



First Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

39 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, October 12, 1990

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct the attention of Honourable Members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us today a visiting Soviet trade delegation.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Rafferty-Alameda Dam Project Water Quality

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). For the last two years, we have been raising the issue of the Rafferty-Alameda dam with the Members opposite in terms of protecting Manitoba's quality and quantity of water. As late as the meeting of the western Premiers, the Lloydminster meeting, we again raised the fact that the Saskatchewan Government was proceeding with the Rafferty-Alameda dam contrary to the Environmental Assessment decision and the court decisions and asked the Premier to take a stand with Grant Devine and protect Manitoba's water quality and quantity.

In light of Premier Devine's further unilateral action on this project, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Premier what is he finally going to do to protect Manitoba's environmental interests?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we were as concerned with the reports in the media as were the Members of the Opposition. The Environment Minister (Mr. Cummings) has today sent a letter to Mr. de Cotret, the federal Minister of the Environment, in which he expresses our serious concerns and asks the Minister to take immediate action to ensure that the panel resumes its review, and that any construction not related to the safety of the dam site be terminated. He indicates that

nothing short of that decisive action will satisfy our concerns.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, in July, I asked the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) to start fighting on behalf of Manitobans in terms of water quality and quantity. The Premier said at that point, "I have a co-operative arrangement with the Province of Saskatchewan and the Premier of Saskatchewan."

I would ask the Premier what action has he taken with his Tory colleague in Saskatchewan to protect the Manitoba water quality and quantity that is clearly at risk with this co-operative and soft approach of the Premier with the Province of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, we have continued to follow precisely the same course of action that was in place when we took Government, that was in place by the former administration, by his colleague to his right. We have the letters and correspondence on file. We have followed exactly the same course of action, knowing that this issue is under federal jurisdiction and that we require the federal Government to impose upon the project the various constraints and the various qualifications that would ensure that our quality and quantity of water downstream on the Souris River are protected and assured under the terms of reference that they have for that project.

* (1005)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Premier mentions terms of reference. My question is to the Premier. How does he explain to the people of Manitoba that the Premier of Saskatchewan has arranged new terms of reference to the Rafferty-Alameda dam at a meeting he had with the federal Minister of the Environment, Robert de Cotret, and the Saskatchewan Premier? What action has the Premier taken to ensure there is not another or a fourth back-room deal between the Tory Premier in Saskatchewan and the Tory Minister of Environment with the complicity of the provincial Conservative Government.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member's question deals with a matter which is not within the responsibility of this Government. The

Honourable Member kindly rephrase his question, please.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Premier, what action is he going to take, what action is the provincial Government going to take to ensure that arrangements and the terms of reference that affect the water quality and quantity in Manitoba are not altered by the federal Government and the Conservative Government, impacting on the water quality and quantity in Manitoba?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, we will continue to do what we have done in the past, what that Member's administration did when they were in Government, which is to demand that the federal Government exercise its jurisdiction over this project—it is under federal jurisdiction—and to demand that they ensure that the quality and quantity of the water downstream in Manitoba, in the Souris River, are not inhibited, not in any way affected detrimentally by these projects.

Senate Appointments Legal Intervention

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the First Minister.

We have received public confirmation from the Conference Board of Canada and other economists across the country that we indeed have a made-in-Canada recession affecting jobs, employment opportunities and the people most vulnerable in our country, Mr. Speaker. The Conference Board goes on to say that interest rates today and the GST tomorrow will continue to keep Canada and Manitoba in a recession situation.

I would ask the First Minister, why has the Province of Manitoba chosen not to join three other provinces in a court challenge to the stacking of the Senate and the unilateral action in provincial jurisdiction for taxation?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in some interviews yesterday, we have sought legal opinion, because I believe that despite the desire that any of us may have to get involved politically in a challenge to the GST, which is not only terribly unpopular but we believe terribly detrimental to our economy as a whole and to specific sectors of Manitoba—tourism, small business—for a whole host of reasons which I have catalogued here time and time and time again. The fact of the matter is—and we have shown before that we are not

reluctant to go into court challenges against the federal Government on a number of issues.

Even when the CAP changes did not directly affect Manitoba, we saw it as a matter of principle that would have the federal Government demonstrate that they could unilaterally get out of signed agreements and commitments with the provinces. We joined that challenge, and we were successful in that challenge because there was a legal base for us to join that challenge.

We have asked for legal opinion with respect to our intrusion on the GST challenge. Our legal opinion is that we do not have grounds to do that, Mr. Speaker, that we ought not do that, because in fact in challenging federal taxing power under certain areas of the Constitution we may implicitly in fact be undermining, if we are successful, federal spending power that affects transfers to provincial Governments in areas of Medicare, health, post-secondary education, social services and many other areas that are very important to us as a province.

We do not want to jeopardize our ability to continue to receive that support from Ottawa by joining that challenge. I might say that the Member must note—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

*(1010)

Legal Opinion Request

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, again to the First Minister, the First Minister has stated that he has a legal opinion. I would ask the First Minister to table his legal opinion, given that it was produced and paid for by the public of Manitoba and given that this issue is very important for the people working, and consumers, in our Manitoba economy. I would ask the Premier to table the legal opinion, and I would further ask whether the Premier has a legal opinion on Section 51(a) of the Constitution Act in terms of the swamping of the Senate.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): With respect to the swamping of the Senate, I have not yet received a legal opinion. I have asked for it, and I said that yesterday. We are awaiting further legal opinions. Obviously we are concerned to ensure that when we have a challenge, or we undertake a challenge, we do not do it strictly on political whim, that we do it on sound legal grounds. We are going to take a look at

whether or not there is an avenue for us to join in that challenge and obviously if there is then we are prepared to do it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Doer: With a final supplementary to the First Minister, when can the people of Manitoba expect a legal opinion on 51(a), which is the basis of many challenges now in the country; and secondly, can we receive a copy of his legal opinion that he says he has as a public document to be tabled in this Legislature; and can we receive a copy of his legal opinion of 51(a) on the swamping of the Senate which, of course, is the germane issue in the many challenges across the country from other provinces that are trying to stop the GST in this country.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I mean, other provinces are making challenges on a whole range of issues. The challenge that Alberta is undertaking is different from the challenge that British Columbia is undertaking, and may be different than the challenge that Ontario is undertaking. So for him to say that it is all based on the same premise, it is not in fact. There are various sections involved. There are various aspects of constitutional law involved.

