



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, July 25, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: To the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid). I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member. It conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules.

Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): To the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba

The petition of the undersigned citizens, of the province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth:

THAT the Winnipeg International Airport is vital to the economic health of the city of Winnipeg, and the project known as "The Pines," in its current location, will jeopardize the future of Winnipeg International Airport.

THAT to risk the jobs of the hundreds of people who are employed at the airport is not in the best interests of the community.

THAT "The Pines" project will inhibit riverbank access to the general public.

THAT the strip mall portion of "The Pines" project will give a foothold to commercial development which is incompatible with the residential nature of the neighbourhood.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to respect the wishes of the neighbourhood by requesting the provincial government to withdraw provincial funding of "The Pines" project.

AND as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker: To the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale). I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member. It conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules.

Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Mr. Clerk: To the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba

The petition of the undersigned citizens, of the province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth:

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THAT to risk the jobs of the hundreds of people who are employed at the airport is not in the best interests of the community.

THAT "The Pines" project will inhibit riverbank access to the general public.

THAT the strip mall portion of "The Pines" project will give a foothold to commercial development which is incompatible with the residential nature of the neighbourhood.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to respect the wishes of the neighbourhood by requesting the provincial government to withdraw provincial funding of "The Pines" project.

AND as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1989-90 Annual Report of the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report for 1990-91 of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Oak Hammock Marsh Ducks Unlimited Headquarters

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): We have seen the Conservative government in power

over their majority government act in quite a bit of a different manner than they did in a minority government. The consensus style of the government is gone. The word "arrogant" has been ascribed to this government. The insensitive words have been described to this government. Words that had been associated only with Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in the past are now being used on the streets and in the avenues in the province of Manitoba.

There is always a chance to change, and there is always a chance to show sensitivity to the issues that are facing Manitobans. Yesterday, again, many other Canadians now have joined Manitoba groups to oppose the Ducks Unlimited complex at Oak Hammock Marsh—interesting comments, I might add, from the Conservative caucus on the most recent story. Conservation Canada, Friends of Oak Hammock Marsh, the Manitoba Naturalists Club, the Sierra Club have joined countless other Manitobans who have presented briefs before Bill 38 and have presented opinions before this government on this complex.

Will the Premier now agree to take the leadership position that Manitobans need and want on this complex, the Ducks Unlimited complex at Oak Hammock Marsh? Would he impose the vision of Manitobans to leave that area as a wetlands area, not an area with asphalt and buildings, et cetera, that are envisioned in the plan being sponsored by his Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns)? Would he, as the Premier, withdraw the money that his government is providing to this complex and take the leadership position and cancel that program and that building for the Oak Hammock Marsh in Manitoba?

* (1335)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, anyone who might want to, for their own political purposes, describe this government as arrogant has either a short memory or did not experience the Pawley years in this province. If they wanted to look at arrogance, they ought to look at some of the behaviour and some of the responses of people like Parasiuk, Schroeder, Lecuyer and many others. They obviously have not seen real arrogance when they talk about that. We will ignore those political cheap shots, and we will look directly at the question that was asked by the Leader of the Opposition.

I say, very sincerely, this government will abide by all of the legislation, all of the requirements and regulations of The Environment Act as they were laid out, passed and conceived by the former NDP administration. There is, in that legislation, what has been termed by New Democrats as the toughest, most restrictive environmental legislation in the entire country. There is the most restrictive environmental assessment and review process.

The most thorough and complete environmental assessment and review that has ever been done in this province was done on the Oak Hammock Marsh development proposal of Ducks Unlimited, with witnesses expert on both sides of the case and a third-party independent review. That proposal was given licensing with conditions, and we as a government will abide by that legislation that was conceived and passed by the New Democrats. We will abide by that thorough complete review process that was conceived by that legislation. We will abide by it and not politically interfere with it.

Mr. Doer: Thank you very much to the Premier.

Bill 38 Withdrawal

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): If he is going to abide by the legislation passed by the New Democrats, I guess he does not need Bill 38 to give his cabinet more power to override the existing legislation. I guess we got an admission from the Premier today that he is going to withdraw Bill 38 finally. He is going to finally listen to the people of this province.

If the Premier is going to abide by his word that he gave us in Question Period just a minute ago, he will instruct his ministers to withdraw Bill 38 so indeed we can abide by the existing legislation. Why is he afraid of the court action from the Friends of Oak Hammock Marsh? Why does he want to ascribe to his cabinet more power that is not there presently by the former New Democratic legislation? Will he now agree to withdraw Bill 38 and listen to the people of Manitoba? Do not give more power to cabinet to override the will of the public. Do not be afraid of court action from the Friends of Oak Hammock Marsh and indeed abide by the former legislation which is in place.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): As has been pointed out very accurately and very honestly by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), Bill 38 simply

confirms in legislation the powers that were taken upon the government by the former NDP administration, by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) when he was Minister of Natural Resources, by several successive NDP ministers by regulation, Mr. Speaker. What they took on upon themselves as government, by regulation, we have confirmed in law to ensure that legally everything they did is confirmed by Bill 38. That is all that has been done. Any lawyer will confirm that for the opposition party.

* (1340)

Mr. Doer: Any lawyer will confirm the government was so afraid of a court case from Friends of Oak Hammock Marsh that they had to give their cabinet more power so they would not have to worry about the will of the people to stop this project. That is what happened with this government and Bill 38.

Oak Hammock Marsh Ducks Unlimited Headquarters

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): The Premier, yesterday, in answers to the media and answers in the House, stated that the Clean Environment Commission was an arms-length process from government. There were two parts of the decision dealing with this project. One was the environmental process; the other was the funding decision. The Premier chairs Treasury Board; the Premier chairs cabinet. This provincial cabinet had ostracized hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money to go into this project.

Will the Premier now take a leadership position and withdraw the provincial money, money that could be used in programs like the Winnipeg Education Centre, money that could be used in our community colleges, money that could be used in our public education system? Would he withdraw the money that he has authorized for this unneeded project so that it could really be spent on the priority areas of this province, not on a building in the middle of the wetland region?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I repeat, to refute the preamble of the Leader of the Opposition, that Bill 38 simply confirms exactly the same powers that were put in place by the cabinet of the former New Democratic administration. In effect, all we are doing is making an honest man of the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman). That is all that we are doing.

Again, to correct the information that has been put on the table by the Leader of the Opposition, the money that has been invested from the Canada-Manitoba Tourism Agreement in the Oak Hammock Marsh development is money that, if it were not used for that purpose, would lapse. That money would not be available for Education, would not be available for Health, would not be available for anything. It is part of an agreement that was negotiated and signed by the former New Democratic administration.

The money that comes out of Natural Resources is money that was already going to the interpretive centre of Oak Hammock Marsh. It was in the annual operational budgets for Oak Hammock. It remains coming out of the Natural Resources department for the support of Oak Hammock Marsh in a new, expanded interpretive centre, Mr. Speaker, so let him not try and mislead the public or misinterpret that.

Rural Manitoba Municipal Funding

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, the Premier and his colleagues continue to criticize their federal cousins for offloading services onto the provinces reducing EPF funding, but the provincial Conservatives are doing the same thing to our municipalities, for example, offloading 2,000 kilometres of roads in the last budget, roads which municipalities are refusing to pick up. I have a copy of the Conservative press release from the last election, which outlines this government's commitment to development in rural Manitoba, but this press release reads like a bunch of broken promises.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Premier. Why have he and his colleagues chosen to break promises to rural Manitobans by offloading services onto municipalities, cutting back municipal operating grants and refusing to go ahead with previous commitments? Is it because they now have a Tory majority and do not have to keep their promises?

* (1345)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I would recommend to the member for Swan River that, rather than listening to her colleagues and reading old press releases, she go out there and talk to rural Manitobans because rural Manitobans are absolutely delighted with the promises and the

commitments that we are keeping to them. Go out and talk to the people about the fact that, by this year-end, we will have 450 decentralized positions in rural Manitoba.

Talk to the people of rural Manitoba about the Rural Development Bond program that will see \$10 million of investment in rural Manitoba for economic development. Talk to the people of rural Manitoba about the Southern Development Initiative that will see tens of millions of dollars of economic development in rural Manitoba—talk—\$19 million in communities such as Winkler, Morden, Steinbach, Brandon, Portage la Prairie, Teulon, Dauphin, Mr. Speaker, all of those areas. Talk to the people of rural Manitoba about \$45 million in the GRIP program that will go into the hands of rural Manitobans.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the Premier that I have been out in rural Manitoba, and I have talked to people. They do not believe—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I remind the honourable member, this is not a time for debate. The honourable member, with her supplementary question.

Ms. Wowchuk: The federal government's revenue to Manitoba has increased by 5.2 percent according to this government's own budget, yet these increases have not been passed onto municipalities. Instead, programs and services are being offloaded onto the backs of rural Manitobans.

I ask the Premier: Given the fact that he is accusing the federal government of being dishonest and not transferring money back to the provinces, why has his government reduced funding to the municipalities by over 13 percent?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the provincial municipal tax-sharing agreement has been in place for many, many years. It was established back by the Schreyer government. It was only the NDP government of Howard Pawley that attempted to limit the transfers and in fact took away 14 percent of the increase from the rural Manitoba municipalities. We allowed that to flow so that they got a massive increase in 1988. Despite the fact that the Leader of the Opposition said that the provincial government needed the money much, much more, that money flowed into the hands of rural municipalities.

He justified it. He said, after all, we need the money more. He said, we pay for health care. He

said, we pay for environment; we pay for education, all those expensive services. He said, rural municipalities are going to have to do with less. He said, we are proud of the fact that we are limiting it, because we have greater needs, Mr. Speaker. That was the greatest travesty that was ever foisted upon rural municipalities in the province. We would not do that. We are flowing along a tax-sharing agreement, unimpeded, as it was designed by the Schreyer administration for the benefit of rural municipalities.

Policing Services

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, today we learned that Pilot Mound Council has asked the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council to provide policing services for them because they can no longer afford the RCMP costs and extra policing costs that they have been asked to pick up.

Will the Premier now commit assistance to Pilot Mound and other rural communities which have not been able to afford the additional costs, along with the other offloading that they have been asked to pick up so that small towns and municipalities can have policing services that they need?

* (1350)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the issue of RCMP costs has been raised by the member for Swan River, because I think that it is time that the New Democrats got up and applauded the efforts of the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) for all the work that he did over a period of more than a year. He stood alone amongst Justice ministers in this country, saying, we will not allow the federal government to unilaterally impose major increases in costs on the municipalities and the provinces of this country.

As a result of his efforts, we beat back the federal government. They have one year in which they will not increase the costs, they will not move to a new formula and they have agreed to come to the table to negotiate a new rate and not do it unilaterally. As a result, the municipalities of this province have been saved millions and millions of dollars, Mr. Speaker, because of his efforts, and I would expect that, the next time the member for Swan River gets up, it is to compliment the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) on his efforts.

The Rotary Pines Project Funding Review

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Urban Affairs.

Previously, we have heard from the former federal Minister of Transport, Mr. Lewis, and from Mr. Marshall Rothstein, who was the chairman of the Transportation Industry Development Advisory Committee, of their opposition to The Pines project. Today I want to table a further letter, dated July 22 of this year, from the now Minister of Transport, Mr. Corbeil, which goes further than just opposing the project but in fact states in part: "Without legislative protection, Winnipeg International Airport, and by precedent, all other federal, provincial, municipal and private airports/aerodromes in Manitoba become open to pressure"

Mr. Speaker, given this very clear prediction by the federal Minister of Transport of the dire consequences of this project on the airport in Winnipeg and around the province from the very people who will set those restrictions, will the minister now rethink his blind commitment to this project.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as we have indicated on a number of occasions, we are of the view that the current review of Plan Winnipeg is the process that needs to be gone through respecting concerns over the airport and its future.

As a matter of fact, those very concerns and that very recommendation is contained in the report of the airport advisory committee to the Minister of Urban Affairs, in its report from last summer. We are following their recommendations in that regard.

They have also indicated that provincial legislation should be implemented, as it has been in Alberta. Mr. Speaker, I am assured that the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) would indicate that Mr. Corbeil has now written to every province in the country suggesting the same kind of activity for their airports. If they have not, then it is a little suspect.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately this minister will not be the one who sets those restrictions. I want to just quote very briefly from the letter again: "The enactment of protective legislation by the Province of Manitoba, which was recommended by the Advisory Committee established by the Province in 1989, is in my view

the best approach to deal with an issue like that raised by the proposed Rotary Pines development."

Why is this minister passing the buck down to the city officials, the very people who have done nothing but allowed development around the airport which has been adverse to the interests of that airport for the people of this province?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, I repeat again for the benefit of the member for St. James. It is our view that the process of Plan Winnipeg, with extensive public hearings, with detailed analysis of problems, not just one specific project, not just subdivisions in the constituency of the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), for instance, but a number of existing areas that have been there for a long time, which also need addressing, those, quite frankly, from the member for St. James' constituency. A number of those issues need to be dealt with.

The primary responsibility for that falls on the City of Winnipeg. They will deal with that through the process of Plan Winnipeg. At such time as their recommendations come forward in the renewed Plan Winnipeg agreement, if they are inadequate in our view, we will take other necessary action to ensure that the public interest is protected.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, the time for necessary action is now. The minister says that the city has primary responsibility, but he and the provincial government are the ones who are promoting and pushing ahead The Pines project.

My question for the minister: Given that he has such faith in the public process which he says will ensue, the review of the airport, will he put The Pines project on hold until such time as that review is completed? That is the only logical thing to do, given the conclusions he has just put to this House.

* (1355)

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, as I have said on a number of occasions, and I will repeat it again for my honourable friend, the process of the review of Plan Winnipeg is now underway. It is anticipated to be completed by June 1 of next year.

That process will involve extensive public hearings, extensive analysis of planning problems associated with the city of Winnipeg. They are the primary planning authority for the city. They have the primary responsibility. When they have completed their analysis, completed their recommendations with regard to Plan Winnipeg, then we will address the issue if that

recommendation under Plan Winnipeg does not go far enough in our view.

In the interim, Mr. Speaker, I have indicated I will not allow any changes to Plan Winnipeg that have any connection with the airport.

Port of Churchill All-Party Committee

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

Before the election, this government promised jobs for the North, a commitment to the Port of Churchill and educational opportunities in the North. This year, this government is taking out over \$200,000 in health care user fees from the North, along with the federal Conservatives who have taken over 25 jobs out of the Port of Churchill alone, a shutdown in the Northern Youth Corps, and a shutdown of the employment services office in Churchill.

My question is to the Minister of Highways and Transportation. Since, at this late date, only one ship from Poland has been committed to the port for this year, why has the Minister of Highways and Transportation not set up an all-party delegation, including The Pas Port of Churchill committee to go to Ottawa and meet with the federal ministers who are refusing to support this port?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, time and time again, I have put forward the position of this government and myself and the action that we have taken regarding the Port of Churchill. Our position is not a political position. I think all members of this House have the same support for the Port of Churchill, and I indicated just last week that I am hoping to meet with the federal minister. I anticipate doing that within the week, and failing to have a positive response to him, I have indicated an invitation to members that I would then try and see whether we could jointly organize to put pressure on. Time is running short in Churchill. The bay is open. Grain could be moving through there. I am still hoping very positively that the Wheat Board is going to be announcing some sales for grain to move through the Port of Churchill very shortly.

Government Initiatives

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the same minister.

Since two years ago, a delegation of northern MLAs, officials and supporters were able to force the minister responsible for the Wheat Board to reverse his stand. I want to ask the minister once again why he will not go to bat for Churchill this time instead of writing more ineffective and futile letters to Ottawa?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, might I suggest that the member get his head out of the sand if he has any misconception that they as a group went forward and forced the minister responsible for the Wheat Board to change his mind because that is not the way the game is being played and it does not work that way. I will continue, along with my colleagues, to keep pushing and try to influence and lobby as best we can in terms of trying to get action through the Port of Churchill.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to the same minister: I am just looking at what the reality is out there up north. At a time when Manitoba is looking at a new record grain production, does the minister not recognize the fact that the port needs at least 700,000 tonnes to break even and deserves a minimum of 3 percent of Canadian grain shipments?

Why has this minister never announced a single commitment of his government to utilize and upgrade the Port of Churchill?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the member again makes reference to the North and the lack of interest of this government. I might just indicate to him that we have two major bridges that we will be officially opening at the end of this month, the Bakers Narrows bridge as well as the Jack River bridge at Norway House, bridges that cost millions of dollars and are justifiably built up in the North. So the commitment of this government to the North is well noted in terms of not only words but in actions as well.

If the member wants to go through the history of what has happened with the Port of Churchill since the time when there were 7,000 people living in Churchill, under their administration, we are down to 700 right now. Let him look at the whole history of what has happened and the position that we have taken in terms of support for the communities up north.

* (1400)

Grand Beach Concessions Tender Process

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, in the past few weeks, we have witnessed many examples of the questionable tendering policies of this government. The Provincial Auditor himself has recently criticized these practices.

Mr. Speaker, last year, before election, the proposal call for Grand Beach concessions was sent out and subsequently contracted. A copy of the criteria used in selecting the tender clearly shows that it was markedly different from the criteria contained in the original call for proposals, including the addition of criteria and the waiting of criteria.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Will the minister tell this House why their criteria were changed and why applicants were not informed of the changes, as required in his department's tendering policy?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that question as notice in terms of the specifics. I point out to the honourable member that these are indeed proposal calls, and that is quite a different matter than a tender call where it is a matter of dollars and cents. Park planners, park managers have to be satisfied that the proposal being put forward by different individuals and groups of individuals for the various activities on a site such as Grand Beach have to, in the opinion of the park's managers, provide the kind of entertainment opportunities, concession opportunities that are deemed appropriate for that particular park.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Mr. Speaker, in correspondence to one of the unsuccessful applicants, the minister indicated that an objective decision-making process was used, yet in another letter from one of his department heads, stated that there was a subjective element involved in the process.

