becoming impatient. I think because of the cutbacks that are being made in Ottawa, that is a lot harder on aboriginal people.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings according to the Rules. When this motion is again before the House, the Honourable Member will have five minutes remaining.

Before adjourning the House, I would like to inform all Honourable Members that tomorrow at 1:30 p.m. we have asked—and it has been in agreement with the three House Leaders—Members will meet in the Chamber for a group photo which will be taken at 1:30 p.m., at which time we will recess the House after the photo to allow the photographer enough time to remove all his equipment. We will reconvene here again at two o'clock.

The House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).