We have legal opinions with respect to the specifics that he referred to in the GST, which I said yesterday indicated that there was not room for us to undertake action and to intervene. At the same time, I have asked for some additional legal opinion on other aspects of the case to see whether or not there are things that we could participate in that would in fact challenge the GST or the Senate changes, or whatever have you.

When we have those, I will be able to give him more complete answers, but the preliminary legal advice we have is that there is not grounds for us to act. In fact, the grounds that have been cited would indeed undermine the federal Government's ability to continue providing transfers to provinces for areas that are vitally important to Manitoba, health care, social services—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Rafferty-Alameda Dam Project Manitoba Interests

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, the Premier has indicated that he now wants to call on the federal Government to deal with Premier Devine. That is very interesting. The fact is that he wants to join with Premier Devine in ousting the courts from the environmental review process.

I wish to—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mr. Edwards: There is a happy little conspiracy here, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to table a memorandum put out by the Government of Alberta dated April 26, 1990. That memorandum states in part: Manitoba will prepare a draft provincial position paper, and we will circulate it to all provinces. The position will be built around the following principles: with respect to projects with transboundary impacts there needs to be a provision for the deferral to the provinces of federal interests.

Mr. Speaker, that memorandum goes on to indicate that interim measures need to be taken to remove it—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is there a question there? The Honourable Member kindly put his question now, please.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, what conspiracy has this Government gotten itself into with the other western Premiers that would require it to pass the buck at this point to Mr. de Cotret, exactly when he is weakening federal legislation on Rafferty-Alameda?

* (1015)

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to rule that question out of order. When the Member opposite uses the word "conspiracy" it is up to the Member to make the charge under a matter of privilege and to state his case fully rather than leaving innuendo on the table.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) is trying to put forward a question. He is entitled to an answer from the Minister.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Manness) does not have a point of order.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) does himself

a disservice in the manner in which he poses his question. He identifies for all of us in the House why he is sitting in the third row now. I got a little tired on the campaign trail of seeing him.

Mr. Speaker, the Member has alleged all sorts of things that are absolutely false. The fact of the matter is that there is a very good reason why jurisdictions who have an interest, a joint interest in a particular project that has environmental impacts, would want to have a common method of evaluation, review and assessment of that project from an environmental sense.

It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever for one jurisdiction to do a complete review of a project under terms and conditions in environmental assessment and then only to have the other jurisdiction do a complete repeat of that assessment under very, very similar requirements. What we want to have is one assessment process that takes care of the highest standards and level of environmental protection that each of us wants to achieve so that the proponent, whoever the proponent is, be that a Government, be that a private agency, a Crown Corporation, can know that they are achieving the highest levels of environmental protection as a result of that project and their litigation procedures in that project, and not to have them go through it twice just for the sake of satisfying somebody who wants to create more bureaucracy and more red tape in a process that should not require that, Mr. Speaker.

Environmental Hearing Process

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, if there was any doubt on April 26, 1990, that this Government was entering into a secret deal with other provinces, those doubts were gotten rid of on May 10, just two weeks later, when the Premier himself is quoted as stating recent federal court of Canada rulings have created a nightmare for developers. -(Interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I believe the Honourable Member was just going to put his question.

Mr. Edwards: Why does this Government want to keep the courts from reviewing environmental projects of the magnitude of Rafferty-Alameda when they have been the only ones protecting it? If we know one thing, Mr. Speaker, it is that you cannot trust Tory politicians to come clean on the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member has put his question.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, that is absolutely ludicrous. We do not want to keep the courts from reviewing these projects. Anybody anytime can go to the courts if they choose to change a decision of an environmental assessment and review, but the fact of the matter is if you have a proper process, if you have one that is credible, that is consistent, that allows people to go and make a proper review and judgment on it, then you will eliminate the need for court challenges because people will have confidence that the process is a good one.

That is what is set up in Manitoba under an environment Act that was passed by the previous administration, that has been supported by the Liberal Party and that has been supported by people throughout the province. When you have that kind of Act with that kind of process in place, it should be carried out in a fair, impartial and even-handed manner and a thorough manner to ensure that the results of that review will be credible and will not have to be the subject of constant court challenges. We want to set up that kind of process not only for within our province but for circumstances in which two jurisdictions, be they two provinces or a province and a state or a province and the federal Government, are involved. That one process, credible, thorough and complete, will satisfy a review that everybody will be able to believe in, Mr. Speaker.

* (1020)

Manitoba Interests

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, the document earlier tabled says in addition—

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I am fully well aware that House Leaders of the various Parties have not come together with you to determine the specific rules that should be presented and abided by, by Members in Question Period, but I must remind you at this point in time that Beauchesne's Rule 409, subsection 8, says that a question that has previously been asked ought not to be asked again. Also, No. 3 indicates

the question ought to seek information, not be argumentative, and also a supplementary question should need no preamble.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Manness), he is quite correct, and I would like to remind the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) your final supplementary question does not require a preamble.

The Honourable Member will kindly put his question now, please.

* * *

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, will the Premier (Mr. Filmon) commit to take Premier Devine to court in the event that Mr. de Cotret does not act expeditiously and force Mr. Devine to recognize the laws of this nation? If he will not, is Manitoba's silence on Rafferty-Alameda at this stage the price for getting all the other provinces' assistance in May and April of this year in keeping the feds out of projects in this province as well as around this country?

What future nightmares are in store for Manitoba that we had to enter into a deal in April of this year with the other provinces to oust the courts from the environmental process?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Now we see the Member for St. James' (Mr. Edwards) agenda. He wants to have court action so there is more work for the lawyers, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), on a point of order.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the Premier has clearly cast an aspersion at certain knowledge which I have which he does not have. He has made reference to the fact that I do happen to practise law. The fact is -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The point of order, please.

Mr. Edwards: The fact is, Mr. Speaker, I would request an apology from the Premier (Mr. Filmon). The courts have been the only people who have defended environmental causes in this country in the last few years. He knows that full well.

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

* * *

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, it certainly has not been lawyers, such as the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), who have defended environmental interests in this country.