Will the minister tell this House what that subjective element was?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I can first of all indicate to the honourable member that it is not a subjective or—what was the other one?—objective decision made by the minister or anybody in the minister's office. This is a matter that the park's director, with capable assistants within the branch who view the various proposals that come forward from time to

time—and they vary in a very wide-ranging form. They make the decision with respect to the awarding of any of the particular proposals received.

Leaseholder Compensation

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, the previous leaseholder of Grand Beach concessions had its contract cancelled in 1989 and is awaiting compensation for leasehold improvements, as stipulated in the contract with this department.

Can the minister indicate what the status of this compensation is and why the previous leaseholder has still not received payment for leasehold improvements made during its tenure?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that question as notice.

Public Utilities Board Manitoba Hydro Rate Review

Mr. Ben Sveinson (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, Manitobans, I believe, will soon see the positive effects of Bill 70. Yesterday, the PUB refused MTS's requested 4.5 percent increase for '91-92 for local services to 1.5 for '91 and has refused to approve a 1992 increase. This decision will result in more money staying in the pockets of all Manitobans.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is for the First Minister. In view of the PUB ruling with respect to MTS rates, will the PUB be examining Hydro rates as well?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, firstly, I thank the member for giving me notice of that question.

I am rather disappointed that the New Democrats and Liberals opposite are opposed to lower rates for ratepayers in Manitoba Telephone System. This indeed is an example of one of the tangible, real effects of—

An Honourable Member: Oz Pedde's salary.

Mr. Filmon: That is right. It is down 1.5 percent, Mr. Speaker, and that is a very positive effect of both good management and Bill 70.

The fact of the matter is, this decision by the PUB that flows directly from Bill 70, a freeze on public sector wages, will result in a reduction of rates and a saving to, for instance, every resident in Winnipeg of some \$4.50 per year. That is a very substantial reduction in our judgment and a direct saving from

the pocketbooks of every consumer. Similarly, not only residents but business people throughout the province will benefit by that decision.

As the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro (Mr. Neufeld) has said, we will ensure that the similar savings that accrue to Manitoba Hydro as a result of Bill 70 will also be passed along to the ratepayer.

We believe that those savings are readily calculable and can indeed be passed along directly to the ratepayer. I am sure the minister responsible will see to it that happens.

Pharmacare Refund Process

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Last month the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) wrote the Minister of Health about the lengthy waiting period for Pharmacare reimbursement. The minister replied that the waiting period was at an average of six and a half weeks. That was two weeks more than last year. The minister said this will come back to normal within a few weeks.

However, last week, we contacted the Pharmacare office. That was in fact by some of the constituents. The Pharmacare office was telling it will take 10 weeks minimum for their process. Can the minister tell this House whether this 10-week period for seniors and people with long-term disabilities is an acceptable way of working?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, no, of course not. My understanding is that the waiting period of time with the year-end filings had gone up to 10 weeks some month and a half ago. As we have done in past years, we have put casual and other staff to work to supplement the permanent staff under the Pharmacare Refund Program.

As of a couple of weeks ago, when I checked as a result of the inquiry from the member for Crescentwood, I believe they were in the six-week range return and had hoped to get between four and five weeks now. I believe that they are, if not close to accomplishing that, very close. The ten-week period did exist, and we made efforts to rectify that.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Speaker, according to the Pharmacare office, a claim is first verified by a pharmacist, then the pharmacist checks for the contents, then the microfilm is made. It is a very lengthy procedure.

We do not dispute the mechanism, but we are asking the minister to form the system so that people can get their claim within four weeks.

Mr. Orchard: I accept my honourable friend's good advice.

Pharmacare Card Implementation

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, during the 1988 election campaign and in 1990, I guess all the parties made the promise for a Pharmacare card.

Can the minister tell this House when finally we will have the Pharmacare card? I must apologize—it was not this party, but it was the NDP and the Liberals who made the promise here.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, as often happens, New Democrats and Liberals promise, but we take action, which, with your indulgence, I would share a little story that I once heard about the New Democrats. Okay, I am sorry.

Mr. Speaker, as my honourable friend might know, we hosted the first national conference on plastic card technology last year, the report of which has been circulated to those provincial participants. We had international participation in that. Individuals from France were here because they have some technology that is at work in plastic card technology.

Mr. Speaker, that report is under review by the department, because if one of them takes a process of using latest technology, we think there might be an appropriate opportunity for Manitoba to not narrowly focus that technology and its potential benefits to the Pharmacare program alone, but are seeking whether there is an appropriate opportunity in Manitoba to have the card replace the Manitoba Health Services Commission card for other insured services as well.

Education Funding Reform

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, the session started out with the Conservative majority government putting public schools in a financial crisis and offloading, in the words of the minister, a 10 percent increase in property taxes to the public schools.

It is ending with the minister refusing to make public his education advisory report, Mr. Speaker, and refusing to make this report public, even though all previous ones have been made public.

Will the minister advise this House today when the new education funding formula will be in place, and can he tell us, will it be as unfair as the present one which sees more money going to schools like Ravenscourt and Balmoral in increases than to all the special needs students in the province of Manitoba combined?

* (1410)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, early in this session, that same question was posed with regard to when we would see a new funding formula. I indicated to the member at that time that a new funding formula would be in place for the 1992 school year. That commitment still stands.

Mr. Speaker, the finance advisory committee have deliberated on this matter, have brought their recommendations to me. That is now before the department. Very soon, we will be gathering a meeting of the interorganizational group to share with them the advice that has been given to us by the advisory committee. We will be, this fall, going to all the school divisions and sharing with them the approach that will be taken.

Mr. Speaker, I can indicate that the funding formula will not be as unfair as the former formula was. Indeed, this is one that will treat all schools as equitably as is possible, given the circumstances of this province.

Mr. Chomlak: I will believe that when I see it, Mr. Speaker.

Federal Commitments

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): My supplementary to the same minister is, the government is involved with some kind of core of core funding announcements or discussions with the federal government.

Is this Minister of Education and Training involved in those discussions because they supposedly involve education and training, and will he advise this House, if he is not involved, why he is not, because programs like ESL, Winnipeg Education Centre, BUNTEP and ACCESS have been cut by the federal government?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I think we have indicated also, on many occasions, that our commitment to those programs is solid. I have also indicated that we are doing everything we can to enhance the opportunities for those disadvantaged Manitobans who are either socially or economically disadvantaged in accessing programs within our school system. That spirit and that attitude will continue as long as I am minister and as long as we are government.

High School Bursary Program Reinstatement

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, that attitude has meant cutbacks in ESL, cutbacks in high school bursaries, cutbacks in Native programs, cutbacks to the Winnipeg Education Centre, cutbacks to ACCESS, cutbacks to BUNTEP, cutbacks to public schools.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Kildonan, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Chomlak: My final supplementary is to this minister.

In about a month, the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre commences. Has he done anything on the High School Bursary programs because the students are again being told one thing by Social Services and another thing by the minister? Has he moved, and will those bursaries be reinstated for the adults?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Once again, Mr. Speaker, the member asks a repetitious question, and may I tell him once again that I have indicated to the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, to Winnipeg No. 1 and to the students who have come forth that we are going to be looking at, and we are looking presently at a way in which we can accommodate those students who attend the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre from outside of the school division. That is where the bursaries are needed most because that is where the greatest cost is for the individual student.

I have made that commitment, and when that solution has been found, I will be then in a position to make that announcement. I can assure the member that we are looking forward to making that announcement before the next school year.

Mr. Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

Speaker's Ruling

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have a ruling for the House.

Yesterday, during Oral Questions, I took under advisement a document tabled by the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay), which she identified as, when tabling it, a petition.

My concern was that under our rules there are particular requirements relating to petitions to the Legislative Assembly, and specific times are set out in routine proceedings for presenting and for reading and receiving them. Oral Questions is not the appropriate time for dealing with these petitions, as all members know.

I have reviewed the honourable member's document and find that it does not meet the requirements of our rules respecting petitions to the Legislative Assembly and indeed was not compiled as a petition to the Legislative Assembly, which I believe the honourable member fully understood.

However, the document is acceptable as a tabled paper, and I am therefore ruling it in order as such. In doing so, I should mention that there have been several cases in relatively recent past sessions where similar documents have been accepted by this House as tabled papers.

Nonpolitical Statement

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): May I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Burrows have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Does he have leave? Leave. It is agreed.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Speaker, today I want to pay tribute to the ecumenical Christian organization Habitat for Humanity Incorporated, Winnipeg. This week 130 volunteers are building three houses on Angus Street in north Point Douglas.

In previous years, 10 new homes have been built and eight homes renovated. Habitat does not build homes for the poor but rather in partnership with the poor. The goal is to provide a decent house in a decent community for God's people in need. The houses are simple and are sold on the basis of Biblical economics—no profit and no interest. The recipients assume a mortgage and contribute 500

hours of sweat equity in the construction of their home and others' homes.

Habitat for Humanity meets two needs. What the poor need and receive is not charity but capital, not case workers but coworkers. What the rich need is a wise, honourable and just way of divesting themselves of their overabundance, a need which is met through donations of many kinds including labour.

I urge all members of the Manitoba Legislature to join me in congratulating the building contractors and suppliers, the financial supporters, the hundreds of volunteers including 40 volunteers from three other provinces and five states and especially to congratulate the three families who will move into their new homes on Saturday. May Habitat for Humanity continue to practise the theology of the hammer and build many more homes with people in need and create community in the process.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could have leave of the House to revert to tablings.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable government House leader have leave to revert back to Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports? Leave? It is agreed.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1990-91 Annual Report of the Fiscal Stabilization Fund of the province.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to petition the House to determine whether or not there is a willingness to waive private members' hour.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: It is agreed? Yes, it is agreed.

Mr. Manness: Would you call the bills in the following order: 41, 42, 49, 54, 59, 66, 69, 72, 38, then Bill 70, then the concurrence motion, then Bill 76.

DEBATE ON THIRD READINGS—AMENDED BILLS

Bill 41—The Public Schools Amendment Act (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill 41, The Public Schools Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques, standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, leave is denied.

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, with respect to Bill 41, I can indicate that I will be the final speaker from our side on this particular matter. Because we had an opportunity to discuss this matter fairly extensively during second reading, my comments will be very, very limited.

We put our comments on the record, Mr. Speaker, and we gave the government and the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) some advice from this side of the House with respect to, not as much the factors affecting this particular amendment, but future amendments to The Public Schools Act, a process that the minister is undertaking at this time in terms of public hearings.

We will be holding the minister to those points as well as another point that relates to this particular amendment that we are quite concerned about. We are asking the minister to very strongly consider the effectiveness of the present transportation system and what has been advised by individuals in the system to us to appear to be a move on the side of this minister to privatize the transportation system. We say, something that is working as well as the bus transportation system does not need to be fixed in that aspect, and the minister should go very warily in terms of changes he is going to make to the transportation system and bus transport in this province, one of the finest, I dare say, probably on the continent.

With those comments, I will close debate from members on this side of the House with respect to this particular amendment.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill

41, The Public Schools Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed?

* (1420)

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 42—The Public Schools Finance Board Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill 42, The Public Schools Finance Board Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur a Commission des finances des écoles publiques, standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I turn this, on behalf of the member for Kildonan.

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, again we did put our comments on the record with respect to this bill in second reading. I can indicate that I will be the last speaker from members on this side of the House with respect to this particular bill.

We are happy to see that the province is moving to implement the recommendations of the Provincial Auditor with respect to the functioning of the Public Schools Finance Board and the Department of Education.

With those comments, that concludes my remarks with respect to this bill.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 42, The Public Schools Finance Board Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur a Commission des finances des écoles publiques.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 49—The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill 49, The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les collèges et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives, standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, on this bill I just want to indicate for the record our strong opposition, despite the fact this matter was amended to deal with some of the concerns that were expressed. Indeed our Education critic will be indicating why this bill is still absolutely unacceptable and why we will be opposing it at third reading stage.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I want to rise on third reading of Bill 49 to register some concerns as well as my opposition to this bill.

I think from the point of view of the Parkland region and the Parkland Campus of the Assiniboine Community College, there are some serious concerns. The member for Roblin-Russell, who is the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), is presiding over a major change with the community colleges in this province, one that is very costly, I might add, and ironically so, considering the fact that the government says they have to freeze wages on the one hand and in the meantime they are prepared to spend millions of dollars for this privatization of community colleges -(interjection)-

Well, it is, and the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) is going to have to answer to the residents of the Parkland region if the services delivered by the Parkland Campus are in any way deteriorated as a result of this move. This minister, this MLA, is going to be the one who is going to be held directly responsible, and it will rest on his shoulders. If the Parkland Campus expands in the future as a result of the board that is put in place of Brandon residents surrounding the major campus at Assiniboine Community College's intentions to expand the services in the Parkland, we will all be very pleased with that, but I have some serious concerns that will in fact take place. If it does, the minister will not hear the complaints, but he certainly will if we have serious cutbacks and reductions in the services of the Parkland Campus of Assiniboine Community College which was put in place by our government as a result of government policy for decentralization for the development of satellite campuses and facilities.

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

That is why the facility in Dauphin exists today, because of government policy. In this arm's-length arrangement that this Minister of Education is now putting forward, we will no longer see government

policy imposed on the community colleges, and I believe that makes the campus in the Dauphin area serving the Parkland vulnerable and at risk. That is something that the Minister of Education will have to bear the full responsibility for if there are major reductions in the succeeding years as a result of this change by this government. He no longer will be directly able to ensure, as the previous New Democratic government was when it established that campus, that in fact those services would be there and would be expanded.

In this case, Madam Deputy Speaker, this minister will be responsible and he will have to answer to the people of the Parkland. That should be on the record and we will watch to see how this works out, being reminded, of course, that this government is prepared to spend a million dollars this year and nearly a million dollars in succeeding years for major cost increases because of this effort by their part, a direct contradiction in their policies as it regards -(interjection)- Well, it is costing the government money. You are not worried about next year are you?

Now the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) is saying not this year. Well, he is not worried about costs that are incurred for future years. We are not pleased to see major expenditures while the government is freezing salaries and cutting back in other areas and slashing in health care and home care and education, all of the things that my colleagues would bring forward, and underspending in Agriculture by \$16 million last year. No, we do not want to see those cuts while the government can throw money around for future years and commit future governments to expenditures of some million dollars a year just for an ideological, philosophical reason. That is what is happening here and again, I say, that this Minister of Education will be held responsible for any cuts in services at Assiniboine Community College as a result of this act and his actions as Minister of Education. Thank you.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, this is an interesting bill, an interesting bill in the sense that it is one of the few, I think, in this Legislature in which each party has a different position, and often that is not the case. There are some times when we agree together, some times when we agree to disagree, but it is an unusual bill which in fact has three different attitudes towards the governing of our community college system.

Madam Deputy Speaker, one of the tragedies in Manitoba education, and it has been an ongoing tragedy, has been the lack of attention paid to community colleges. In this province we have experienced the lowest percentage of young people going on to community colleges, per capita, of any province in the country. This is not new, this is not the fault of this government, this has been an ongoing attitude towards our community colleges which has not worked in the best interests of the young people of the province of Manitoba. We have watched them all too often be used as the whipping boy of the Department of Education when somebody needed to find cuts somewhere. The community colleges often became the target of that cutting system, and the result was the lack of expansion of those community colleges.

One of the difficulties in the Department of Education is that it is very massive. It is very, very large. Staff have to focus on specifics within the department, and all too often the specifics have been K-12. Nobody can really argue about that because the mandate of the province in terms of education is really K-12. That was the original thoughts in the minds of the Fathers of Confederation.

The expansion of universities and community colleges has been very much a 20th Century concept, and that is why the federal government, quite frankly, became involved in supporting the post-secondary system where it has never supported the K-12 system. Unfortunately, as we have seen, that has not changed the focus particularly of departments of education. Some provinces have dealt with it in a way unique from ours, and one which I think is a movement in the right direction.

* (1430)

I would ask the Minister of Education to look into it in more depth with respect to this province, and that is the separation of the Department of Education into two departments, one K-12 and the other post-secondary education. In this case, a good mix would be post-secondary education and training. I think in light of the amounts of money, quite frankly, spent on education, it makes sense to have two departments. This would mean that there would be an equal focus given to post-secondary education and training in this province, something which I do not believe is happening at the present time.

The minister decided—I would like to think that is how it was done—that perhaps one of the ways in which more time and attention could be focused on community colleges was to give them some governance. That would allow the board of the community colleges in much the way that the University Grants Commission focuses on the needs of our university sector—although it is primarily the funding model for that sector, but at least it does give another authority above and beyond the Department of Education.

So I do not fault the minister for looking at a governance model. I do not agree with the New Democratic Party that the status quo should be retained, because the status quo simply was not working. The status quo was not focusing enough time and energy and money on the community college system and on its growth. So I do not fault the government for looking at a governance model as a means of focusing more time and attention on the community college system in the province of Manitoba.

Where I fault the government is by the governance model that they chose. They could have taken, for example, the governance model in Newfoundland which moved to a system whereby all of the employees of the community colleges remained civil servants. All of their protection was there. Transfer from community college was easily attained. We did not look at that model, or at least if we did, we rejected it. We looked at models that have, quite frankly, not been successful in other provinces, and that is to provide an independent governance authority for all three community colleges.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not think that bodes well for our community colleges, because I think what it is going to do is to devolve powers to those community colleges and to set them up in a competitive mode one with another. They are also going to be doing what our universities are doing at the present time, and that is turning to more and more private funding to finance the operations of their community colleges. That, particularly, will hurt those community colleges, two of which of the three are not located in the city of Winnipeg.

The city of Winnipeg has a natural attraction to business, because Winnipeg with almost 600,000 people has a broad business sector. If the Red River Community College must turn to the business community for additional funding, they will find that

much more easily attained than if KCC has to turn to local business funding or ACC has to turn to local business funding. Quite frankly, the business base in the community of Brandon, the base in the community of The Pas, simply is not large. It is not easy to go out to a business community that may, in fact, have a limited base of opportunity in terms of the number of businesses located there and get funding.

You are also going to find that it will not be easy for ACC, unfortunately, or KCC to attract business support in the community of Winnipeg, who will be looking to their own community college to fund. I think, Madam Deputy Speaker, that this will in fact lead to a disproportionate amount of money available to ACC and KCC in relationship to Red River Community College.

I also think that we are not making the best use of teaching staff. Teaching staff at the present time is transferable. That ease of transferability will be dissipated as a result of Bill 49. That will not bode well for the students who will enter programs at our community colleges.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I wish we could support this bill, because I think the minister got it half right. I think he got it half right in wanting a new form of governance, a new initiative which would bring more focus, more attention on our community colleges, but I am very much afraid that the governance model that he has chosen will work to the disadvantage of the community colleges. When you do something to the disadvantage of the community colleges, the only ones who suffer are the students.

That is the whole purpose of an educational institution. It is to educate young people. If the opportunities for the education of those young people are less readily accessible in northern communities, because KCC has to cut back on its operations or has to charge unrealistic tuition fees, it will be the students who will suffer. If ACC has to offer less programming, then those children and those students will be drawn to other academic institutions in the province, driven away from their own local institution. That will not only impact upon those students, that will impact upon the whole community.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is with great regret that I have to say the Liberal Party will not support this legislation, because quite frankly, we think the minister has been misguided.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Deputy Speaker, I can indicate just for the record something I have indicated informally to the minister. I will be the last speaker from this side of the House with respect to this particular bill.

I would just like to commence by perhaps dealing with several comments of the Leader of the third party with respect to this bill. Unfortunately she misinterpreted the position of the New Democratic Party on this bill by stating—and if anyone read my remarks or any of our remarks in Hansard, they would see quite clearly what our position was with respect to this bill. We are certainly not advocating necessarily the status quo by any stretch of the imagination, and we made some very concrete suggestions during second reading debate with respect to what we thought could improve the situation.

Secondly, in some respects the Leader of the third party is correct. What I see curious about this bill is, it is really a rather schizophrenic bill. It provides all power to the minister and then it does not provide any power to the minister. It could be read both ways, and I am saying that of someone who has had some experience with drafting legislation of this kind, and it reads to me like a typical corporate entity with all power to the board or no power to the board, which is the way often that corporate entity legislation is drafted. It deals with delegated power, et cetera.

So I think in that respect, the Leader of the third party is correct. The minister is kind of having it both ways. He is keeping a foot in both camps on this bill, much like the Liberal Party is with respect to their position, sort of a foot in both camps, so both the government and the Liberal Party are quite cleverly trying to keep on both sides of the debate with respect to how this is going to work.

Why is this bill before us today? Is it the result of consultation with the community? Was there a hearing process? Was there consultation with students? Was there consultation with parents? Was there consultation with rural groups? Was there consultation with anybody? No, Madam Deputy Speaker, definitively no consultation with respect to this legislation, with respect to this model that is being put in place.

Madam Deputy Speaker, is this bill before us as a result of some kind of intensive study, some analysis undertaken by the minister? I think not,

although I must admit there is a task force report. The minister has one. He is refusing to give it to us. The bill has been put in place, the task force report has been there for some time. The minister is failing to give it to us, so we cannot even make a proper or an adequate assessment upon the basis that this model, this change, this governance has been put in place.

So I have to suggest that there is no study, there is nothing in place that suggests why the government is adopting the approach that it is adopting. How can we on this side of the House make any kind of meaningful analysis if we do not know the basis upon which this bill, this whole system, was put into place? How are we to conclude that it is not simply being done for, I dare say, political reasons or, worse yet, philosophical reasons. The minister failed to give us any costs until finally it went to committee a couple of weeks ago. The minister failed to make the report public despite repeated demands. The minister failed to hold consultation. How can we on this side of the House but conclude, Madam Deputy Speaker, how can we not but conclude that it is being done for philosophical and/or political reasons, because no meaningful analysis, no rationale, no basis has been provided to us in order to make this particular decision.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when changes were made to the community college system and the university system in the '60s and '70s, some very innovative changes by, I dare say, Conservative governments, it was done as a result of consultation, royal commissions and the like, but no, notwithstanding this government, not with this minister. What you have is what is being put in place, the pro-business, pro-Conservative agenda, just like in the letter that went out and said, we need a majority government to push our pro-business environment.

* (1440)

That letter went out and all this session we have seen that kind of legislation being brought forward by members on that side of the House and by this Minister of Education. How else can we conclude otherwise, Madam Deputy Speaker? We have no choice but to conclude that it is philosophical. We have no choice but to conclude it is political, because the minister is offering nothing and has failed to offer, despite repeated demands, any rational basis or information as to why this decision is taking place.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, when we say, when the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) says that this is a result of privatization on the part of this government, it is true, because there has been no contrary facts offered on the other side. It is a single-minded attempt on the part of this government, following the lead, following the role of their mentor in Ottawa, Brian Mulroney, and his sidekick, Michael Wilson, to go on market-driven training and to totally saturate the market.

Every aspect of post-secondary education is now market driven. It is market-driven this and market-driven that. If it is not Workforce 2000 or private training, it is privatization of programs, and I will demonstrate that in the course of my comments. It is all done for a philosophical, political move towards the market-driven, and we have said many times on this side of the House, Madam Deputy Speaker, that there is a role for market-driven programs.

Let there be no suggestion on this side of the House that there is not a role for market-driven programs, but market-driven programs do not dominate, predominate and overwhelm every single other aspect of education. That is what is happening under this Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and under this government—total domination by market-driven programs. Madam Deputy Speaker, why should we on this side of the House not conclude otherwise, when we see the manner and the fashion by which this kind of bill has been brought in?

First of all, we have the climate of industrial relations that have been brought in under this particular government. Madam Deputy Speaker, they do not understand industrial relations. The minister is laughing. The minister was the most shocked person in the committee room. He was the most shocked person in the committee room during committee hearings when he found out that the employees did not somehow hear his words, did not somehow hear his pronouncements. This minister was shocked to find out that the word had not been communicated to the minister. That is because they have no sense of industrial relations.

If we look at Bill 70, if we look at The Workers Compensation Act, Madam Deputy Speaker, if we look at the government's, finally, reluctance to accept the amendment in this particular bill, we see this government does not understand labour relations. Indeed, this government, this minister,

does not understand human relations. I am sorry to say that, but it is a reality and it is a fact.

If it ever became clear, it was certainly clear in the climate of the committee hearings that were held about two weeks ago, when presentation, after presentation, after presentation, indicated that the employees, the students, and all those individuals out there did not know where the government was going in college governance. That is what happens when you do not consult. That is what happens when you keep your task force report secret.

Secondly, Madam Deputy Speaker, all of this bill, this whole process has been brought in, in the climate of forced cuts and forced cutbacks at the community college expense. We have seen a retrenchment of funding to the community college system for the last three years and, in particular, this year we see a \$3-million cut to the community college system and many, many programs cut. How else can we on this side of the House but conclude that the concept is ill conceived, ill thought out, philosophical and political, Madam Deputy Speaker?

Thirdly, we have seen forced cuts in programs being offered by the community colleges across the board at all three community colleges. Coincidentally—let me reiterate that—coincidentally, we see these courses being offered in the private sector. It is coincidental that these programs are offered in the private sector.

You know, I want to set an example of a woman who came to see me yesterday in my office. She was told she would be retrained. She was told, go to one of the private retraining institutes in the city of Winnipeg, so she went. She sat down with them. One of the private training institutes said, oh, yes, you can take our course. It is going to cost you \$3,700, and we want \$200 down. This woman does not have \$200 to put down.

She then went to Success College and was told, oh, yes, you can take our course. Indeed, you can qualify for a federal government grant to take our course, but it is going to cost you \$4,500—\$4,500 at a course that cost at Red River College \$500 to \$700. That is what this government is doing. That is what is going to continue on an increasing basis.

If you look at the list of programs cut by the government, not by the colleges—let us be honest—the programs were cut by this minister and this government. If you look at them all, they say,

alternatives, go to Success; alternatives, go to some other institute. Yes, you can go. You have to go on a waiting list, and you have to pay five, six, seven, eight, nine times the cost. That is what is happening with this total commitment, this overriding preoccupation with private training. That is what is happening.

Madam Deputy Speaker, let me cite the other example, the ESL program. Now there is an example. English as a Second Language taught at Red River Community College: waiting list, 100 students; waiting to be tested, 100 students. What does the government do? What does the government order Red River Community College to do? Cut half of the program—cut half of the program where there is a waiting list of over 200 people. What does the government offer as an alternative? Oh, go to Winnipeg School Division No. 1, where the government attempted only months earlier to cut out the ESL program. At least, they reneged. At least, the public got up in arms. A thousand people went to a rally. They forced the government to retrench and back off that program.

Unfortunately, the government then cut half of the program at Red River, but I digress. This government says, we will cut half of the program at Red River Community College, and you can take it at Winnipeg School Division No. 1. You can take it at a place where there is another waiting list. In this context, in this environment, how can we on this side of the House conclude that the decision was rational or was well thought out or was done for educational reasons? It is very, very difficult.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we had anticipated amending the bill in a very wide range. It would be our preference to see a new, a different structure put in place. We had anticipated amending the bill in a wide variety of ways. I am just going to touch on some of those areas because the way, the context, that the committee hearings went, we did not put all of our amendment forward. We would have liked to have seen a better process for choosing boards to allow representation from regional bodies, as were so eloquently put by the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman).

We would like to see more representation by those involved, students, faculty, workers and others, because one of our greatest fears, and this day will come to pass, is that board will be another example of rampant Tory patronage. It will be the same crew that are on numbers of other boards and

will be giving the minister the same kind of advice that those same boards give.

Madam Deputy Speaker, so they will only hear their side of the story, and that is what is dangerous because, right now, the minister is only hearing the Mulroney line and the minister is only hearing the Michael Wilson line. Then the board will only give him the same board line, and that is a concern of ours.

* (1450)

We would like to see an amendment because of the confidentiality section in the particular act, Madam Deputy Speaker, because the board—while meetings are supposed to open, if a matter is confidential, it can be made confidential. We would like to see an amendment that would somehow not allow the board to have and to put into place horrendous tuition fee increases, something that has happened at the universities at the expense of the students and something that will unfortunately happen as a result of this process.

I have already indicated what is happening in the private sector. Courses that cost \$500 to \$700 to attend at Red River can be got, yes, in the private sector for \$3,000, \$4,000, \$5,000. We would like to put an amendment that would put some check on that kind of increase that will only have to be borne on the backs of students, Madam Deputy Speaker.

After asking in the House, on numerous occasions, after numerous attempts, the minister finally outlined for us what the costs of this governance model would be, and I dare say, Madam Deputy Speaker, those are probably not the total cost, but I will accept the cost and use them at the face value because they are the ones the minister provided. I think they probably underestimate; nonetheless, we will accept those figures.

So we are talking about a million dollars, close to a million dollars, \$900,000. Madam Deputy Speaker, how many ESL students could that train, how many other students could that close to a million dollars train this year, how many people would be attending Assiniboine College, Keewatin, Red River, but for the minister taking that money and putting it into a whole new model, the whole new system that is not that well thought out?

In addition, Madam Deputy Speaker, \$800,000 per year will be the cost of implementation. The minister asks us to believe that this money will not be at the expense of programs and students. That

is the same minister who said funding private schools would not be the expense of the public school system.

Madam Deputy Speaker, what we have seen is things like, this year, more money going to Ravenscourt and Balmoral Hall in increases than all of the special needs students in the province of Manitoba combined. That is the same minister who said, oh, no, this money will not be lost to the public school system. I know the Liberals are chirping on this because they are sensitive. The minister is sensitive, and he is chirping because he is telling us to believe now that this million dollars a year and this \$800,000 a year in increased costs will not affect programming.

How can it not affect programming when you have cut 19 programs this year, when you have cut 14 to 16 from Brandon, when you have cut from Keewatin? The minister expects us to believe that this money would not go into programming, would not go into students, would not go into faculty. Madam Deputy Speaker, this cannot be the case, and it clearly will not be the case because this money would have been pumped into the education system, or alternatively, it would have gone to some form of tax relief, but do not let the minister mislead us or lead us down this path of believing somehow that this money would have been available to programming.

We will be watching the implementation of this policy, Madam Deputy Speaker. We will be watching the implementation of this. We will be watching the cost factor. We will be watching the expenses factor.

We will be looking to see how all of these proliferating private schools that are now providing courses at horrendously increased costs that were formerly provided by the community college system, we will be looking to see how these schools are managed, how these schools are properly being dealt with. We will be watching.

We will be watching the appointments to the board of directors of these community colleges. We will be watching to see if these become like what happened in Alberta, where a Tory member actually went to the convention of the Conservative Party of Alberta and said we have to stop these patronage appointments to our community college boards because they are wrecking our community colleges. We will watch to see if that happens in Manitoba as

well where this crew will continue to go on its single-minded way listening to no one, consulting with no one, not releasing reports and appointing only those who say what they want them to say to the boards of the various colleges and the various organizations.

We will be watching the tuition fees. We will be watching what happens to the students as a result of this. We already know. I have already indicated that I had a woman in my office yesterday, who for a course that would cost \$500 to \$700 at Red River, has to pay \$3,700 at one private college and over \$4,000 at another one. We have seen that happen, Madam Deputy Speaker.

We will see what happens to the tuition fees and we will see how they treat the people involved in the system because, in the final analysis, that tells all. That is one of the reasons we are suspicious of this whole process in the first place, because of the haphazard and rather unfair way that those involved in the system have been dealt with by this government. We will be watching how the people are dealt with in the system, not just those directly involved, but the students and all those on the periphery.

We will be looking to see if there will be more and better graduates, Madam Deputy Speaker, from this process that is going to be put in place by this government. In the final analysis, the most important thing, of course, is what is done for the students and the people of Manitoba, whether or not out of this will come better education, better training, higher quality, more students employed and the like in the province of Manitoba. In the final analysis that is what really matters and, all partisan issues aside, this is what we really all are striving for in this Legislature and in this province. We will be looking to see if that happens.

We will also be looking to see, as I indicated in my second reading speech, whether or not we will see 10,000 widget makers trained with this horrendous amount of money going to the private sector when there is only a need for six widget makers in the next few years ahead. We will be seeing if the planning under this system actually works. I hope it works. I hope the system works for the sake of all students. I hope the system works for the sake of all Manitobans, but this minister and this government will be accountable. We will be holding them accountable for the results of this particular approach.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): I rise to put a few closing remarks on the record on this bill. I am not suggesting that I am closing debate. The member for Kildonan said he was going to be the last speaker from the opposition, so from that I would conclude that I in fact will be putting concluding remarks on the record.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have heard from both parties with regard to their attitudes on college governance. I would have to say that the Leader of the Liberal Party did put some thoughtful remarks on the record with regard to the Liberal Party position on college governance and indeed, if one were to look at the various models of college governance throughout Canada, one would find that there are several different models and they work in varying degrees.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when we decided to move towards college governance as a result of requests by the community colleges in this province, as a result of requests by the communities themselves, as a result of requests by Brandon, by Dauphin, by The Pas, by the community in Winnipeg, the chambers of commerce, students who were attending these colleges, we put together a group of individuals representing the communities, representing the community colleges, to look at what form of governance would best suit our system in Manitoba.

I would have to indicate that we had representation from the community college system on that task force that submitted a report for the minister to move towards college governance. It was with that that we moved in this direction. We did look at other programs, at other college governance systems in Canada, and we have put together what we think will work for Manitoba. We have retained some powers for the minister to ensure that there will not be duplication of programming between our colleges, so that there will not be a degree of competition between our colleges to the extent that it will take money away from programs that students can access.

* (1500)

Behind all of this is the intent to improve the service delivery to students and to potential workers in this province. It is true that we do not have a large percentage of our high school graduates moving to

a community college system and the reason for that is that we have a small community college system, one that has not been able to respond to the needs very quickly and very well because of the way that it has evolved. What we are doing is ensuring that community colleges are going to be able to be more responsive. They are going to be governed by people from within that community, people who can make decisions for the community colleges, who understand the community, who understand that community college within that area.

Whether it is in Dauphin or The Pas, I am of the firm belief that it is the people of those communities who can best decide what types of programming those community colleges should be offering so that student graduates out of those community colleges will find employment within those communities.

I am confident that this system is going to work for our province, it is going to work for the benefit of the students who are attending those institutions. There may be some hurdles that still have to be crossed with regard to implementation of this process, but we have tried to iron out all the wrinkles that we can foresee at this time, and if there are some minor changes that are required as we move along to college governance, we are committed to correcting them. For that reason, we put in a transition team, a team made up of people who are working at the colleges, of the people who administer the colleges, of people from the community who can help us in the transition phase. Yes, the amendment that the members from the New Democratic Party brought in was acceptable. That just shows, Madam Deputy Speaker, that we are open to good suggestions so that the community college system can benefit.