The fact of the matter is we have said consistently that we will do everything we can to ensure that that project does not proceed without us getting guarantees and assurances that the quality and quantity of the water downstream in the Souris River in Manitoba is negatively affected by that project. We will consistently pursue that through the correct avenues which are the federal Government who have jurisdiction over that project.

Agape House Funding

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). The Eastman Crisis Centre, Agape House closed three weeks ago leaving 87,000 families, women and children, without any shelter or crisis services. In a very cynical announcement just before the opening of the House on Thursday, this Minister announced that the shelter would be given emergency funding to reopen, but no Core funding was guaranteed.

Mr. Speaker, given the business oriented slant of the throne speech yesterday, it is hardly surprising that women, children and families in Manitoba come last in this Government's priorities.

Can the Minister tell the House why the women and children in the Eastman area of Manitoba are being forced to go for up to six weeks without any emergency shelter and crisis services, and why no emergency funding was provided in the interim while this Government is yet again studying the matter?

* (1025)

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): I thank the Member for the question. The issue of the Eastman shelter, of course, was brought to my attention soon after my assuming this portfolio. I am very pleased that we were able to meet with board members later that day, and department staff were able to meet with the board on the subsequent Saturday to iron out some of the

difficulties with the Eastman shelter, that we have been able to put in place some funding and a funding and service agreement, which will see the reopening of that shelter in the near future.

I would also indicate that our concern and our commitment to shelters has been very clear over the last two years, and that we have increased the funding to shelters by 47 percent. I would indicate in the case of the Eastman shelter that the increase was 150 percent.

Women's Crisis Shelters Funding

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): We all know that family violence is a growing problem in the Province of Manitoba, as it is throughout Canada, with the number of women killed at the hands of their spouses, a devastating reality. In spite of this, shelters and crisis services are in constant danger of being forced to close because of poorly structured and inadequate funding.

Can the Minister tell the House what his plans are for providing adequate central Core funding for crisis services so that other shelters that are in financial problems because of an overreliance on per diems will not have to close, shelters such as Selkirk and Winkler?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): As I have indicated, Mr. Speaker, the increase in funding for shelters has been substantial, that we have increased the funding over the last two years of some 47 percent, and that the Core funding is a substantial amount of the funding and the per diems is also an important aspect of the funding for shelters which addresses any volume increase that they may encounter.

Government Initiatives

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Given that there was no mention in the throne speech yesterday of the problems facing crisis shelters and services to women, will the Minister tell us now what his Government's priorities, plans and policies are for implementing services to put in place so that women and children will have proper protection in this very important area?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): The record of this Government over the

last two years is very clear that there has been a substantial increase in funding for services to people.

We look forward to the debate on the throne speech and the tabling of the budget in the near future and look forward to discussing the Estimates shortly afterward.

Aboriginal People Hunting Rights

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): I want to take this opportunity to thank the residents of The Pas riding for giving me the honour to represent them here today.

Mr. Speaker, the rights of aboriginal people to fish and hunt have been recognized by both the Supreme Court of Canada and the Manitoba Court of Appeal as recently as last month. Now despite this fact, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) has not ordered his officers to stop charging aboriginal people from hunting and fishing. In fact, there are people right now awaiting trial while waiting for the Minister to stop charging people.

My question is directed to the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey). Will he now recognize the rights of aboriginal people, and how many more people will be charged until the policy is changed?

* (1030)

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, let me first of all welcome the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) to the Manitoba Legislature. I look forward to debate on many issues and consider him, even though he may not have taken the right political path in life, but I certainly consider him as a friend and will look forward to debate in the Legislature.

Dealing specifically with the question, Mr. Speaker, I know this has been an issue that the Member has had a lot more aggressive action on than he ever got from the previous administration of which he now sits. I will take that question to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) and deal with that matter as we have been dealing aggressively with other issues, of which the Member for The Pas has brought to our attention, gaming being one of them.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Northern Affairs request the Crown to immediately drop charges against Luke Robinson, Paul Cook,

Matthew Wilson, Andrew Robinson and Judas Cook from Cross Lake?

On March 1, '89, the Alberta Government declared that law enforcement on migratory birds hunting by aboriginal people was curtailed immediately. As well, the Alberta Government dropped all outstanding charges against aboriginal people. Why has the Minister not done the same thing here? How many more times will the courts have to rule against?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, as this matter falls within the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Natural Resources, I will make sure we get together to have an answer for the Member in a very short period of time.

Mr. Lathlin: Because these recent court decisions have placed the Government in a position of having now to go to the aboriginal people, what action has the Government—the Minister, the First Minister, the Justice Minister—prepared to take now in view of all these legal precedents?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, let me make it very clear that I indicated to the Member that there were two other ministries involved, and I will bring it to their attention very shortly. If the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) has further information to add, he is quite free to do so. But we will, as I said, live up to the commitment that I made—meet very shortly to get a more complete answer on behalf of his constituents.

Goods and Services Tax Legal Intervention

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, a few minutes ago the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) has said that if credible cases and credible actions were taken, we could avoid court challenges. Well, the federal Government is not credible and indeed has lost the moral authority to govern in this nation. Therefore, it is up to the provinces to protect the interests of Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Why is this Government, therefore, not meeting the challenge of all Canadians, including all Manitobans, and taking the federal Government to court on the GST?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, that question was previously asked very effectively, I thought, by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr.

Doer)—more effectively and was answered very effectively.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, while it might have been asked, it certainly was not answered. The question that I now want to put to the First Minister is what exactly were the questions that he put before his legal advisers to which he got answers saying, "We shouldn't challenge the GST?"

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, very clearly, the question that was asked was whether or not there were grounds under which we could make a constitutional challenge against the constitutional validity of the GST being imposed by the federal Government.

I have indicated that not only does the preliminary advice that we have received from our legal advisers, our constitutional lawyers, indicate that the federal Government appears to be within its constitutional rights in imposing the tax; but secondly, if somehow a judgment would be made that puts in jeopardy or puts in question or invalidates the federal Government's taxing power in this particular area. It would also by implication put in jeopardy the federal Government's spending power in the areas of provincial jurisdiction that are affected by equalization, transfer payments for health and post-secondary education, CAP, all of those areas that are vitally important to Manitobans.