Madam Deputy Speaker, our intent with this legislation is to ensure that we have a strong community college system. The member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) has criticized this move because he is content with the status quo. He is content with leaving the college system where it is. The New Democrats do not have a vision for change. They do not have a vision for moving our college system ahead into the future. We have that vision, and we are going to ensure that this system is going to work for the benefit of the students who attend our community colleges, for the communities themselves, so that our community college system can grow and offer more programming for the residents of this province. Thank you very much.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), third reading of Bill 49, The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi sur les collèges et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives). All those in favour of the motion, please say *yea*. All those opposed, please say *no*. In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, Yeas and Nays, please.

* (1510)

Madam Deputy Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested. Call in the members.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is third reading of Bill 49, The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les collèges et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives.

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

Yeas

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

Nays

Ashton, Barrett, Carr, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Gaudry, Harper, Hickey, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Malloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylcyia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 29, Nays 26.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

THIRD READINGS—AMENDED BILLS

Bill 54—The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1991

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of

Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 54, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité), be now read a third time and passed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, of course as we know, this is a collection of various miscellaneous amendments in the field of taxation and finance. The opposition raised one or two concerns yesterday in terms of one or two of the clauses in this particular piece of legislation.

I have expressed our concerns in particular about the section that has a bearing on the payment of social allowance payments to thousands of recipients in the province of Manitoba. We have over 20,000 cases on social allowance, and I would dare say that they are all going to be affected by this particular amendment. I appreciate the minister's explanation that the key part of this amendment is to enable the government to pay out over a 12-month period certain tax credits rather than have them paid out in a lump sum by application through the income tax process.

This sounds admirable on surface, and we wish that we could accept the minister at his word on this, that the social allowance recipients will in no way be hurt by this. On the other hand, we do regret that the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) has not seen fit to consult or discuss this with the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization or some of the various more prominent social service agencies, social service nonprofit groups, associations that do exist out there and represent people who are going to be affected by this legislation.

We are particularly concerned that when this bill is passed and the new procedures are brought into effect, in some way or another these funds, these monthly payments representing the Property Tax and the Cost of Living Tax Credits, are somehow or other not lost and that somehow or other these do not substitute for the regular inflationary increase.

(Madam Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

I would trust that next year when this comes into effect we will have the inflationary increase that is usually provided for, depending on what has happened to the consumer price index, depending on what has happened to rise in the cost of living in the province, but we would also have, in addition to that, equivalency of these tax credits.

It seems to me that there are going to be some difficulties in providing these. It seems to me, from my understanding of it, these payments are going to relate to the previous year, so if this becomes effective in January 1992, it will have reference to credits that normally would be applied for in the spring or the early spring or late winter of 1992 for the year 1991. So instead of the social allowance recipients obtaining them in lump sums, probably around late February or March or whatever, these monies will now not be fully available until the end of the year. In other words, they will be paid out on a one-twelfth basis per month.

To that extent, the government probably stands to save interest on funds. I suspect, although we do not know, it has not been explained to us, the government will likely be saving some money on this by virtue of the slower payout of these funds.

Having said that, Madam Deputy Speaker, we want to assure the House that we will be monitoring this. We will be in consultation with the organizations and associations that represent these people who are being affected, such as the Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization or the coalition for social allowances. We will be talking to them. I would trust the minister will be in contact with them as well, to ensure that the administration of this is done in the most fair and equitable manner possible.

Having made those remarks, I for one am prepared to see this bill passed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The question before the House is, on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), third reading of Bill 54, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité). All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

DEBATE ON THIRD READINGS—AMENDED BILLS

Bill 59—The Workers Compensation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill 59, The Workers Compensation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail et diverses dispositions législatives), standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Deputy Speaker, indeed I am pleased to be able to speak on Bill 59—not pleased with Bill 59, because this is yet another example of the bias of this government. This government, since it has achieved that majority the last election—a majority is a majority is a majority—indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker, has charted a clear course that fundamentally is dictated by one sector of our society. This is a Workers Compensation bill.

Is it indeed the workers of Manitoba who are being listened to by this provincial government? No, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is the Chamber of Commerce. Surprise, surprise, surprise, the bill goes to committee, brought in by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik). Surprise, surprise, surprise, every single workers organization, every single injured workers organization condemned the bill. Surprise, surprise, surprise, there were a few brief briefs from the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce. What did they say? Well, they did everything except pat the minister on the back and say good, good job, Mr. Minister. They said quite clearly that the election debt to the Chamber of Commerce was paid up, and that is what this Workers Compensation bill is about, an election debt to the Chamber of Commerce.

* (1520)

Indeed, I was reading through a Tory fundraising letter earlier today, a fundraising letter that was brought out before the majority. It said, Madam Deputy Speaker, and this was sent to their fundraising list, quite clearly that the government had been able to implement some aspects of its agenda with a minority, but it needed a majority to get the job done. What did it say this government

would do? What did it say? Fairness for people—did it talk about that? No. Did it talk about economic development? No. Did it talk about social justice, proper social programs? No, it said that they needed funds donated to the Conservative Party to win the majority so that there could be a pro-business government in Manitoba. That is what they said before the election when they were raising funds. Today they are paying off those people.

They are paying them off by bringing in a pro-business Workers Compensation bill. That is part of their election debt. Indeed, the minister protests from his seat. He knows that this bill is fundamentally in keeping with the Chamber of Commerce agenda and always has been. He knows that, in his own comments before the committee, for every dollar in additional benefits for workers, this minister is taking away \$4 out of the pocket of injured workers. He is cutting the budget at the expense of injured workers currently and in the future, and survivors and their families.

In committee, the minister, after hearing the pleas from injured workers' organizations, from the labour movement, from practising physicians for changes to the act, brought in nothing but technical amendments so that he could go to the Chamber of Commerce and he can be patted on the back and be told, good job, Mr. Minister, good job, you delivered. Madam Deputy Speaker, in the Conservative Party, that may advance the political career of the minister, but I remind him through you that he is not the minister responsible for big business. He is the Minister responsible for Labour. He is the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation, and it is about time that minister and that government started paying attention to the working people and the injured workers of this province instead of delivering on election debts to the Chamber of Commerce.

I sat in that committee and heard those pleas. They were reasonable, and they were based on concerns that have been expressed over the last number of years, that have been expressed going back to the review committee, the King Report. They were based on that, and I say they were reasoned concerns. They were concerns based on the future of this system of workers compensation in this province, and I want to deal with the specifics.

I want to deal with the specifics, because I want on the record the type of concerns that were raised that this minister and this government are ignoring.

I want to raise, on the record, the way in which this government is ramming through one more piece of antiworker, antilabour legislation in this session and, in fact, as we remember this session, it will be characterized by basically that same approach.

This government has its majority. It is not listening, Madam Deputy Speaker, it knows it has the majority. It did not listen on Bill 70, it did not listen on Bill 38, it has not listened on Bill 49 and it is not listening on Bill 59, either. We went through a hearing process and it did nothing to change the mind of this government. They sit there, they say why should they change their minds, they have a majority now and they can do whatever the heck they want. I could use stronger language, but whatever the heck they want, and that is what they did in Bill 59.

I want to raise some of the concerns that were expressed. First of all, the minister is not giving the real facts about this bill when he suggests, as he did to the media the other day, that somehow this bill is to deal with Workers Compensation claimants getting greater than 100 percent benefits. If that was the intent of this bill, nothing more, nothing less, why did the minister not bring in a bill that said that. What the minister did, instead, was bring in wholesale changes to Workers Compensation, many of which are not supported by working people, and went out and tried to mask it as being, in that particular case, that it was somehow to deal with strictly the overpayment benefits.

I want to deal with what this bill does. If that was the intent of the minister, the actual fact of what he has done is reduce, by his own Estimates, in the range of \$7 million to \$8 million, the kind of benefits payable. He is saving money by his shift, the gross to net shift, and it is not, Madam Deputy Speaker, a shift to 90 percent of net—that is for the first two-year period. It is a reduction to 80 percent after that period. Some workers will receive thousands of dollars less, all single workers will receive less money under this form. It is going to save the Workers Compensation Board money. The minister indicated that on the record. That provision was to do with reducing the deficit at the expense of injured workers and their families. That is the sole intent of that.

For the minister to suggest that really all he was just doing was preventing people from receiving 110 percent, 120 percent, 130 percent of benefits—that is not what that shift does.. It goes far further than

that and the minister knows that, but that is indeed the response he gave in the House, the response he gave to the media. That changes, fundamentally, the bottom line, the number of payments that are paid to individuals.

I point once again to how this government did not listen in committee when the city of Winnipeg unions there indicated they wanted one of the most innovative programs of rehabilitation, of getting workers back into the workplace after they were injured. What does the City of Winnipeg do? It provides top-up benefits. The City of Winnipeg provides the basic principle that workers should receive 100 percent. Madam Deputy Speaker, one can argue whether it should be 90 percent, or 100 percent, and if the intent was to deal with strictly the situation where people could be paid higher than that, there is the question of whether that is interfering in the collective bargaining process or not, but I can see that it is a reasonable concern the minister could express, but he has gone far further than that.

He has gone far further than that, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I point to the city of Winnipeg as an example, where they have a model program on rehabilitation where they provide greater support in the way of remuneration for lost wages than virtually any other employer in the province of Manitoba. I point to that because the bottom line is, the facts were before the minister. The minister chose to ignore the facts and proceed with that change, one of the major factors of this bill.

* (1530)

The other change is in regard to the lump-sum payments in comparison to the previous system, and once again it is going to save the Workers Compensation Board money. The minister said between \$7 million and \$8 million, and I am basing this on the committee figures. -(interjection)-

I hear the member for Portage speaking from his seat. I want to indicate that we may have our arguments at various times, but I do know that in the case of the bill that he brought in, as much as I disagreed on a number of points, he will note that we did support the bill, and he may remember some of the discussions that took place at committee whereby we ensured—

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):
You are not going to support this one?

Mr. Ashton: Well, the Minister of Finance says we are not going to support this one. No way are we going to support this; no way are we going to support Bill 59. I note the comparison when, with the previous minister, he brought in a series of changes, a number of which by the way were supported by both management and labour, a number of those changes, and was a fairly crafted balance. I have had many an argument with the member for Portage, but not on that bill.

I do not mean it as an obituary for the member for Portage in a political sense. I have actually agreed with him twice now in the space of about two weeks, first on a point of order with the member for St. James. I do not know if he has changed or I have changed or if it is just one of those unusual circumstances that occur, sort of like an eclipse, where the planets line up and the two of us agree.

I did agree with the bill he brought in. We supported that bill, and we had discussions and ensured that it was passed without any amendments that might have detracted from that passage. I note that, but this current minister is reducing benefits. This is going to impact on future injured workers; it is going to impact on future survivors of injured workers, widows and their children. That is one of the more unfortunate aspects of this particular bill.

There were other changes. We indicated at committee, we support the indexation. It is not a complete indexation, but certainly the principle of indexation in the bill, and we support the increase in the maximum earnings under this bill. In actual fact, one really implements the policy that has been in place in a general sense, although I agree it should be legislated. That is the indexation. The other change, Madam Deputy Speaker, really is a matter of catch-up. We feel the figure is, if anything, on the low side, given the changes in earnings in Manitoba, but it certainly is reflective of that change.

As I said before, the balance, dollar for dollar, in this bill was in the range of four to one, based on the minister's own statistics. For every dollar workers get extra, four dollars is going to be taken away, and that is the bottom line of this bill.

It does not stop there. This affects current injured workers and future injured workers in terms of benefits. How else does it affect injured workers? A number of other provisions were brought in over the protest, once again, of virtually every

organization that appeared there other than the Chamber of Commerce and employers.

I refer to the \$250 fee that was put in place, and there was one change on amendment, but the basic principle has been adopted now by the government in terms of frivolous appeals of charging individuals, companies, \$250.

I just want to remind the minister of the type of circumstances that most Workers Compensation claimants who are fighting their claim find themselves. A lot of them are on welfare, have lost their homes, have lost their families in some cases. I have dealt with people who have fought for years to establish their Workers Compensation claim—years, Madam Deputy Speaker—and were only successful after going through financial, personal and marital ruin.

This minister is now saying that they have to have hanging over their head the prospect of a \$250 fee—up to \$250, says the minister. These are people who do not have any money. Is the welfare department going to finance their appeal if someone determines it is frivolous? Well, it is not covered under the guidelines. That is what this minister is doing, and that is one of the other problems in this bill.

This bill is based on the assumption that there are a lot of people out there trying to cheat the system, Madam Deputy Speaker. I find it very insulting for the many workers compensation claimants whose claim has either been accepted or even those who have had it denied. I would say in my 10 years I have never seen a fraudulent claim, a frivolous claim related to workers compensation. Every person I have dealt with on workers compensation—I have dealt with many, both as MLA and as critic for our party in workers compensation issues. Every single person that I know has not been acting on a frivolous basis, yet this minister has built in this particular fee.

Did it stop there, Madam Deputy Speaker? No, it did not. The minister went further. One of the things on the Chamber of Commerce hit list was access to employers for medical information. The minister says, we cannot deny this, we cannot deny it, we have to give it. I say to the minister that I do not buy the kind of rationale that he has put forward. He says other provinces are doing this, other provinces are doing that. He uses Charter arguments, legal arguments, et cetera.

I remember in this House, and I use as an example, where the electoral boundaries commission assumed that the Charter of Rights would not allow for a 25 percent variation in political boundaries. The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) will remember that. What happened in Saskatchewan and the court case there? Their boundaries were legalized based on the 25 percent variance. The Minister of Northern Affairs, I know he was very concerned about it at that time, the loss of a rural seat. We were concerned about the loss of a northern Manitoba seat.

I raise that because there is a classic example where if you sit there and you take that sort of approach, if we had not taken that sort of advice, if we had in the legislation—and I say we, it is collectively—put in that provision, and if we had instructed the electoral boundaries commission to act on that basis, we would not have lost those two seats. We would have had, I think, a fairly reasonable distribution between urban, rural and northern seats.

I use that as an analogy, because in this case the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation (Mr. Praznik) says, well, we had to bring in employers' access to information. I will tell you what physicians are saying. They are concerned about the access to information by people other than, in this case, the Workers Compensation Board, who obviously have to have that material, or the workers themselves. This is interfering in the patient-physician relationship, the confidentiality. What it does is it sets the system up for abuse. It means that employers are going to have access to information that can and, I believe, will be used in other contexts. I believe that fundamentally, Madam Deputy Speaker. It will be used in other ways. I believe what it does is it sets up the system in a far more adversarial way than it has been up to this point in time.

I want to describe how that is going to develop by looking at some of the other problems. Experience rating—this government has been doing that by the board policy for the last year and a half, two years. What is experience rating? Well, experience rating says that a particular employer's rate should be based on the number of claims that employer makes. What are the problems with that? If you want to see the best example of the kind of difficulties you run into with that, Madam Deputy Speaker, look at the City of Winnipeg, which is

self-insured. Look at the presentations at committee from the Transit Union, CUPE Local 500. Both of those presenters indicated the City of Winnipeg appeals claims on a regular basis.

Like the member for Portage (Mr. Connery) told the committee, that by the sounds of it, in his opinion, it appeared to be nothing short of harassment—indeed, harassment. Why does the City of Winnipeg do that? They do it because they are self-insured; they essentially have what is experience rating. Their rates are based on the claim experience. What it has done is it has introduced an adversarial relationship in the system far greater than with other employers generally.

Who else is in that category, Madam Deputy Speaker? The railroads. Who else made presentations before the committee? The rail unions and the rail companies. Why? Because they are on an experience rating system. Anybody that is self-insured in this particular case, in the case of an employer, can cut down on the amount of payments that are made by reducing benefits, by making sure there are fewer claimants who are successful. What has happened, the experience with those employers, has been they routinely contest cases and they have whole branches of their bureaucracy established to do nothing more than contest claims. This minister is opening the entire system up for that type of a concept, and if the minister does not believe that there is going to be abuse on experience rating, he should look at the fact that there has already been abuse with employers, even without that direct incentive to reduce it.

* (1540)

I know cases, and I have outlined this before in debate on this, I know a case—my brother, when he was working for Inco, was in that same situation. I outlined this in debate on second reading—where he was injured, indicated he could not return to work. The company offered to pick him up; they were desperate not to have this reported as an accident. He was a medical student at the time. He knew the damage that could take place, even with so-called light duty. He said, well, I really cannot come in; I will be back in the day after if everything is okay. When he came back in he was told by his supervisor, we know your kind, you will never work here again. Coincidentally, Madam Deputy Speaker, when he applied the following summer he was not hired again by Inco.

Coincidence? Well, I leave it to your judgment, but the fact is, the whole approach—the company in this case, in particular the supervisor, and I do not say that is the approach at Inco generally; I do not believe that is the case—was to tell someone who was injured to get in to work, to keep down the accident claims, something, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think is absolutely unacceptable. It was happening before and it is going to happen on an increasing basis.

Well, did the minister stop with that? Did he stop with what would have been a pretty Draconian piece of legislation and say, well, we have done enough for now for the Chamber of Commerce again? Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, no, he did not. He brought in another section which gives the board the ability to privatize a significant part of its business, including adjudication.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the minister may say, well, it will only be in terms of positive cases. I just want to look at the difference in the system we are going to see as a result of the minister and his bill. Injured workers now are going to be faced with access to their medical records. They are going to be faced with the \$250 fee in terms of frivolous appeals, and they are now going to be faced with the situation where companies are increasingly involved in the handling of Workers Compensation itself.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I ask you if you would feel comfortable if you were involved, say, in a civil action, or someone else in this House, and you were to be sued by somebody, and you then found that the person who was suing you was also the judge deciding the case. That is the concern that people have in this particular case: the destruction of the impartial basis of workers compensation, and that is what this minister is doing.

I want to deal with some of the main concerns that were expressed in committee about the principle. I outlined some of the details of what this minister is doing. I want to talk about the principle, Madam Deputy Speaker. What is the principle of what this minister is doing?

The original relationship that was established with workers compensation was a trade-off. Injured workers were giving up the right to sue. Why would they do that? Indeed, because the legal process is a lengthy process, a costly process. One of the main reasons for that trade-off was to allow injured

workers more immediate access to benefits. Indeed it was a trade-off. The trade-off was not being able to have access, as we have seen increasingly, to some of the high liability payments that have arisen out of court action.

Madam Deputy Speaker, what was the trade-off for employers? For employers it was an insurance system against that type of action, a trade-off. I know some injured workers have questioned whether that trade-off really applies with some of the delays that have taken place. I am not just blaming any particular government in terms of what has happened in terms of the handling of cases. They are efforts made by all governments. There have been increases and decreases and waiting times, et cetera. So long as anyone has to wait for any extensive period of time is obviously going to be a difficulty.

Apart from that, one can use whatever description you want. You can call it workers compensation. You can call it employers insurance, if you like. That was the trade-off.

There have been concerns expressed in the bill about the fact that court action is being opened up in a number of cases. I note that for the records, Madam Deputy Speaker. Beyond that, what about that trade-off?

I kept hearing from employers that this is employer funded. Indeed, would you not expect employers to fund a scheme that is essentially insurance and protects them against lawsuits, provides benefits to individuals and compensation? Who would you expect to pay liability insurance, Madam Deputy Speaker, in terms of the operation of a store for customers, the employees? No, you would expect the employers. That is where this minister is so fundamentally wrong in his approach on this bill, because he is increasingly asking not the employers to pick up the tab but employees, in this case for reduced benefits now, reduced benefits for future injured workers and reductions in terms of the number of people who will be able to qualify. That is the trade-off.

I want to look at how this minister, if anything, is putting us back. He is being regressive. He is putting us back years in terms of workers compensation by addressing another concern that was raised. I mentioned the benefit concerns, the process concerns. There was a very real concern expressed about the definition of occupational

disease. A practising physician said, very clearly on the record, that in his opinion the section in the bill that the minister has included on occupational disease is restrictive to the point where future claimants, particularly those where medical science is discovering some of the impacts of the workplace in ways that had not been the case before, are going to be denied their claims. He indicated that very clearly.

There was concern expressed indeed once again by a practising physician and by others about the use of the term "dominant cause" and how that is subject to abuse and how people might, who even currently could receive benefits, in the future would not receive benefits under that provision. It does not just stop there, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Occupational disease, dominant cause, the minister has essentially—and the dominant cause in particular has dealt with that—eliminated some of the changes that took place. Another thing that was definitely on the Chamber of Commerce hit list in terms of pre-existing conditions of recognizing their role in conjunction with workplace-related factors in creating difficulties.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, there is a whole package in that piece of legislation which is aimed at reducing the number of people in the future who will be able to access workers compensation benefits. What defence has the minister used? Well, he has used the book's argument. He has suggested that, and that indeed is the case. It is to reduce the cost of the Workers Compensation Board, but I have dealt with that. We do not feel it should be done at the expense of injured workers.

What other arguments has the minister used? The minister has tried to suggest this is part of the review committee, the so-called King Report that was brought in. What the minister forgets to mention is how this government has not acted some key provisions of that report, how it has twisted others to the point of being unrecognizable. I note, for example, the Manitoba Federation of Labour was very clear in its presentation and listed for the minister some of the changes that have been brought in, whether they were consistent with the King Report, whether they were in opposition to it and whether there had been any action at all.

I note that, Madam Deputy Speaker, because this report in no way represents the kind of consensus the King Report represented, where the vast

majority of recommendations were achieved by the support of all three individuals on that particular commission. That included employer representatives; that included the employee representatives and the chair as well—unanimous support.

So what has this minister done? Well, the first thing he has done in terms of the process is he has broken yet another promise of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) -(interjection)- Well, the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) says that he cannot keep track of all the broken promises. Indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker, in this session, we are seeing that the Premier who before the election was talking more of the same is now bringing in a totally, a drastically different agenda and particularly in regard to labour legislation. The Premier said in the election there would be no major changes to labour legislation without full consultation. It was made clear by the employee reps. They did not feel that this bill had been subject to anything other than perfunctory consultation.

That is where we are at, Madam Deputy Speaker. Bill 59 has been rammed through a committee by the government majority. Bill 59 is before us with only a few minor amendments, mostly technical in nature. Bill 59 is just as bad on third reading as it was on second reading.

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Worse, because they did not listen in committee.

Mr. Ashton: Indeed, perhaps as the member for Crescentwood says, worse, because they did not listen in committee. Indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker, we are seeing on a daily basis the words of the minister responsible for Natural Resources who said in committee on another bill, and it could equally apply to this bill, that he had to be in committee, but he did not have to listen. That is the Conservative attitude. They have to be here. They have to sit in here. They have to sit in committees. They have to go through a formal process of listening to people, supposedly, but they do not have to hear what they have to say.

* (1550)

Perhaps it had to come, the wisdom in this case, from the dean of the Conservative caucus, the dean of the Legislature. I give him credit. He is honest. He says what he thinks. He said what he thought on that particular occasion when one of the presenters in Bill 70 said, you, sir, should listen.

You are on this committee. He said no, I just have to be here, I do not have to listen. Madam Deputy Speaker, I think that could be the motto of this government throughout this session. They had to be here, but they did not have to listen.

What have they done that shows any ability to listen in this session, Madam Deputy Speaker? They have sat there with the comfort of their slim majority. They have been pretty close on some votes this session, I might add, the one in committee the other day on the Minister of Family Services' (Mr. Gilleshammer) salary. He was bailed out by the Chair sustaining the vote, as is the custom. So they are not quite as smug as they might otherwise be, but the essential level of arrogance has not been tempered by the slim nature of the majority, the temporary nature of this government. In fact, I remember Sterling Lyon used to use this term all the time. If ever there was a temporary government, it is this government.

They have not listened on anything. They brought in, at the best, technical amendments, minor technical amendments, including on this bill. I say to them, Madam Deputy Speaker, indeed they do not have to listen. They just have to be here. That is what destroys governments, because it engenders the kind of cynicism we are seeing on a dramatic basis across this country nationally with the Brian Mulroney government. Some of us were perusing a poll before, and I think what was the most significant was not so much the ups and downs of who was in first and who was in second and the degree, et cetera, what have you, but the level to which the Conservative Party nationally has sunk.

On the prairies, Madam Deputy Speaker—we could talk about Ontario, we could talk about B.C., we could talk about various provinces, but in the region that we are in, nationally they have sunk to 8 percent -(interjection)- 9 percent. Indeed, I know others have commented on that, but I mean, 9 percent. Nine percent of the people in a poll would probably say the world is flat, Elvis is alive.

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Ashton: I see some of them are here, Madam Deputy Speaker, those who are voting federally Tory and those who believe Elvis is alive. How many on the other side believe the world is flat? They are all that same 9 percent, I am convinced of it.

Nine percent—it used to be that you could form a party and you could call it the Loony Fringe Party and you would register 9 percent in the polls. Now we have the Progressive Conservative Party in its heartland, in western Canada, registering 9 percent. I suspect that indeed—

An Honourable Member: The Rhino Party . . .

Mr. Ashton: Rhinos run better than that indeed.

An Honourable Member: Lower than the interest rates.

Mr. Ashton: That is right. Lower than the interest rates, for the first time in history, Madam Deputy Speaker. I think that is why the interest rates were constantly moved up for a period of time, because the government was dealing with that particular—or moved down, to bring it into line. I suspect most of the 9 percent, a good chunk of them are sitting in this Legislature on the government benches. -(interjection)- Even then—no, wait a second. The member for Portage (Mr. Connery), I will accept him. In fact, nobody knows from day to day where the member for Portage is going politically, even the member for Portage.

An Honourable Member: Least of all the Deputy Speaker (Mrs. Dacquay).

Mr. Ashton: Least of all the Deputy Speaker indeed, or the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), but that is another issue. I look at it, the government has sunk so low, and how did that happen?

An Honourable Member: How?

Mr. Ashton: Indeed, the member asks how. It happened because the government decided that it had to be there, but it did not have to listen: the GST, various other issues we can include, free trade.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): They wanted to dance with the gals that brung them.

Mr. Ashton: They wanted to dance with the gals that brung them, says the Leader of the Liberal Party. Indeed, they have been dancing, except there have been fewer and fewer dance partners for Brian Mulroney.

I wonder how that can happen. If anybody had said that the Conservative Party nationally would have sunk to 9 percent in the polls in the prairies, even two years ago, if I had said in this House, I am sure the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) would have

sent me to the then existent psychoanalysis covered by medicare that no longer is and suggest that I be committed for suggesting that. Psychoanalysis is no longer there, and I am standing here today saying they have reached 9 percent in the polls, and what happened? They did not listen. They had to be there but they did not listen.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Indeed, I notice the minister is here listening to my comments, and as I said, I admire his honesty. He and the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) both, this session, have to be admired for their honesty, if not for their political judgment, some of the statements they have made.

I ask the question, how this government in Manitoba can avoid the same course. Well, we are seeing what is happening. On bills such as this, they are not listening. They have their strategy worked out, I am sure.

I noticed the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), when I talked about the federal Conservative Party, was a little bit reluctant to commit himself to supporting them. I can understand given what has happened in Portage, in particular with the base and despite the lobbying that took place, the kind of treatment that took place. I suspect there may be some others here who may be hedging their bets right now, Mr. Speaker, hedging their bets.

Indeed, this is very relevant on Bill 59 for the minister, because I suspect that what a lot of people are going to do is either support the Reform federally or else try to out-reform the Reform Party here in Manitoba.

The Reform Party has been a very interesting development. It claims to be a populous movement. One has to only look at the support it has received from corporations, the report it has received from all companies and its pro-business, big-business agenda that out-pro-big-businesses in terms of the agenda, the agenda of the federal Conservatives. In the corporate board rooms, Mr. Manning is well known. Indeed, if one looks at the contributions, that trend is there.

I suspect that maybe this was the diabolical strategy of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) in bringing in this bill, diabolical strategy to out-reform the Reform Party.

I make a prediction, Mr. Speaker, because I notice in this House the last time they ran into problems

because of their federal cousins, the current Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) said well, there was a solution, they could change their name. They did, they called themselves the Filmon Team during the last election -(interjection)- They changed the name on the ballot, indeed. They changed their name.

After a while when the Premier becomes increasingly enmeshed in some of the problems, the difficulties, some of the scandals swirl around his political supporters, I predict that they may make the same move they made in the 1940s. That is when they developed the name Progressive Conservative, an oxymoron if there ever was one. -(interjection)-

Indeed, it is like the member for Rossmere's (Mr. Neufeld) multicultural strategy for his—there are many contradictions with this government. Progressive Conservative—like revenue neutral GST. We can run through the list, Mr. Speaker. There are many, and most of them have been developed by Progressive Conservatives.

I predict they are maybe going to change the name to Reform Conservatives. I am not trying to patent that, but I would not be surprised because they are like a leopard. They are going to try and change their spots. They are actually more a chameleon.

I am sure the minister will go into the corporate board rooms and he will say, well, guys—I say guys because essentially it is the old boys network of the Conservative Party—yes, you are getting upset with our federal counterparts but, hey, look, we are going to outreform the Reform Party in Manitoba. Look at this Workers Compensation bill, we are going to save you money.

I do not think the nurse will be giving the same speech to injured workers. He will not be giving it if he speaks at the MFL convention. He will not be speaking in front of the—in terms of the labour movement. -(interjection)-

The minister says, is he getting an invitation? I have no idea. I would suggest that if he does plan on speaking, and I am sure they will invite him, I am sure they would love to express their views on what he is doing, that he rethink his antilabour, pro-big-business stance.

I say, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, that this bill, probably as much if not more than Bill 70, proves it, because Bill 70 is a one-year hit on working people. This will be longer. The one-year hit may be longer

as well, but this is permanently entrenched in legislation, except any New Democratic government as a first line of business will change these negative changes and reform the Workers Compensation Board in favour of injured workers and not the big business Chamber of Commerce interests served by this government.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member's time has expired.

* (1600)

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my comments to this bill, this Bill 59, The Workers Compensation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act.

This is a very important bill for the working people of Manitoba. Considering that my constituency is comprised to the greatest degree of working families, Mr. Speaker, this is going to have very obviously a very large impact upon the constituents in my community. The previous speaker—and I must agree with the comments he made in stating that this bill that is brought in by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) is destined to fulfill the needs of the Chamber of Commerce of this province. I must concur with that, because I think that is what it is intended to do.

It has been said many times over that the deficit of the Workers Compensation is the key concern, and I have heard companies state before that the fees that are charged to the employers to support the compensation are too high and that they feel they are being overcharged. If the companies themselves, Mr. Speaker, had spent as much energies on reducing the number of injuries to their employees and reducing the number of possibilities where their employees could get injured, I think we would see a definite reduction in the number of injuries and, of course, a reduction in the costs that are associated with those injuries. We do not see the employers, at least it has not been my experience where I have seen that practice, where the employers would concentrate that much energy on reducing injuries.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that this bill brought forward by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) sort of has what I would like to term a poison pill attached to it. If you accept the couple of good provisions that are in the bill where it indexes on a permanent basis the rates that the employees receive for benefits up to a maximum 6 percent—plus the maximum annual

earnings level has been raised. Outside of those two areas, I think there are a lot of negative things in here with respect to the injured workers in the province of Manitoba. If we were to accept in total this bill, I think we would be doing an injustice and a disservice to these injured employees.

There have been many facts that have been discovered since this bill was brought forward and, of course, these facts have been stated by previous speakers to myself. It has been my experience in my working career, using the 75 percent of gross payment that is currently in place, where there are some cases that I have been personally aware of where some employees have been paid slightly more. I stress the term slightly, Mr. Speaker, more than what their net income, their take-home earnings would have been. The proposal by this minister in this bill to change the 75 percent of gross payment to the 95 percent of net payment I think is going in the wrong direction.

An Honourable Member: Ninety percent.

Mr. Reid: Sorry, 90 percent of net.

If the government was concerned that the employees were receiving payments to which they were not entitled there could have been other proposals put forward in this bill, and they could have changed the 75 percent of gross up to the maximum that the employees had been previously earning. That would have capped their earnings or their income from workers compensation benefits at a level no more than which they had previously received when they were working.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that would have been fair, because I do not believe that there is anyone who wishes to receive any more than which they were entitled. Yet this government now is proposing by this 90 percent of net to actually penalize the injured workers of this province by some 10 percent. I think that is the wrong direction to go in, because this 10 percent penalty is going to add pressure to these injured workers to cause them to return to work earlier than might otherwise be advisable for them to do, because a lot of them are living on the edge, they are living from payday to payday trying to meet their bills and their commitments and to support their families.

There are a lot of areas that show why the government is taking these steps. In my constituency office I have had, I would say, well over 75 percent of my casework is workers

compensation related. In that respect a lot of them are long-term disability claims who have been cut off from their payments. They have gone through the appeal process, and the appeal process takes a number of months. In the meantime their payments have been stopped. I do not know of any family, even of any of the members in this Chamber here today, that could survive for two months without any income to sustain them except those who may have started off here being independently wealthy before they came to the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that the process that is in place is a fair process. These employees now are not being advised that there are worker advisors there to assist them. Where the injured employees do find out that there are workers advisors, the worker advisors' workload is above and beyond what any reasonable person could expect to be able to handle. Therefore, the assistance of these worker advisors is very limited, and the ability of them to get involved to any large degree is restricted.

I have seen, Mr. Speaker, in some of the casework that I have been dealing with in my constituency, the doctors, the specialists, in some of our more renowned hospitals in this province and in this city, have given medical opinions, and these medical opinions have been forwarded to the Workers Compensation Board, and the Workers Compensation Board doctors have overruled the opinions of the medical specialists who work with these injuries and these type of cases day in and day out, week in and week out, yet these specialists' opinions are being overruled by the Workers Compensation doctors. I do not think that is fair, Mr. Speaker.

An Honourable Member: Name one.

Mr. Reid: Yes, Health Sciences Centre, any one of those doctors you want to pick in there.

For the members opposite, if they are interested I will forward the names of those doctors to them. I do not have them readily available with me here right now, but I will provide those names for those individuals who want them. All they have to do is call my office, and I will instruct my assistant to forward the names of those doctors to them to let them see.

So let the members opposite not doubt that there are specialists in the field who are having their decisions overruled by Workers Compensation

doctors. It is very obvious that they do not care, Mr. Speaker.

There was a bill, Mr. Speaker, that is before this Legislature as well, that I think, if the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) was sincere, he might have included in his own legislation, and that is Bill 9, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act, which will move forward to include firefighters under protection of Workers Compensation. If this government is sincere in what they are saying and they want to protect and look after the injured workers of this province, they should include firefighters in that coverage as well.

Since Justice Lyon, I believe, was the one in his ruling who had previously struck down the coverage for these firefighters, I think it is incumbent upon this government to bring forward legislation to protect the firefighters who, in the performance of their duties, put their lives on the line every time they go out and respond to a call, protecting—

An Honourable Member: What do the miners do? What about miners?