* (1035)

She is the one who has said over and over again, Mr. Speaker, that we are a have-not province, that we are dependent upon Ottawa for these transfers and that we must ensure that we protect those transfers. I am suggesting to her that the legal opinion indicates that they would be jeopardized if such a challenge were successful.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, but if we learned nothing else from the Meech Lake fiasco this was that you could get a legal opinion on almost everything and every one of them disagreed with the other one.

Why is this Government not prepared to accept the legal opinions available in Alberta, in British Columbia and Ontario, all of which says to them that they have good grounds to take a court case on behalf of the people of this province and nation?

Mr. Filmon: I might indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the three provinces that she names are not recipient provinces under equalization. They may have no concerns about jeopardizing that federal ability to transfer payments to us. She has said over and over

again that she understands the difference between provinces that contribute and provinces that receive equalization but she is not differentiating with respect to this particular legal point. I am not a lawyer as the—

An Honourable Member: And neither is Paul Edwards.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. The Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon), to finish his response.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, neither of us are lawyers. I think we have to accept the best legal advice available to us and that is precisely what we as a Government are doing.

Economic Growth Government Initiatives

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). The Conference Board has stated that we are now suffering a made-in-Canada economic recession. Thanks to Tory policies in Ottawa, we have a return of stagflation, that is inflation and high unemployment at the same time. In Manitoba retail trade is at a standstill and getting weaker; housing construction is down sharply.

I would like to ask this Minister, will he or his Government do anything to offset the economic recession that we are now experiencing or will he sit back idly and watch unemployment grow and businesses fail in this province?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Member opposite has a funny way of dealing with statistical numbers. I will have an opportunity in the Throne Speech Debate to take argument with some of his pronouncements.

What we know for sure is that within the context of Manitoba, as will be presented in fairer detail in the budget, that retail sales in this province are up as reflected by the revenues, second best in the country. We also know that investment, the total in capital investment, is fourth best amongst provinces in Canada. We also know that real growth in this province as measured against the national average at one time was shown to be 2 percent. That number is growing, growing very quickly in the context for 1990.

I will acknowledge that the economy in the nation is not robust. I will acknowledge that there is a somberness out there with respect to the national economy but when one wants to compare the Province of Manitoba across any other province in this nation we are doing exceedingly well.

*(1040)

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, how can this Minister really justify not taking any action, not taking any immediate or specifics? He talks about retail trade. The fact is it is less than inflation.

Mr. Speaker, what steps is this Minister prepared to take to offset the downturn in the economic cycle when our manufacturing industry is suffering a serious decline both in terms of output and employment? We have 9,000 fewer jobs in manufacturing in Manitoba this year—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, it is wonderful what a renewed mandate does to Members of this House. The Member experienced more fire in that question than he did the last two years all together. I look forward to debating many more economic questions over the next number of days and months.

Mr. Speaker, if the Member was listening to the Premier in making announcements to the election campaign, if he was listening to the throne speech yesterday, indeed if he heard many of the answers in the House last Session, he would find out that we are not going to follow the former blueprint of the NDP, which left us with a legacy of \$10 billion of debt, which left us with a legacy of \$550 million a year of interest payments to service that debt, which has taken away a lot of the flexibility from this Government to deal with some of the real problems that exist.

Employment Programs Government Initiatives

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, will this Minister address the -(interjection)- I am asking the question—very serious problem of declining full employment in this province? We have 5,000 fewer full-time jobs in Manitoba today than we had a year ago. More and more of our work force is part time. Will he address that specific question?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, our labour statistics are certainly impressive over the release of the last month. Here

today our labour force has increased 1.2 percent. There has been growth in the employment sector within this country. The Member likes to dwell purely in the manufacturing sense. He knows full well that manufacturing jobs across this country, across the United States, across every western jurisdiction in the world are falling. He knows that. Why is he not so honest to get up and use that as part of his preamble instead of trying to make it appear like it is only happening within Manitoba?

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I realize that we have not sat in the Legislature for a number of months and perhaps the newly appointed Government House Leader (Mr. Manness) has perhaps forgotten some of the basics of our rules in terms of parliamentary language. I do believe to question the honesty of the second most senior Member of the House, a Member who is known for his accuracy in statistics over the years, is out of order. I would ask the Government House Leader to withdraw that comment unequivocally.

An Honourable Member: Withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Mr. Manness: (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, as I am also an economist, I know how economists tend to work with numbers. Let me say to the Member opposite, I certainly will withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Government House Leader.

Agricultural Assistance Fuel Tax Rebate

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Yes, indeed, Dauphin. Mr. Speaker, we have an unprecedented -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please. -(interjection)- Order! Order, please. The Honourable Member for Dauphin has the floor.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, we have an unprecedented crisis in agriculture that is a very serious matter, I am sure of concern to all of us. It comes about as a result of the disgraceful price of grain, soaring fuel costs, high interest rates and the punitive action and inactions of the federal Government and lack of aggressive action by this Conservative Government here in the Province of Manitoba.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that all of us are pleased to see some indication that the federal Government is going to be restoring the interest-free cash advances for grain farmers, something that has come about as a result of a concerted lobby by the New Democrats in Saskatchewan, as well as in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Is there a question?

Mr. Plohman: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister, not because of the action by this Minister. I ask this Minister that since there was no mention in the throne speech of the fuel tax rebates by the federal Government being restored, why there was no mention, and what is the action he is taking to have the federal Government restore the fuel tax rebates, 9.5 cents per litre, which would be a tremendous help during the soaring fuel costs that we are seeing at the present time?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): I am glad to see the Member for Dauphin is as lively as he always was, but he is just putting as much information on the record as normal.

The price of grain is a problem, but certainly the actions by the New Democratic Party did nothing to reinstitute interest-free cash advances which, hopefully, will happen very soon. It has been action by this Government and many other prairie governments across western Canada that have put the issue in front of the federal Government.

I would also remind the Member that we put in place a \$24 million interest rate relief program this year. I would also remind the Member that we just went to Geneva where the issue of GATT discussions is in place, where the issue of being able to resolve the world price of grain and the access to markets is the main issue which must be addressed and which we are addressing.

Mr. Speaker, if the Member wants to ask another question, I would ask him to wait until he has his turn.