* (1610)

Mr. Reid: I am talking about firefighters here right now. -(interjection)- It is very obvious, Mr. Speaker, that these members opposite, the government members, make light of the fact that these firefighters are putting their lives on the line and their health on the line every time they respond to a call. They make light of it. They laugh at this. They do not take the matter seriously. If they had taken it seriously, they would have done something to include the firefighters in the compensation entitlement to benefits.

These firefighters perform a necessary service to us in society. They go out, and when they respond to a call, they do not know what it is that they are going to be facing when they arrive at the scene. It could be an injury. It could be a fatality. It could be hazardous chemicals in a plant that are on fire, as we have seen in this city in past years, but where they do, they go and respond to protect the citizens of our society. For that, they should be protected so that, should they incur any kind of occupational illness or injury, they should be covered for that.

An Honourable Member: They are right now. Anything related to the occupation, they are covered today, absolutely.

Mr. Reid: No. No, and if the minister looks at the definitions that are in the actual bill itself, there is a

section in the bill under occupational diseases—means a disease arising out of and in the course of employment and resulting from causes and conditions (a) peculiar to or characteristic of a particular trade or occupation or (b) peculiar to the particular employment, but does not include the ordinary diseases of life—right?—the ordinary diseases of life.

So if an employee contacts or finds that they have cancer, to me, the definition that is in this bill says that, where it cannot be proved that they got this disease as a result of the performance of their duties, then they will not be covered. -(interjection)-

I find it very unusual that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) is trying to defend his bill before us here today. I cannot fault him for it. His name is the cover of the bill. I remember this minister saying in this House, Mr. Speaker, and I am not sure if it is on the record, but I can relate it to members of the House because it was something that stood out very clearly to me. He said that if he had one friend in the union ranks and he lost it because of this bill, it was no big deal.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, it is very obvious that he does not care about the workers of this province, and I remember quite clearly, because it struck me as a very odd position for a Minister of Labour to take, that he should not be concerned for the working people of this province, those for whom he is supposed to be responsible.

Mr. Speaker, when an injured worker has to leave his employment due to injury, it is not only the physical problems that the injured worker has to deal with. There are the psychological and the emotional and the family stresses that arise out of the injury as well. I have seen in my dealings with constituency casework, compensation-related claims, and I have worked with people who are on long-term disability, have had back surgery and may never return to work. These employees and their families go through some traumatic times. They feel that they in their own minds lost any worth that they would have in society and their self-esteem has dropped. For that, it creates additional stresses within the family.

These are the things that they have to deal with, these problems, and they do not need to have any other problems piled on top of them as a result of their dealings with the Workers Compensation Board. It has been my experience that they have

had in many cases many problems in dealing with the board.

I have another case that came before me again this week, a long-term disability. The individual had their benefits terminated in May. There are doctors' reports on record indicating that this individual is indeed a legitimate claim, and yet the claim was terminated and the benefits were cut off. They were cut off in May, and it has been some two months now that this family has gone through without any income to sustain them.

I think that we should have a process in place that the benefits would be maintained in place until the appeal process is exhausted, and then if it is ruled against the appealing party, then there is a position that could be taken by Workers Compensation to terminate benefits, but not until the final appeal process has been exhausted as we are seeing now.

I have seen situations where employees have been called back to work on light-duty jobs. These employees come back to work because they want to be productive members of our society and they want to feel some self-worth. They return to work and they work a short period of time on the light-duty jobs and then the employer gradually places more and greater responsibilities in terms of work on the employees in the sense of physical capabilities.

That, I believe, leads to potential reinjury or new injury of the employee's previous injury. That places the employee at risk, and I do not think that is right. There should be some provisions there to protect these employees who return on light duty.

I have never, Mr. Speaker, in all my experience ever seen an employee who intentionally puts themselves in a position where they would be at risk so that they would be injured. If they were to do that, they would be putting their families at risk, and I do not think that any employee in the work force wants to put their family at risk. They do not need more problems. They want to go along, they want to do their job. They want to receive the income to which they are entitled and they want to live a comfortable, happy life. They do not need these injuries.

This bill overall, I believe, outside of the two areas that I have mentioned, and that is the indexation up to the maximum of 6 percent plus the maximum annual earnings of \$45,500, are the two areas that are good in this bill. Outside of those two, I find little else in this bill that I could support. For that I feel that I will not be supporting this bill based on the

information that I read in this bill and the facts as I know them to be.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, with those comments that I placed on the record, I hope the government members have listened to the concerns of the people who have come before committee and presented and to the concerns that the members on this side of the House have raised. I doubt that will be the case; therefore I will not be supporting this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for and charged with the administration of The Workers Compensation Act): Mr. Speaker, I will try to be extremely brief in my comments, as I know there are many pieces of business before this House.

I would like to say, in just prefacing my remarks, that the greatest asset any individual or party or group can bring to public life, of course, is their credibility. Credibility is based every time upon the testing of our statements against fact. What I have heard in the opposition of members of the New Democratic Party and the Manitoba Federation of Labour goes beyond what I initially expected in terms of credible comments. In fact, they have gone far into the realm of building this into an attack that does not exist.

Mr. Speaker, I expected certain issues would not be agreed upon by labour. Certainly I expected that their preference was a hundred percent of net on payment of wages as opposed to 90 percent. That is a consistent position. I expected some concern or problems with the occupational disease definition. I expected that. Harry Mesman and I had many conversations about that.

In listening to the comments that were made, I want to just again put on record some of the facts which are totally missed in the comments made by other members. I know the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) may not want to hear this, but I have a right to put this on the record. Again, 140 of the 178 recommendations of the King commission are now entirely substantially complied with, their commission. Six other provinces have gone to the net and dual award system in their payment structure.

Mr. Speaker, remember where this structure began. It began with a New Democratic Party government in Saskatchewan, in fact one of the few

WCBs in the country that has no deficit today. It began with an NDP government and has spread with this province to seven jurisdictions in this country. We have heard comments by members opposite with respect to this being an employer insurance plan. We know that if we did not have Workers Comp, probably 70 percent to 90 percent of the claims that are made would not find any redress in the court system. So although those comments are made, this is an employer-funded plan. It is there to meet a purpose, and I think any government has to be responsible in providing a fair benefit package.

* (1620)

The one issue, Mr. Speaker, and I am coming to the end of my remarks, but the one issue that the New Democratic Party has never answered in this debate every time they have been asked, is what they would do with the current overpayments, where we have many people earning up to 130 percent, 130 percent of their take-home pay on comp. I expected them to say, go to a net system at 100 percent of net, even though no other jurisdiction has said that, but they never said that. They said only to keep the status quo with all its problems.

So I appreciate the comments that were made by other members, and I thank the support of members on this side for passing the bill.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 59, The Workers Compensation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail et diverses dispositions législatives. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. The question before the House, third reading of Bill 59, The Workers Compensation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail et diverses dispositions législatives.

All those in favour of the motion, please say yea. All those opposed, please say nay. In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker, please.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

The question before the House is third reading of Bill 59, The Workers Compensation Amendment

and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail et diverses dispositions législatives.

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

Yeas

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

Nays

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

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 29, Nays 26.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* (1630)

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I had proposed to call Bill 65. It is not on the Order Paper. Would you ask leave of the House to call Bill 65, Report Stage?

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to allow Bill 65 to come forward for the Report Stage?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave? Leave has been granted.

REPORT STAGE

Bill 65—The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1991

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): I move, by leave, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Bill 65, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives), as amended and reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be concurred in. Agreed?

Motion agreed to.

THIRD READINGS

Bill 65—The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1991

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Bill 65, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives), be now read a third time and passed.

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

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave? Leave has been granted.

Motion agreed to.

DEBATE ON THIRD READINGS—PRIVATE BILLS

Bill 66—The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation "The Winnipeg Canoe Club", standing in the name of the honourable member for Inkster.

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, leave is denied.

Point of Order

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would ask if in fact the government plans on having closure on this particular bill at this time.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would, prior to speaking on the bill, ask the government House leader, if we were to adjourn debate, would he be forcing us to in fact finish debate on this bill today? Is that the government's intention—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have recognized the honourable member for Inkster to debate Bill 66.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I am very disappointed in this government and the treatment of the Salvation Army—

Point of Order

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have recognized the honourable member for Inkster to speak on Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I would like to challenge the Chair.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Do you have a problem over there?

I have simply recognized the honourable member for Inkster. I have asked the honourable member that Bill 66—and I have indicated to him that I have recognized him to speak to Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, we have, in the past couple of days, seen the government's reaction to the Salvation Army, and it has not been what we believe is in the best interests of the thousands of volunteers who put in hundreds, thousands of hours in every year. I would suggest to the government that they should be giving that private members' bill—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am asking the honourable member for Inkster now to be relevant to Bill 66, the Winnipeg Canoe Club. In case the honourable member for Inkster is unaware of it, I will remind the honourable member that you simply have 15 minutes to debate Bill 66.

Order, please. Our Rule 33.(3): "... speeches during the Private Members' Hour or during debate on a private member's order called by the government pursuant to sub-rule 20(2) shall be limited to fifteen minutes." The honourable member for Inkster simply has 15 minutes. The honourable member for Inkster, keep his remarks to Bill 66.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, every session members of this Chamber bring in private members' bills. The member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) brought forward a bill which we in the Liberal Party support. We want to be able to put our remarks on

the record when we feel it is most appropriate, much like we would like to have the opportunity to put our remarks on the record for all of the private members' bills. This government, in its cold, uncompassionate way, is denying us an opportunity to speak on some of those private members' bills. A Salvation Army bill is one of those bills that we feel, like this bill, are very important to be debated and passed in this Chamber in this session.

One has to ask the question in terms of what are the government's priorities. Mr. Speaker, we have a priority with this bill as we do with the Salvation Army bill. We feel that both bills, both private members' bills, deserve to pass. What I am concerned about is that one of these private members' bills is not going to pass because of a personal vendetta. I believe that is wrong, that one of these bills is not going to be passed as a direct result of someone in this Chamber who does not want that bill to be passed. Who are the people who are going to be penalized as a direct result of this personal vendetta? Thousands of volunteers, and that is wrong.

* (1640)

Members of this Chamber have put hours of time and effort into private members' bills. All of them put in effort in hopes that their bill will in fact be able to pass, like the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) who put in, no doubt, a tremendous number of hours, who consulted with different individuals, different people, to get this bill before us today. Mr. Speaker, she is not alone. There are other members who have worked equally as hard, who deserve the same type of treatment.

It is not the first time that we have seen private members' bills pass through and the government will try to indicate in terms of lack of notice for some of the bills. Mr. Speaker, I have been here where we have seen private members' bills go through first, second and third reading in a day. The excuses that the government is giving on some private members' bills is very different. They have a double standard for different members, and I believe that is wrong. The government has an obligation not only to recognize the importance of the Winnipeg Canoe Club as we in the Liberal Party have. We have agreed that we will pass this bill. I am very disappointed that the government has done what the New Democrats have done and invoked closure. They are not going to allow members of the Liberal Party to debate this bill when they feel it is

most appropriate to debate it. That means if we wanted to make a phone call to the Winnipeg Canoe Club or any other organization to find out what their thoughts are, they are denying us that.

That, in my opinion, is a slap in the face from what we have been doing with this government for the last couple of months. In the last couple of months, we have been very co-operative in trying to accommodate the desires and wishes of this government on many different items of government House business. I do not know what the Minister of Finance and Government House Leader (Mr. Manness) intends to do this evening, but I think he has jeopardized a lot of negotiations that will likely be limited to a certain degree in the future as a direct result of denying us the ability to stand this bill.

We would have been more than happy to pass the bill. The Liberal Party supports the Winnipeg Canoe Club. The Liberal Party supports the bill. We, in fact, Mr. Speaker, want this bill to pass and receive Royal Assent this session. We were not going to prevent the bill from passing. We do want to have a few more members to speak on this bill. I would hope that if the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) decides to adjourn debate on this bill, the government would show the common decency and respect the parliamentary system and allow him to adjourn debate, as we have done through private members' hour on every private member's bill.

You ask yourselves how long those bills have been standing in your names for the last three, four months in second reading. All we are asking is that we be given the same right that we have given you when it comes to standing bills. If you respect the parliamentary system, then respect the opposition parties. Allow us the opportunity to speak on the bills when we want and when we feel prepared to speak on the bills, not to try and force through something prematurely or without any type of negotiations. To do what you are doing is to tell us that you do not have the ability to be able to negotiate a good deal, and no one wins in that case. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I want to say very briefly on this that there are procedures that we follow with private bills. I would note on this particular one that the sponsor of this bill met with me several months ago and identified the fact that it was going to be introduced. In fact, we had the chance to discuss it in caucus several months ago, and when we finally reached the stage

in the session—and I do not think there is any secret of the fact that this session—well, it may wind up before it winds down, but it is definitely winding down in one sense. That is why we supported this bill. I note the Mount Carmel Clinic bill was also introduced last session.

I point out in terms of the process, just very briefly, that we had another private members' bill, The Pas Health Complex bill. I have been assured by the Government House Leader (Mr. Manness) and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) that, while it could not be dealt with in the context of statute law amendment, it will be dealt with next session. They have been very open minded on it where they indicated there should be no difficulty in introducing it.

I would suggest, if the Liberals have concerns about another bill which was introduced rather late in the session, that I am sure the same sort of process could be undertaken. We have taken the time on this to consult with the government. These are private members' bills. They are not political bills, Mr. Speaker, and that is why we had no difficulty supporting this bill sponsored by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), why it was no different from the Mount Carmel bill and why we do not see any problem with The Pas Health Complex bill. If The Salvation Army bill has been put through the same process, I am sure the same consideration would be given.

I would suggest we have the vote on this bill. It is a good bill. The Canoe Club does need this change to move to a nonprofit situation. If we delay passing this bill, Mr. Speaker, it could jeopardize their efforts to get on a sound footing and establish a nonprofit system. I would suggest that each of us, having had the chance to express our views, including the Liberal House leader—and I respect his views, I understand his concern, but that we not hold out the Canoe Club on this one any longer, pass this bill and move on to other business.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, this is a bill, the Winnipeg Canoe Club bill, which is very straightforward. It is a bill which gives the membership nonprofit status, which allows them to continue in such a way that the affairs of the Canoe Club, should they ever break up, would mean that any monies left over, as I understand the bill, would then be put into a public venue. That is a reasonable proposition, and it makes for a bill which

really should not involve us in any controversy whatsoever.

The problem is that this bill as a private members' bill has been given appropriate consideration by a majority government and it is one of their members that has introduced that particular bill. There are other bills that are presented, which are also of a noncontroversial nature, that are also of concern to members of this House, because they happen to be in an area where their constituents live and reside as, of course, the Canoe Club exists and resides within the constituency of the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render).

In this situation, The Salvation Army bill, we are dealing with a nonprofit hospital, a hospital which wants, by this bill, to extend its participation more broadly within the community. Like the Winnipeg Canoe Club bill, we are not dealing with a bill which would in any way work as a detriment to the people of this community. In fact, the Winnipeg Canoe Club bill works, we hope, in a positive way in its community, but we have a private members' bill which is doing the same thing, and what we do not understand, quite frankly, is why this government will not negotiate and deal in good faith with us as a political party and, more particularly, with the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) in the same fashion.

Are we changing the rules of this House so that bills that are presented by government members get more consideration than bills which are presented by opposition members? I certainly hope not, because that will be a very dangerous precedent, yet that is what is happening. We have had a circumstance in which the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has indicated he wants a legal opinion. Well, there is a legal opinion. Legislative counsel has prepared such an opinion, and that opinion says that the bill is in first-class order. So we are asking that, like the Winnipeg Canoe Club bill, we be given the same consideration by members of the majority government of this Chamber, and to date they have been unwilling to treat us in the same way as we would have them treat all members, not just the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render).

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): I move, seconded by the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), that debate on this bill be adjourned.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for St. James, seconded by the member for

St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), that debate be adjourned. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: No.

* (1650)

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the comments of my House leader, but as well add some comments about this bill which I support and have made that known to the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) wholeheartedly. What I have asked for is due consideration, not for myself, not for my constituents, indeed not for any partisan purpose, but for the Salvation Army whom we have heard repeatedly lauded by the members opposite as a wonderful organization, an organization deserving of our unqualified support.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I beg to bring to the minister's attention, and I just did personally and he indicated to me that he did not even want to look at the legal opinion I have put in front of him. That was what he said to me, he did not want to look at it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I have recognized the honourable member for St. James for Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act, and I would ask the honourable member to keep his remarks relevant to said question.

Mr. Edwards: As I was saying, I put the legal opinion on the Salvation Army bill before—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am requesting the honourable member for St. James to keep his remarks relevant to Bill 66.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I do believe my comments were in order, and I want to continue on line. I am not reflecting on the Chair. I simply want to continue speaking—

Mr. Speaker: On Bill 66.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, Bill 66 in reality in this Chamber is inextricably linked to Bill 67. The fact is that today I have learned, unlike what the Minister of Health told me two days ago—he said he had ordered a legal opinion—I learned today that they had not referred any legal opinion to the department of civil legal services. I had to do that and I have, which I want to table—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am requesting the honourable member for St. James to keep his remarks relevant to Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, the Canoe Club Act is an important act for that private organization. Private acts generally are largely not a part of our normal legislative regime, in terms of creating new ones, these days. They often flow from years, past times. That is true with the Canoe Club; that is also true with the Salvation Army. I think it is incumbent upon us to do our utmost to facilitate their operations, in particular the operations of a nonprofit organization such as the Canoe Club which serves the community in a recreational capacity and a social capacity, but also the Salvation Army. It serves the community as a medical facility. To have become the subject of a partisan dispute between the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and myself, I regret if that has happened.