Mr. Speaker, he talks about fuel rebates. Yes, that is an issue we have discussed many times at the annual Ministers of Agriculture meeting, that Ministers' meeting occurring again in November here in Winnipeg. I have invited them here. That issue will be on the agenda, along with many other issues in front of the agriculture community today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corp. Low-Interest Loan Program

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for a supplementary at the end of Question Period. I would like to ask the Minister, in light of the fact that there is specific action that he can take, rather than just simply blaming everything on the international problems and GATT talks, specific action such as low interest loans, long-term low interest loans through MACC for particularly young farmers, will this Minister now immediately take action to put in place a low interest loan program, not just for operating for one year, as was done this past year, but long term interest rates for—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Member has just shown his lack of knowledge of what the MACC rates are. They are the lowest available to the farmer from any source. They are lower than FCC, lower than the private sector, and young farmers have a 4 percent interest rebate available to them every year, which we doubled a year ago—we doubled the benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely appalled that this Member has no idea that MACC is the best source of funds, has been for sometime, and we have approved the access to young farmers substantially. I would ask him to catch up on his details a little bit and not bring misinformation to the House.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to proceeding with Orders of the Day, I would like to draw Honourable Members' attention to the loge to my left where we have with us this morning Mr. Harry Harapiak, the former Member for The Pas.

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

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to make a non-political statement?

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

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Hickes: It is a privilege to pay tribute in this House to fellow aboriginal people honoured last

night at the First Annual Aboriginal Honour Celebration Banquet. The Honour Roll inductees are Flora Zaharia, late Tommy Prince, Reggie Leach, late Walter Flett, Isaac Beaulieu, Mary Richard, late Arsene Spence, Art Shofley, Dorothy Betz, Dave Courchene, Sr., late Jackson Beardy and Elsie Bear. Everyone of these individuals have made an incredible contribution on behalf of aboriginal people and for the betterment of our society as a whole.

I am sure all Members in this House join me in extending our thanks and congratulations.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): May I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for St. James have leave to make a non-political statement?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Edwards: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of our Party, I would simply want to add our congratulations to those who were inducted at the banquet last night into the Aboriginal Honour Roll.

I also want to add, as well, our best wishes for a successful remainder of the week, in the week of celebrations and festivities that have surrounded the celebration of aboriginal heritage many, I believe most, of the events taking place in this city. It is truly, I believe, a tribute to the organizers that it has been extremely successful. I think it has been a very important project, not only for the aboriginal community, but for the non-aboriginal community and, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate, on behalf of our Party, those who have been involved in this very important week of festivities. Thank you.

* (1050)

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

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am indeed pleased as well to join with the Honourable Member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) in his non-political statement in recognition of those people and their contribution to the country and to the Native community. I, as well, Mr. Speaker, participated in the official opening of the Aboriginal Celebration Week. I think their theme is to be commended; there is a lot of work to do.

I truly look forward to the aboriginal and to the Native people who are part of this Assembly to help in the times that we are going through to help put on the table some of the ideas and thoughts that they have, so that we all as a society can work better together, and so the lives of everyone will be improved by that. I look forward to the coming months of debate in this Legislature.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): I wonder if I might have leave to make a statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Osborne have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, I would ask all Members in this House to join with me. Last night, all today and into tomorrow, the Manitoba School for the Deaf and the Deaf community in this province will be celebrating 25 years since the return of that facility to this province. I, as Members in this House will know, have a special relationship with that community and I started my working life at that school, and we will be spending some time there this afternoon.

That school has provided an important focus for the Deaf community in this province and has allowed that community to grow and to take its own place in this community. I would ask all Members in this House to join with us in supporting them and thanking them for the work they have done these last 25 years.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CONSIDERATION OF THE THRONE SPEECH

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you call a motion dealing with the throne speech?

Mr. Speaker: Consideration of the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

Mrs. Rosemary Vodrey (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose), that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor as follows:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, in Session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been

pleased to address us at the opening of the present Session.

Motion presented.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mrs. Rosemary Vodrey (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I regard this opportunity to move the acceptance of the throne speech as an honour and a privilege.

I would like to begin with my congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, on your reappointment to the office of Speaker.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the Pages. I hope that your experience here in the Legislature will be enjoyable and rewarding along with the hard work that I know you will do.

I would also like to welcome my new colleagues of all Parties to the Legislature, and I look forward to working with you.

I am very grateful to the people of Fort Garry for this opportunity and responsibility to represent their interests and concerns in the Legislature as their full-time MLA.

I also want the people of Manitoba to understand that I am concerned with issues of wider effect. I have travelled this province in areas to the north and south and the east and the west with task forces relating to health and literacy. I have met with residents, and I have heard their special concerns. I have been privileged to see their homes and schools and hospitals and community centres, and I have met with their elders and community leaders and the community members themselves. These people and their concerns, which are sometimes of a distinct and local nature, are also of a concern and an interest to me.

Mr. Speaker, I moved to Manitoba in 1975. My husband is a fourth generation Manitoban, and my children are fifth generation Manitobans. Both sides of my husband's family were pioneers in their own way: his mother's family, early settlers around Riverton; his father's family, urban business people and politicians. We are here to stay.

My professional background includes teaching at the University of Manitoba the Faculty of Human Ecology and Family Studies, teaching at the Misericordia School of Nursing and doing research there, and clinical work with children and families in the school system. The focus of all of this work has

been direct counselling and assessment, and the teaching of human development and clinical skills.

In addition, I worked in counselling and referral as a local broadcaster and a volunteer speaker in the community. Most recently, I have been attending the University of Manitoba in the Faculty of Law. This has been another avenue to be sure that people have the best chance to tell their story, and also a genuine interest in the law and the legal system.

Politics has been a lifelong interest and dream. I have been an interested observer who hoped to be elected and to be part of the political process. My family has been very supportive and my children are now at an age where they can understand the commitment. My success is also due to their support and their understanding.

The skills that I bring to this House are largely influenced by my background and my work with people. I am a listener, and I want to hear all sides and to weigh the issues in order to make good decisions.

Let me tell you a little about my constituency. Fort Garry is an urban area located in the southern part of Winnipeg. It was settled by pioneer families and many of those farmed. I was pleased to meet many of those early pioneers recently who told me of the changes and the developments they have seen as Fort Garry has grown and changed from rural to an urban area.

There are several areas of distinct residential interest in Fort Garry. Old Fort Garry, an area of older settled homes and mature trees, this area includes Wildwood Park, a community entirely facing a park with no roads except by back lane along its perimeter. Old Fort Garry and Wildwood have seen several generations of Manitobans raised there, a residential community surrounding the university somewhat newer than old Fort Garry. This area includes people doing all kinds of work, including students, support staff and professors at the university as well as those engaged in many other businesses and activities. Thirdly, Waverley Heights, a community within Fort Garry of about 20 years, quite well-known for its community spirit, and fourthly, Whyte Ridge, a newer development and a community of approximately five years. Fort Garry has a good balanced mix of single and multiunit dwellings throughout the constituency.

Small business is the cornerstone of economic activity in Fort Garry as it is in all parts of Manitoba.

Fort Garry residents are joined by other Winnipeggers in their support of our local stores, shops and service providers. Fort Garry has a natural concentration of business along its main traffic arteries, particularly Pembina Highway.

* (1100)

Just as a balanced mix of single and multiple residential dwellings is necessary for a strong community, so is a good mix of small business, light industry, manufacturing and heavy industry. Fort Garry boasts a good balance of all aspects of business within its boundaries; in fact, many of our larger complexes operate on shifts around the clock.

Our largest provincial university, the University of Manitoba, is located in Fort Garry. Its campus is a beautiful place to visit, a mixture of old and new buildings and agricultural farm land. The Fort Garry School Division is responsible for elementary and secondary education. Its responsibilities extend into the constituencies to the north and the south of my own.

The Victoria General Hospital is located in Fort Garry, and it provides in-patient and out-patient care and emergency service.

Fort Garry also has places of worship for many different religious groups. My experience is that Fort Garry is a dynamic and welcoming community, and I thank the people of Fort Garry for the opportunity of representing them.

The people of Fort Garry raised several issues of importance. They were reflected yesterday in the throne speech. Let me tell you about them.

First of all, economic development: employment is important, and development leads to employment. In Fort Garry there are some large industries, but we need to continue to encourage businesses to settle in Manitoba. We need to create an atmosphere where business will not only come here, but will stay.

As a result of this economic development, benefits will accrue to the whole community. In terms of small business, large business and industry is only a part of a healthy economic picture. Many Manitobans have used their initiative to develop and proceed with small businesses. These provide in some cases a dream come true for entrepreneurs and employment in a personalized setting for others. As the secretary-treasurer of a small business, I know that small business creates employment.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the Filmon Government's record in accomplishments in economic development. We introduced a new \$5 million program to provide new businesses with start-up financing and business training. The Business Start Program will be targeted at women and rural entrepreneurs.

We established a \$30 million venture capital fund administered by the private sector that provides investment capital for Manitoba businesses, Vision Capital Fund. We established an Export Assistance Program to stimulate growth in the manufacturing and service sector for businesses wanting to export to the United States under free trade.

We signed a Western Provinces Inter-Provincial Trade Barrier Reduction Agreement to assist Manitoba businesses in obtaining projects and contracts in the western provinces, and we introduced the Small Business Tax Reduction Program in 1988. This gives small businesses in Manitoba a one-year tax holiday.

All of these examples, Mr. Speaker, show our Government's determination to build a strong Manitoba. That determination was demonstrated yesterday in the throne speech.

The environment: we have all seen and share a growing concern for our future, our children and our grandchildren. These concerns are real and powerful and focus on the environment.

Mr. Speaker, our Government introduced The Waste Reduction and Prevention Act to promote recycling initiatives along with a \$1 million commitment to reduce the amount of solid waste in half by the year 2000.

Our Government has a strong record of accomplishment on the environment, but a Government can only go so far. These concerns must translate into action on all levels. Equally important is action by an individual, family-by-family, household-by-household basis.

We are supporting the pilot blue bag project of bag collection programs in the City of Winnipeg. We are protecting the Red River by requiring the City of Winnipeg to clean up its sewage outlets and stop snow dumping in the river.

Mr. Speaker, it is up to each and every one of us. Individuals in their own homes must also take action and share in this responsibility. I am particularly concerned that our youth become involved, that our young people receive the information that they need

to help plan ahead and, in many cases, to teach their own families and older community members how to do things with the environment in mind. We must realize, it starts with us. We must ensure that future development is sustainable development.

Education: Mr. Speaker, education is an issue of great concern if we are going to make an environmental difference and have our lives bring us personal satisfaction. The largest university in our province, the University of Manitoba, is located in Fort Garry, and I know that post-secondary issues, from the point of view of students, and also professional and support staff, must continue to be addressed. Post-secondary education is a long-term investment. Its benefits are not always measurable immediately but continue to grow in the years to come. Through post-secondary education we can encourage talented professionals, both clinical and research, to settle in our province. We can train and educate those who wish to learn right here, and we can encourage them to stay.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that our Government increased funding to the universities by 7 percent, the largest increase in six years. We established a literacy task force and provided over \$400,000 in programs. We established a literacy office and a literacy council. This will assist Manitobans of all ages, even adults who, for whatever reasons, are lacking in basic literacy skills.

We enhanced funding to improve educational opportunities available to adults, seniors, the mentally handicapped and individuals with special needs.

Education, elementary and secondary programs are also vitally important. In the elementary years we have our chance to engage youth in their early formal learning process. In the secondary school years we can encourage students to learn and to experience and to build on those early skills and to develop toward their own career goals and their goals of individual fulfillment.

Services to people: in the work of economic development, environmental planning and protection and the process of education, we must be mindful of those in our province who need support and resources to assist them personally, support such as health care, both acute and extended care. The extended care provided may for some Manitobans make their last home a place that is comfortable and supportive.

Children and families need supports through periods of crisis and trauma. Each individual may define a crisis differently, and we must support their definition and their cries for help. Some families have members with special needs, and these individuals may need assistance to remain in the community. Women and children need shelter and education so they will not be victims of violence and of neglect.

Mr. Speaker, our Government commissioned the Health Advisory Network to undertake an extensive examination of the needs for long-term care facilities in Winnipeg. The result was an announcement that \$75 million would be spent over the next three years in the construction of 675 new personal care home, chronic care and rehabilitation beds.