If the Minister of Health feels uncomfortable with me putting forward this bill for whatever reason, I am willing to say that whomever he chooses I would want to second this Bill 67. Let us not let the political games of the Minister of Health interfere with doing what is right for the Salvation Army. The group in our community has done nothing but serve through thousands of volunteers, as the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) has pointed out, not only the interests of the St. James-Assiniboia community but, as the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) pointed out, the entire community.

Mr. Speaker, I have a legal opinion here that I have given to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). He indicated that he was not going to look at it. I gave it to the Minister of Finance, the House leader (Mr. Manness). He said he was not going to look at it. Let me tell you what that legal opinion says. Firstly, it says the matter has never, ever been referred to Legislative Counsel. I did it. We did it first, because he threw that up as a reason why it should not go to vote. Not to mention the fact that last Friday Mr. Praznik, the Minister of Labour, talked about getting a legal opinion, and he tabled one that is five pages long on Monday, two days later, over the weekend. This is a ruse. The fact is this bill is noncontroversial, nonpartisan. It cites one minor problem, and there is an amendment attached to the documents I have provided which would deal with that. We are willing to have perhaps the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) second it.

Mr. Speaker: I am sure that the remarks of the honourable member are directed directly to Bill 66. The honourable member is talking of this legal

opinion of a certain bill, and I am sure it has to do with Bill 66, is it? I am sure the honourable member will want to make that tie in together somehow.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, Bill 66, the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) has indicated, did receive some legal opinion on it, as has this bill. Legal opinions are important. They are, in these matters, relatively easy to get. They can be gotten relatively quickly. There is one outstanding concern which is not a concern with respect to Bill 66 but which is a concern with respect to Bill 67, and I cite this in terms of comparison between the two. That concern indicates that there may be issues that would have to be addressed by the Department of Health.

I invited the minister two days ago to have made those comments known; he cited none. He cited one difficulty. That difficulty was a legal opinion, a difficulty which did not exist with respect to Bill 66. What is really happening here in this Chamber, and it is unfortunate that the Canoe Club and the Salvation Army have become the subjects of the kind of political, shameless game playing going on between this Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and literally any member of this Chamber, but it happens to be me. I regret that. I regret that he has taken this to a personal level on a private act which can only do good in the community.

It is truly, I believe—it does not just reflect in an insulting fashion on him but on all of us as members that we cannot come together on such a noncontroversial, nonpartisan issue as doing what is right for the Salvation Army. We should be ashamed of that kind of spectacle for the people of this province. It is being promoted and promulgated by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and he and he alone. What kind of message does that send to the community who look to us for common sense and for assistance in doing the kind of volunteer work that they do tirelessly, have so for decades, will so for decades to come.

Can we not come to the point where we can give them a hand when they ask for it? The fact is no, apparently not. Apparently, the Minister of Health sees fit to instead pull the entire process down to the level of petty partisanship. That is an issue which I addressed in this House a couple of weeks ago, and I remember the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province standing up and saying it is time we moved beyond that; it is time we looked to a higher level of debate.

Well, this is part and parcel with that same lesson, Mr. Speaker. It is time we went beyond the kind of games that are being played here today. The Canoe Club deserves our due consideration of their bill, and they deserve the common-sense approach, the nonpartisan approach of this Chamber, as does the Mount Carmel Clinic, as do the numerous other private members' bills that have come before this House, as does the Salvation Army.

* (1700)

Mr. Speaker, I, too, recall when a private members' bill came forward from the then member for Lac du Bonnet, now Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik). I think it was Victoria Beach, I am not sure what the actual organization was. We saw and passed that bill the same day a couple of years ago. Now what is going on with the government that they cannot see their way clear through the morass of the partisanship, in particular in this case of the Minister of Health, to do the right thing?

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Canoe Club is a laudable organization indeed. I have fond personal memories of tennis games and swimming and playing golf at their facilities, enjoyed them on many occasions in years past and I hope in years future, because I know the Canoe Club has had some difficulties financially. They have done some restructuring. I think they have come a long way, and I look forward to their continued growth participation in the broader community.

Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to do the right thing and to not play partisan politics with the Canoe Club bill, unlike the government with respect to the Salvation Army. Now, the Canoe Club should not be caught up in this kind of garbage that is being played on the floor of this Chamber by the government. Let it be known who stood in the way with absolutely no excuse to doing what was right for the Salvation Army in this community. It was the government.

I do not believe, I really do not believe it was the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) in whose riding this hospital is. I do not believe it was him. I do not believe it was the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) who got involved in this because she was sponsoring the Canoe Club bill. I know who it was. It was the same person who just told me he was not even going to look at the legal opinion. That is the man who is playing politics with the Salvation Army. That is the man who hopes to run a health

system, Mr. Speaker, that does some good in this province, and they are going to rely on the volunteers, and they are going to rely on the good will of the Salvation Army in this community who have run that Grace Hospital for decades in this community, tirelessly, and the one time they come to this Chamber for some assistance this Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to sponsor the amendment to the Winnipeg Canoe Club. I did not realize it was going to resolve into this kind of a discussion. As many of you know, the Winnipeg Canoe Club is one of the oldest, if not the oldest active sports club in Canada. It is a club that offers services not just to the residents of St. Vital but to the residents of all of Winnipeg. It was formed in the 19th century. It survived two World Wars, fires and floods in the 20th century, and this amendment will make sure it is a viability into the 21st century.

The Winnipeg Canoe Club has a long tradition in Winnipeg and I know that Winnipeggers are proud of the services and the opportunities that it has offered countless Winnipeggers and, indeed, Manitobans, for almost a century. It would be a shame if any honourable members in this House did not support the amendment and thus help to ensure the fine tradition of the Winnipeg Canoe Club is carried to the end of this century and well into the next century.

I would ask that all honourable members keep in mind that it was this Legislature that incorporated the Winnipeg Canoe Club many, many years ago. I would ask that all honourable members help keep alive the marvelous history and record of the Canoe Club by voting in favour of the amendment.

I will finish by thanking all those members who do see it in their hearts to support this amendment. Indeed, my thanks come not just from me but from all members of the Winnipeg Canoe Club, who come from all over the city.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation "The Winnipeg Canoe Club". Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would ask whether or not there is a willingness to sit beyond six o'clock. I would say until 12 a.m.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to extend the sitting hours for today from 6 p.m. until 12 a.m.? Is there leave of the House?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Mr. Manness: Would you also ask the House if there is a willingness to waive private members' hour?

Mr. Speaker: I thought we did that. That has already been done. Leave has already been granted.

DEBATE ON THIRD READINGS

Bill 69—The Manitoba Medical Association Fees Repeal Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill 69, The Manitoba Medical Association Fees Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur les droits de l'Association médicale du Manitoba, standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I certainly have strong views on this and I expressed those in second reading. This destroys the Rand Formula, and indeed our critic will be speaking at length, and our Leader. It is a very important bill to us because of the principle involved, and we indeed will be opposing this bill strenuously.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we have spoken on this bill at second reading. We went with interest to the committee hearings to hear from the Manitoba Medical Association. The Manitoba Medical Association articulated in very clear terms that the only rationalization that they could have and receive from the minister on the introduction of this bill was that it was revenge for the way in which the Manitoba Medical Association conducted their affairs in their dispute with the government last year, and that the government would roll back the provisions with the

Manitoba Medical Association really to provisions that are pre-Rand Formula, which was granted to associations, unions and other organizations in the late '40s. We have a situation in this Chamber today where we are being asked to pass legislation that goes back some 40 to 45 years in terms of the development of intelligent labour-management relations in the province of Manitoba, including relations with professional organizations.

We asked the president of the Manitoba Medical Association at that committee whether, in fact, there was any consultation whatsoever with the Manitoba Medical Association on the changes that the government was unilaterally introducing. The Manitoba Medical Association said no. They were told at the end of a meeting with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) that this is the way it is going to be; tough luck if you do not like it, because we are going to bring it in. We have a majority government, and that is all there is to it.

Mr. Speaker, they could get no explanation from the Minister of Health. They have now stated in their own publications, professional publications that go out to all doctors, that the real reason the government is bringing in this bill is to take away or to treat the doctors and the doctors' association in a way that is revengeful and spiteful because of the way in which the association advertised and campaigned against the government last year in their fees dispute.

We have had lots of fights with the doctors ourselves of the Manitoba Medical Association as a government. Governments of all political stripes in all provinces of Canada have had healthy disagreements with the doctors associations. That does not mean to say if you feel that they took you on and fought you hard, that you change the way in which their association or their organization operates, and you take away some of the provisions that were granted by votes by their membership years ago.

The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) cites a statistic, I believe—and I am just going by memory—that says some 30-or-so percent was the vote of the doctors for purposes of association in the Manitoba Medical Association. That is the rationale he used to change this provision.

Mr. Speaker, the calculation that the government used and the minister used was a calculation based on all eligible voters. In other words, they took all

the voters who did not vote and all the voters who voted against it to get the 30-or-so percent. Under that logic, the Conservative government now, of the day, would be sitting in at some 31 percent in terms of the vote, in terms of what the doctors had calculated. So they are using a different standard and a different measure and democracy than what they have been elected with.

(Madam Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

I think it is important to note that in most of these votes, in all of these votes with all of the associations, the vote is calculated on the percentage of people who vote, the percentage of people who vote for and the percentage of people who vote against. You do not take all the people who do not vote and calculate those as no vote. That is not the way we operate in democracy.

* (1710)

I would note, Madam Deputy Speaker, that under that calculation I think Ronald Reagan only got 25 percent of the vote in the United States. Of course, he almost received all the electoral votes in the two terms that he had. He is the hero of the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) and other members across the way. He and Margaret Thatcher are the mentors for members opposite, and I thought I would mention that when we are dealing with the Manitoba Medical Association.

Yes, that was a tough disagreement between the government and the Medical Association. I did not always agree with the tactics used by the Medical Association. I sided with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) when the Medical Association advertised and placed on their billboards the Premier's home number. I thought that was wrong and in very, very poor taste when they had a disagreement with the government, and I said so publicly, and that was during the election.

I also thought, when the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) got into a fight with the Manitoba Medical Association, that he was wrong to call their bargaining unit and their doctors liars publicly in the Winnipeg Free Press. I thought the Minister of Health was not provoking sound relations with the doctors but was rather inciting an emotional situation, something he likes to do, Madam Deputy Speaker, and therefore, we also said the Minister of Health was wrong in that regard, too.

But having said that both sides were wrong in that dispute from time to time, that does not mean to say

that you change the rules, because as the doctors said at the committee, that they were doing this on the basis of spite or revenge. It is a long-established principle of associations and organizations that he or she who gets the benefits from an organization, after a democratic vote take place, pays the dues, unless there are religious reasons, extreme religious reasons, to justify the opposite.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this established principle was established, I believe, even before the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) was elected to this Chamber. It was established in the Rand Formula decision. The Member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) would probably know the date better than I—but I think it was late '48, '47, was a dispute between the auto workers and General Motors, and Justice Rand wisely said if you get the benefits you pay the dues, you cannot get a free ride in this world. The organization that negotiates for you and deals with these issues should get the dues.

That is why, when the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) says why is the NDP standing up with the Manitoba Medical Association, we can answer because there is a fundamental principle here, and just because you are mad at somebody does not mean you erode those principles. What is this, government by revenge, legislation by spite? It does not make any sense.

Madam Deputy Speaker, there is always a price to pay, because this government and all governments need to work in partnership with the Manitoba Medical Association. They are the primary gatekeepers of medical costs in our province. They are the people that can work in partnership with any Minister of Health to try to deal with the reform in the health care system that is absolutely necessary. You do not stick your finger in the eye of an organization that you need to work with in terms of health care reform. You are being spiteful at the expense of your own treasury. What is the benefit? What have you gained? I mean, you have lost some partnership, you have lost some good will with the Manitoba Association, what is the benefit? Can somebody tell me what the benefit is to go back before 1947 in terms of these principles?

I would also ask the members opposite to look at what is going on with the Manitoba Medical Association and public health. Madam Deputy Speaker, it is worth noting, and I hope members are listening, that the Manitoba Medical Association is

right now running an excellent campaign on fetal alcohol syndrome. I have seen it on television, maybe members opposite have seen the advertising on television, advertising again, warning parents-to-be, mothers-to-be, to be very careful about alcohol consumption during the period of time when they are carrying a child. Madam Deputy Speaker, this is a very good thing in our society that they are spending their dues that they are collecting not only in bargaining with the government and not only advertising against the Premier but also spending it on public health.

Now what is the government gaining by passing this Bill? Oh yes, they are going to be able to say, oh, we got them; that will teach them to fight us again. Although I note that they are still bargaining in arbitration cases right now, not being cited specifically in Bill 70, a curious exemption, a very curious exemption, judges and doctors. Tory consistency, I guess it is called, is it not?

Having said that, Madam Deputy Speaker, you are gaining absolutely nothing by passing this bill, except a little bit of adolescent revenge and you are losing partnership, you are losing good will with an organization you have to work with. I would suggest that the taxpayers will ultimately be the losers. If there is money taken away from the Manitoba Medical Association because we have gone prior to the 1947 decisions, that money, I would suggest to you, is not going to be eroded from their normal bargaining. They are still going to hire the lawyers and the advertising people and whatever else to do their traditional jobs. That money is going to come away from the fetal alcohol syndrome programs and the programs on wearing helmets and head protection devices when kids are on bikes. Those kind of programs.

They helped us. I better not mention this, because I do not want to offend the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns). Maybe he might be coming with us in terms of this bill. I was going to mention the nonsmoking bill. I would lose him completely at that point.

They have helped us in preventative health care measures, Madam Deputy Speaker, and they are still helping us. Why take that money away from fetal alcohol syndrome programs? Let us keep it there. You are not gaining a thing.

Sometimes legislation is bad, and even the government that brought it in should have the ability

to admit it. I believe this legislation is bad. It is bad in principle; it is bad in public health policy; it is bad for the taxpayers. We will not gain anything by passing it, and I believe we will lose a lot if it is successful.

I would urge members to have a sober second thought on this bill and vote with us and vote against the bill, because it does not do anything for Manitobans. It just does a little bit for people who got mad at the MMA last year. You just do not pass legislation by revenge.

Thank you very, very much, Madam Deputy Speaker, and those are my comments on Bill 69 as it is before us today.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased also to add my comments at this third reading stage of Bill 69 and to once again express our deep concern about this bill and to plead with members in this House to, as my Leader has just said, give sober second thought to this matter, reconsider this very regressive, negative legislation and resume once again true, meaningful, co-operative, consultative relationships with a very important group in our health care society.

It is very difficult for us to understand what the government intends to accomplish by repealing mandatory fee collection of the Manitoba Medical Association. It is very hard to understand the reasons for an action which goes entirely against the wishes of an organization and their plans and their goals for organizing their business as an association.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it seems very clear to us that it is an intervention in an area where this government does not need to be intervening. It not only violates the principle of the right of an organization to, on a democratic basis, set the rules by which it governs itself, it is also a very harmful intervention from the point of view of our public health care system, from the point of view of our society as a whole. It can bring nothing but harm and destructive measures to our health care system. It only runs the risk of placing in jeopardy the necessary co-operative consultative approaches that have to occur around health care reform if we are ever going to deal with the looming health care crisis before us now.

Madam Deputy Speaker, let us go briefly over the history of this issue. As the Leader of our caucus

has just said, this issue goes back to the mid-1940s with a very important legal judgment after a lengthy and bitter strike between the United Auto Workers and Ford in Windsor, Ontario, and Justice Ivan Rand was the arbitrator called in to resolve that dispute.

* (1720)

The resulting Rand formula from Justice Rand's decision that has been now adopted by most of industry and labour relations acts and increasingly by professional associations provides that all members covered by collective agreements, by joint collaborative efforts, are required to pay dues. They are not required to join the union or join the professional association, but they are required to pay the dues. Madam Deputy Speaker, that decision has been upheld, has never been struck down since its origins of roughly 1945. It has been upheld because it makes good sense, because it is based on the principle, a very simple principle, that it is only fair that those who reap the rewards should pay their fair share of the costs involved.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that is in essence what the MMA is asking of this government. It asked for that right back in about 1984-85 when discussions began with the then Minister of Health, the Honourable Larry Desjardins, and the president of the Manitoba Medical Association. Those deliberations, that dialogue, that sharing of concerns and issues resulted in a major accord that set the stage for future collaborative action on some very important health care issues.

As part of that agreement, reached finally in 1986, the government of the day, the New Democratic Party government, and the Minister of Health, Larry Desjardins, made a commitment to accept the principle, the long-established principle, the Rand formula, of compulsory payment of dues by medical practitioners at their meeting on June 25, 1986. That commitment was translated into legislation. That legislation was passed. That legislation has held all of us in good stead since 1986. It has served the Manitoba Medical Association well in that time. It is a principle that has gained support, achieved greater support from members of the medical community. It is a principle to which members would remain committed to, Madam Deputy Speaker.

There is a long history and commitment for this principle. It has worked well, and it makes no sense to us and to the broader community that this

principle now be trampled with. It can only be seen as an act of revenge on the part of this government. It can only be seen as a blinkered, ideological, knee-jerk reaction. It can only be seen as an autocratic, dictatorial decision handed down by this government out of a commitment to stick to their regressive and narrow views about collective organization and collective association.

To conclude, Madam Deputy Speaker, we urge this government to reconsider this legislation in the interests of health care for all Manitobans, because the full co-operation between the government of the day and the medical practitioners in this province is absolutely fundamental to achieve quality health care to preserve a universally accessible health care system in the face of a growing financial crisis. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The question before the House is on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness); third reading on Bill 69, The Manitoba Medical Association Fees Repeal Act. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Madam Deputy Speaker, Yeas and Nays, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Madam Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, I just wanted to indicate for the record that my friend the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) has a conflict of interest on this issue and has left the Chamber accordingly. Thank you.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Thank you for drawing that to the attention of the House.