In services to people, our Government has a proven track record. We provided \$200,000 to launch a wife abuse as a crime public awareness campaign aimed at the prevention and the reporting of wife abuse. We increased funding by 47 percent to wife abuse shelters and crisis lines. We more than doubled funding to the child protection centre.

* (1110)

We established Winnipeg's first Native women's shelter which will house a province-wide toll-free crisis line. We are establishing a working group on community living to investigate new and innovative ways of meeting the ongoing needs of Manitobans with disabilities.

We established a training program to upgrade the skills of 1,800 individuals who work with mentally handicapped Manitobans. Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of working with mentally handicapped individuals in Manitoba for six years.

Finally, those services to people, along with those services, I would like to speak of rights, the rights of individuals to speak. Ours laws guarantee a person's right to free speech, to speak to each other and to speak to, and through, their elected representatives, the right to be heard, to be confident that what has been spoken is heard in a forum and at a time when it can be listened to and under circumstances where it can be understood, and the right to listen, the right to listen to all variations and variety of opinions from all people who wish to speak, the right to listen and to be informed.

These are important rights for all people and I look

forward to putting them into practice here in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, let the people of Fort Garry, and all of Manitoba, know that I have a commitment to continue to listen and to understand their concerns. My sign-off as a broadcaster was "Talking Helps," and I look forward to talking with and listening to Manitobans in examining the serious issues before us. Thank you.

Mr. Bob Rose (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, let me begin by adding my congratulations to you on again being chosen Speaker of this Assembly. It is an indication of respect and admiration for past performance, and it also indicates confidence that you will continue to serve this House in a manner that promotes a high level of debate that Manitobans rightfully expect from their elected representatives.

As a former constituent I can also add, on behalf of the people of Turtle Mountain, our appreciation for your past service as our MLA, and also for those parts of the constituency that were represented by the Honourable Don Orchard and the Honourable Jim Downey, our appreciation to those two worthy people as well.

It seems to be a rule that the constituency of Turtle Mountain elect people of outstanding quality. I think not only of the Honourable Denis Rocan, but the Honourable Brian Ransom and the Honourable Sterling Lyon as well. At this stage I can only hope that I will not be the exception to the rule. Perhaps the reason for the quality of representation is the quality of people who live in Turtle Mountain. Most of our residents are industrious. They are good citizens with a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, religions and languages, people who understand that logic and reason should not be mistaken for prejudice or bigotry. We sometimes have our little disagreements in Turtle Mountain. There is nothing like a minor hockey tournament to develop the spirit of competition among communities, but these little conflicts amongst ourselves are just part of the spice of life. In reality these people of different backgrounds and languages live together in harmony and work together to improve the quality of life in our towns and our communities.

I think, Mr. Speaker, of centres like Pilot Mount, Crystal City, Cartwright, Killarney, Boissevain, Baldur, Belmont, Ninette, Wawanesa and Souris, to mention some of the larger centres where the citizens have worked in co-operation with other

levels of Government to provide education, health and recreation facilities. I think of many smaller communities, too numerous to mention, where declining populations over the years have led to their decline as well, but where hundreds of people still live, very aware of the fact that people services are best delivered as close to home as possible, whether it be teaching children or treating patients. Moving them farther away from home is detrimental, even though population declines sometimes dictate no other choice.

I think, Mr. Speaker, of the thousands of people in Turtle Mountain who live in our productive and diversified farms and who in the final analysis ask little more from society than the right and opportunity to produce and market their produce without unfair competition, and also recognition from society that those rows and rows in supermarkets piled high with high quality and economical food does not just happen.

If we are to continue to enjoy a high standard of food availability and at the same time recognizing the tremendous contribution agriculture makes to our economy over time, society must be prepared to help our primary producers in times of negative or low returns. The need is urgent, Mr. Speaker, when you consider that some of the costs of producing this year's bountiful harvest that we have just enjoyed were incurred more than a year ago, it is certainly not unreasonable to ask for the return of interest-free cash advances until such time as the system can accept farm stored grain.

I applaud the acceptance of the Manitoba Government in principle of a proposed comprehensive safety net program, and I urge this House to work toward quickly and co-operatively developing a shared safety net program that is acceptable to producers, the provinces and the federal Government and has at least the basic support of all three political Parties so that some permanency of programs can be in place. The ad hoc support programs of the past, while necessary and very welcome, do little to encourage stability in agriculture.

This Government's undertaking to pursue aggressive marketing strategies for agricultural products, working together with producers and industry, is also worthy of applause.

We must also continue to strive to control costs of agricultural production. The escalating price of oil,

for example, makes it even more imperative that all levels of Government refrain from taxing farm fuels.

Turtle Mountain has many small businesses and industries, Mr. Speaker, as well as an agricultural economic base—industries like Western Archrib in Boissevain, who supplies their rafters locally, nationally and internationally, a good example of the possibilities of expanding off-farm income, a program that is part of this Government's thrust.

The area also enjoys some of the finest recreational opportunities in the province, with many facilities for winter recreation and beautiful and challenging golf courses to enjoy in summer. Two unique attractions are the Souris swinging bridge, a bridge across the Souris River, and the International Peace Gardens just south of Boissevain on Highway No. 10, a spacious, magnificent and tranquil garden straddling the border between Canada and the United States and known worldwide as a symbol of co-operation and peace and understanding between two countries. Unique events such as the Boissevain Turtle Derby also attract international attention.

In short, Turtle Mountain has many advantages for local residents and many attractions for tourism as well. Our beautiful lakes and streams provide opportunities for swimming, boating, fishing and other water sports, as well as habitat for waterfowl, even though the recent drought has jeopardized these activities through low water levels in some of our lakes.

Pelican Lake, for example, the first in a series of lakes along the Pembina River chain, is at such a low level as to drastically affect the enjoyment of local people and cottage owners and drastically affect the businesses in the area as well that rely on tourist dollars for their survival. Fortunately, plans are in place with the support of the provincial and federal Governments to manage water levels in Pelican Lake to a greater degree. The Pelican Lake Enhancement Project is presently studying environmental concerns as well as examining the downstream impact of the project. Later today I will be attending a PFRA open house in Ninette where there will be a public opportunity for discussion and consultation.

Tourism is an important part of our provincial economy, and the constituency of Turtle Mountain has much to offer to enhance that provincial attraction to tourists.

* (1120)

I spoke earlier of our residents as industrious people. They are fully aware, Mr. Speaker, that Government's contribution to economic development is best directed toward providing a climate that promotes the ambition, ingenuity and imagination of its citizens. A recent example in our constituency is the potential development of contracting data entry work in the Town of Boissevain. At the initiative of the local community development corporation and the with the help of a grant from Industry, Trade and Tourism to conduct a feasibility study, this idea in less than a year has moved through the development stage to a trial basis operation in the very near future—another good example, Mr. Speaker, of the difference between what happens when Government programs encourage industry rather than the opposite.

The people of Turtle Mountain also recognize that some services and social programs are best delivered by the province. It is encouraging then when our contribution to provincial payrolls is recognized through the decentralization program. Having our local economy share in Government payrolls makes our rural communities even better places to live. It also helps to maintain good schools and good health care facilities and social services which all Manitobans should enjoy and which this Government is committed to preserving.

I have no reason to believe that the decentralization program is anything other than right on schedule and you can be sure that new people and new jobs will receive a warm welcome. Killarney and Souris, the two towns in Turtle Mountain that will benefit most under the decentralization program, are both vibrant communities of friendly people. Most of the amenities of urban living are combined with a more leisurely lifestyle. Red, amber and green lights bring thoughts of Christmas, not traffic.

Mr. Speaker, I have been a farmer and a businessman for 35 years and a politician for something like five months, but I have already caught myself saying "clearly" a couple of times when the issue was not clear at all. It reminds me that the people of Manitoba expect their representatives to act honestly and with respect for other points of view.

People are seldom complimentary of politicians,

but they were delighted with Manitoba's performance in Ottawa during last spring's Meech Lake week-long struggle. The co-operation and inclusion of all Party Leaders on an issue as important as the Constitution is politics at its best.

People are angered and frustrated with politicians who act in a self-serving manner. They are angered and frustrated with politicians who bicker among themselves while the object of governing seems to be lost in the struggle to gain political advantage. They are angered and frustrated with politicians who forget to represent their constituents. I do not mean by that a politician is not expected to use judgment based on logic and reason on most matters, or that he or she should yield to every special interest group or demonstrator, but rather I refer to the so-called silent majority—and not always silent anymore—who quietly go about their business of paying taxes and being good citizens and are concerned with the direction our elected representatives sometimes seem to be headed. They are angry and frustrated with politicians who seem to have a callous disregard for taxpayers.

Governments do not create wealth, people do and the only source of revenue our Government has is from the perspiration and efforts of its citizens. Perhaps it is time to stop referring to Government grants or Government funding and news releases, perhaps it is time to replace these soothing phrases with something more honest like this project will cost X millions of dollars of taxpayers' money, or this project to improve our standard of living is financed by money borrowed from our children. Thanks kids.

I was a trustee in the Souris Valley School Division for 16 years and while our contribution to our fine public school system we have in Manitoba was small compared to the other 12,000 capable teachers and administrators, at least when we handed out a high school diploma we did not have to say, oh, by the way, here is your mortgage as well. That was because we had—dare I whisper it at a senior level of Government—a balanced budget. This is not to say, Mr. Speaker, that people expect a massive correction in our financial course, but only that the pilots as the helm have a clear vision of the icebergs of uncontrolled Government spending. I believe that this Government has that clear vision, and its attention to live within its means is welcomed by Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that none of the politicians that I have described are in this

Assembly. Generally the Manitoba electors have the good sense to elect people of integrity, regardless of political belief.

It would be remiss of me if I did not publicly express appreciation for this opportunity for an inaugural address. Thank you, as well, to the voters of Turtle Mountain; thank you to those people who have gone before us, the pioneers who broke land and planted the trees and built our towns and our cities and developed this great province; thank you to those brave men and women who risked their lives in world conflict not that many years ago so that we might continue to meet in free and open assembly; and thank you to the Members of the Assembly for listening to me this morning. I look forward to working with the other 56 Members toward good Government for our province.

My experience on the executive of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, where urban, northern and rural school boards are represented taught me that people, and people problems, are very similar regardless of geography. It taught me that listening leads to understanding, that discussion and consultation generally lead to problem solving much quicker than confrontation. This principle applies even though the mix in this House is much greater than geographic. The mix includes gender, race, religion, ethnic backgrounds, age, as well as longevity of citizenship. Some Manitobans are newcomers, some have roots that go back before the formation of the province. Regardless, we are all proud of our heritage and we are all proud of our province, and it is with pride that I, as a grandson of a first generation Manitoban, and a grandfather of fifth generation Manitobans, second the throne speech. Thank you.

HOUSE BUSINESS

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering whether or not there might be unanimous consent for me to move a motion dealing with the special committee of seven persons, in other words, the striking committee of the House. I wonder if I might move that, please.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Government House Leader have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that a special

committee of seven persons be appointed to prepare and report, with all convenient speed, a list of Members to compose the Standing Committees ordered by this House, and that such committees shall be composed as follows:

Mr. Ashton (Thompson), Hon. Mr. Downey (Arthur-Virden), Messrs. Helwer (Gimli) and Lamoureux (Inkster), Hon. Messrs. Manness (Morris) and McCrae (Brandon West), and Mr. Hickee (Point Douglas).

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): I move, seconded by the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that the House be adjourned.

Motion agreed to, and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Monday.

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Friday, October 12, 1990

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

House Business

Oral Question Period

Rafferty-Alameda Dam Project
Doer; Filmon 11

Senate Appointments
Doer; Filmon 12

Rafferty-Alameda Dam Project
Edwards; Filmon 13

Agape House
Barrett; Gilleshammer 15

Women's Crisis Shelters
Barrett; Gilleshammer 16

Aboriginal People
Lathlin; Downey 16

Goods and Services Tax
Carstairs; Filmon 17

Economic Growth
L.S. Evans; Manness 18

Employment Programs
L.S. Evans; Manness 19

Agricultural Assistance
Plohman; Findlay 19

Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corp.
Plohman; Findlay 20

Non-Political Statements

Aboriginal Honour Celebration Banquet
Hickes; Edwards; Downey 20

Manitoba School for the Deaf
Alcock 21

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Throne Speech Debate

Vodrey; Rose 21

Special Committee appointment
Manness

27