* * *

Madam Deputy Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested. Call in the members.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is third reading of Bill 69, The Manitoba Medical Association Fees Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur les droits de l'Association médicale du Manitoba.

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

Yeas

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

Nays

Ashton, Barrett, Carr, Carstairs, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Gaudry, Harper, Hickes, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylycia-Leis, Wewchuk.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 28, Nays 25.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* (1750)

* * *

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): I had previously given you Bill 72 to consider. I wonder if we could now move to Bill 38 instead.

Mr. Speaker: Whatever you wish.

Bill 38—The Wildlife Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune, standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to this bill.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I concur with the former speaker. I feel compelled, given the long-term ramifications of this bill, to put some further thoughts on the record. We sat through many, many hours of public hearings, as the minister knows well, my colleagues and the opposition party, and we heard nothing from environmentalists but that this was a regressive move.

Now it is true that successive New Democratic governments had in place regulations which empowered them to essentially the same thing. The difference was this, Mr. Speaker, the difference was that in the regulation granting section of the bill there was one limitation. What was that one limitation? That one limitation was that what was done even in the regulations had to be judged according to what was in the best interests of the management of Manitoba's wildlife resources.

Now, this is The Wildlife Act, after all, Mr. Speaker. That curtailment as broad, as general, as vague as it is, seems fairly minimal and did so to every presenter who I put that question to at the hearings. That is a pretty logical obvious limitation on a development in a wildlife management area that it be in the best interests of the management of the wildlife resource of the province. If The Wildlife Act does not stand for that, what does it stand for? What happened, what this minister did, was he not only took the broad power of the regulation which successive ministers, the former minister now the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), who is also a former minister, both had it in place, he took that and he put it in the act and he exempted it from that minimal, absolutely minimal curtailment of Section 2 in The Wildlife Act. So, let not him stand here and say that he is just putting into the legislation what the NDP had. It was with limit under the NDP.

True, they abused it. They put an oil well in the Pierson Wildlife Management Area just before they lost in 1988. They did that, and no one challenged them and they are lucky they did not because the truth is Section 2 in The Wildlife Act gave some opportunity to challenge it. They would have had to have justified an oil well as being in the best interest of the wildlife management.

I do not think it would have qualified. I would have been interested in a qualification. None was put forward by the opposition members at the time when this came up repeatedly in the hearings, but in any

event, there is no question and there can be no question, this minister is going further than any minister has ever gone in the history of this province. I dare say, he is setting a precedent in this nation, Mr. Speaker, in terms of gutting The Wildlife Act.

Now, one might legitimately ask: What does The Wildlife Act mean? If not the things done under it are in the best interest of managing the wildlife resources of the province, what can it mean? It means something less than that now. What it really means is, this is The Wildlife Management Act insofar as the minister of the day thinks something should be done whatever, wherever, whenever. This could conceivably contemplate the paving over of every wildlife management area, all 70 in this province. That could happen under The Wildlife Act. Is that not an incredible spectre, Mr. Speaker?

This minister could pave over every one of the 70 wildlife management areas and be within the bounds of the law, under The Wildlife Protection Act, and that is what this minister is doing in this legislation.

I do not say that the Ducks Unlimited project is going to pave over Oak Hammock Marsh. It is not going to pave over the whole thing. This bill is not, and this is in spite of the fact that both the New Democrats and the government have cast this as the Ducks Unlimited bill, it is not the Ducks Unlimited bill.

In fact, Mr. Pannell who presented before the committee said, it was very interesting, he said on behalf of the environmental community—he is a very respected man in the environmental community—he said, I would far prefer you put in an amendment to the act which said Ducks Unlimited can do whatever they want at Oak Hammock Marsh and just leave it at that. If that is what this is about, let us debate that and let us limit this legislation to that. If that is what you want it for. That is what Mr. Pannell said before the hearings, and I appreciated that candidness, because it highlighted for everyone that this bill is for every minister, this one and the next one, and whoever comes after that one, dealing with wildlife management areas.

It is going to be a legacy for all of us unless we reverse it, and we hope we have the opportunity to do that on this side of the House in short order. But, Mr. Speaker, the danger inherent in this is enormous. It is not restricted to this project. It is not restricted to this wildlife area. It is not restricted to

this time period or this government. It has been put into legislation until such time as we change it in the future, and that is a scary prospect.

The people of this province can no longer look to The Wildlife Act for any protection of wildlife. They have one recourse, and that is the political recourse to the minister himself. He has total discretionary control over any development of any kind in any wildlife management area.

Mr. Speaker, the politicization of that act is now complete. It was started by the NDP, but it is now complete. It has been completed in, I believe, a most regressive, environmentally backward fashion. If there is any clearer picture of what the environmental rhetoric coming from this government is about, it is that. It is that an entire act has been gutted by this single stroke in this act.

(Madam Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

The minister will herald the fact that he has created new wildlife management areas. Yes, he has. He will herald the fact that many of them have been created on political initiative, some of them his, and that is true. If he really believed that these areas were worth protecting, and if he really believed that what he was doing this time was in the best interest of the wildlife management of the province, why did he not leave that test in place?

* (1800)

He has told us he needs this act to avoid a lawsuit from Ducks Unlimited. If he had been sued by Ducks Unlimited, there is only one test it would have been held to—what is in the best interest of the management of the wildlife resource of the province? Ducks Unlimited obviously cannot meet that standard or he would not need this bill. That is the bottom line, Madam Deputy Speaker. By his own words he said he needs this bill to avoid a lawsuit. That is the only potential challenge there was, and he has eradicated that. This must be not in the best interest of the wildlife management of the province, and actions speak louder than words. He says it is, fine, defend it.

What is he afraid of? Either he cannot defend this one, or the real agenda is there are lots of other projects he is looking at. He is creating a free hand for a long time to come. I believe the latter myself. I believe that if, as Mr. Pannell said before the committee, this was only about Ducks Unlimited, we would have had a section saying Ducks Unlimited can do what they want at Oak Hammock Marsh. He

would have stood up and he would have defended the project, and that would have been the only thing, but he did not do that. He put in place a discretionary power over all of the wildlife management areas, over all projects, and without time limitation, without any limitation.

Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, we have had some rumours that there are some members on the other side, the government side, who are thinking of leaving the chair. I see the government Whip shaking his head. Either that is nervousness or he is saying no to me, I am not sure. He has been shaking before. I frankly think he is underpaid for the amount of time he spends shaking, but there is some concern. I hope it is true. I personally do not have a lot of faith that it is true, but I hope it may be true, and I know—

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Stand by Harry.

Mr. Edwards: The Minister of Labour (Mr Praznik) says he is standing beside Harry, and I would encourage members to vote with their conscience on this one, to not be cowed by the very partisan representations which have been made throughout by this minister on this particular project, and to see this bill for what it is. Look at their own constituencies in which there may be quite likely some wildlife areas. Look at the potential for abuse. If we trust Harry, as it were, if as the Minister of Labour says we are with Harry on this one, the minister; then so be it. Let us do that. Let us trust him, but do they trust the next Minister of Natural Resources in the same fashion implicitly without restriction?

Mr. Praznik: That may be even a Liberal.

Mr. Edwards: Now that may be, yes. The Minister of Labour says, that may be a Liberal, maybe a New Democrat, maybe another Conservative. This is not restricted to this minister. Again, this is not restricted to this project. Let the members in the government ask themselves whether or not they want a free hand enshrined in legislation for all time, for all purposes and for any minister.

Mr. Praznik: Not for all time.

Mr. Edwards: Now the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) says, not for all time. Is there a time limit on this legislation? Are they already thinking of maybe repealing it? I would be thankful, and I invite the Minister of Labour to get up and say that this is not for all time and we are giving it second thoughts.

I would appreciate that, but there is no indication of that on the face of this bill.

This bill says nothing about a limitation. It is a gutting of the act; it is a shameless retraction of everything this government says it has stood for on environmental issues. It gives no security to the public, and it gives no recourse to the public. For that, it is a sad day for Manitoba's wildlife resource because it goes way beyond this project. The minister says he stands for the ducks—let him stand for the ducks. This affects far more than the ducks; this affects far more than this particular preserve, this particular project. This affects all of us in every corner of this province, every wildlife preserve that is there now, that will be there in the future, that is what we are talking about.

We are not talking about this project. Members opposite should take note of that because they themselves, I am sure, have areas in their province that either are areas they would like to see protected for the betterment of wildlife or will be in the future. Think about that. This is not restricted to this project and as much as they may want to support this minister, let them ask that question for future ministers, future years, when they may not be in government and they may want some recourse, what will happen then.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this bill deserves to be opposed to the bitter end, and it will be. We can only, I assume, look forward to the day that we will have a chance to put some meaning back into The Wildlife Act, so the people can look to it and say maybe this does something for wildlife. I assume that from the title, from the preamble, maybe we should make the sections correspond with the natural, obvious, assumption people make when they look at The Wildlife Act.

The truth is this no longer has anything to do with wildlife protection, according to this minister, it has to do with politics, the politics of the day and the minister's desires of the day. He is without limitation on that power and for that he should forever be ashamed as the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), the sponsor of this bill. He has gutted that act, that is what he is proposing here today. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): We want to rise on this bill. It is rather ironic that it is almost 12 months since we saw the Premier (Mr. Filmon) campaigning in this province in a canoe,

padding down the wildlife area or the LaSalle River, proclaiming his allegiance to the environment, proclaiming his party's allegiance to the environment of Manitoba, making all kinds of election promises.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is a long 12 months because there is a real fundamental difference between what this government proclaimed it would do during an election and what it has done since an election.

This Premier should have been campaigning in a bulldozer rather than a canoe if he was going to be straightforward with the people of Manitoba. He should have been bulldozing our wildlife areas and building the Ducks Unlimited complex in the Oak Hammock area, because that would have been a more honest portrayal of the vision of the government and the vision of the Premier in dealing with these projects.

The reason for this bill is very clear. The government needs more power than it presently has to get through the Ducks Unlimited project at the Oak Hammock Marsh, to get through other projects we know not of. Clearly, they wanted to take many more powers unto the cabinet of the day rather than leaving that protection in the legislation and leaving the protection in the legislation that could be arbitrated in courts when the public representatives wanted to raise issues of importance and challenge decisions of arbitrary governments.

When the Premier says today in Question Period that there is no difference between what is in this act and what happened in the past, then the question that begs the answer is: Why are you changing the act? You are changing the act to give the government of the day more power in the act over the wildlife areas in the province.

Now the minister cites examples in the past, and I welcome those examples, because if there were examples in the past that were wrong, that is why we passed the new Environment Act to give the public greater protection. If there were wrong decisions before, they should have been challenged. I know the government, before I was elected, was very involved in other wilderness areas when the Atikaki Park area was going to be proposed for development, and it was set aside as a wilderness area in the province of Manitoba. There are, you know, good and bad examples that one could be citing on the record, but the question

remains: Why are you changing the act? Why do you want to change the act?

You know it was not proposed in the election. It was not even proposed in the Speech from the Throne on March 8. I suggest the idea of the act came forward when the advisers to the minister and the advisers to cabinet said, listen, the friends of Oak Hammock Marsh have a legal argument. They could, on behalf of the people they are representing, win this case. So Ducks Unlimited came to their friendly minister and, I might say, a friendly minister who has said on the record, I have never and nobody could ever accuse me of being an independent person with respect of the Oak Hammock Marsh project. I have always indicated my position. I have never indicated otherwise.

I know the minister wears the pin of Ducks Unlimited, supports their program and has been very open and straightforward on that. I disagree with him, but I surely know and members in this Chamber surely know the position of the government minister on this project. They like it, they support it, and they will do anything possible to get it through. They have been honest on that score.

* (1810)

The member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) cited and quoted today jokingly saying, if there is anybody opposed to this we will shoot them or kill them or something like that. Not very appropriate, Madam Deputy Speaker, even for a joke I would suggest. Surely in a parliamentary democracy the idea of assassination, because you will not vote for the Oak Hammock Marsh project or vote against The Wildlife Act, is a little farfetched.

There have also been people citing Conservatives are going to vote against this bill. I do not know where the intelligence of the member is who was quoted in the press conference yesterday, and I hope that individual in Ottawa was correct, but if I was playing poker I would not be betting that would be happening. I would have to say I know members opposite have stuck with this bill through thick and thin, mostly very thin, because most Manitobans are opposed to this development of Ducks Unlimited at the Oak Hammock Marsh.

They know that presenter after presenter after presenter not only dealt with the principle of this bill, taking power away from the people and giving power to the cabinet, which is absolutely in the

opposite direction of every environmental piece of legislation that is being passed in this country today, where we are giving more power to the people, we are saying to the people, it is your environment; it is not industry's environment, it is not government's environment, it is your environment, and you have to be involved in the process.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the members opposite sat through those committees and listened to the presentations on the principle and rejected that advice. They rejected an amendment that we proposed to make The Environment Act clearly the major piece of legislation, the dominant piece of legislation dealing with this bill. I still think The Environment Act is the dominant piece of legislation, but that puts it back in the courts potentially. They rejected the advice that hundreds of Manitobans provided to the government through weeks of testimony at committee that the Ducks Unlimited proposal was not consistent with the vision of a wetland region at the Oak Hammock Marsh, people who were founders of the Oak Hammock Marsh, who worked as volunteers, and these are people across all political stripes.

I talked to people who worked as volunteers in the '60s to establish this Oak Hammock Marsh, and they cannot believe what the government is doing. They have been campaigning against this since it was announced in January of 1990. We got a leak from the Department of Natural Resources that in fact this project was going to go forward, and it was considered at that time by our sources in the minister's department as a pet project of the minister of the day. The intelligence we received from his department was not far off and has been fairly accurate in terms of the actions of the minister and the verbal statements of the minister since then.

Madam Deputy Speaker, hundreds of Manitobans said no to this bill and they also said no to the Ducks Unlimited project at the Oak Hammock Marsh. Now, why do you not put the building in Stonewall? Why do you not put the building outside of the wetlands region? Why does it have to go inside the wetland Oak Hammock Marsh area? That is what most people ask me. Why are they doing this? We do not have enough land around the city of Winnipeg in natural preserve. Why are we taking a natural wetland region and putting bricks and mortar in it? It is a question I cannot answer.

Now, the minister disagrees with us, the Premier disagrees with us, the cabinet disagrees with us,

and not only do they disagree with us, but they are putting money into it. How do you justify putting money into a ducks project in a wetlands region and cutting out money in the Winnipeg Education Centre in downtown inner city that trains our most needy people in terms of training and development? How do you say yes to ducks and Ducks Unlimited and no to people in the inner city? I do not know how the cabinet rationalizes those choices. There is no justification for it

An Honourable Member: It is an educational facility.

Mr. Doer: I have no problem with an educational facility. Put it five miles outside of the wetlands region, you have no problem with us, but there is just no justification for this at all in that area. We have the cost reports of the Natural Resources Department. We have the costs from the Manitoban tourism agreement. We never negotiated that tourism agreement for the Tories to spend it on this project, I assure you. Madam Deputy Speaker, we also have money going to highways for the project, as revealed by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

Now we have national organizations—if it was not enough that this project would be criticized by all kinds of organizations in the province of Manitoba, we now have national organizations criticizing this project. Here we are, the home of the environmental sustainable development centre, the United Nations Centre, and we have all the major Canadian environmental groups criticizing this provincial government, this Premier (Mr. Filmon), this Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns). Conservation organizations, the Sierra Club, the Friends of Oak Hammock Marsh, and other environmental groups are now coming out publicly calling upon the Conservatives to vote with the people and against this pet project.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is now becoming a national scandal. It was a provincial scandal before; it is now a national scandal. That is too bad. This is going to dog the Premier because he is not going to be the person in the canoe the next time he tries to get a photo opportunity on the environment. People in the environmental movement right across this province know what he stands for when the crunch comes in. He not only does not side with the environmentalists, but he puts money in against the environmentalists of the province for this project.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this bill is a bad bill. It is bad in principle; it is bad in its application. The battle for this bill is not over. If we are not successful today in the Chamber, I would suggest strongly to the members opposite that there will be challenges under the federal legislation. They have plugged up a few provincial loopholes, they think, but there are going to be further challenges under federal legislation. There are many countless Manitobans and countless Canadians who are going to take the provincial government to court again. You know, you could put over a couple of Band-Aids on a bill like The Wildlife Act and take away the principle of decent wildlife management areas, but Madam Deputy Speaker, there are other acts that this group will challenge you on. They are already citing the migratory birds act.

This government thinks that this project is going to go ahead with the passage of this bill tonight. I would suggest they not get their Ducks Unlimited champagne out too early. There are people who are going to oppose this project because it is inconsistent with the vision of that area for many Manitobans, not for the Conservatives, but for many Manitobans.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we could speak for a long time about this bill. It is a bad bill. It is meant for a negative project in the province of Manitoba. We are going to oppose it, and we are going to be proud to oppose it. We are going to be proud to campaign against this change in the wildlife management act because we promised the people of Manitoba. The rights that they are ascribing to cabinet now in this bill will be taken away if some other government or other party is successful in winning in the next provincial election. This will not end. This is going to be a good public fight in the next election for the protection of our wildlife areas. That I guarantee you, Madam Deputy Speaker, on behalf of our party. Thank you very, very much.

* (1820)

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Deputy Speaker, I have had a number of opportunities to speak about the ills of this bill, and about the ills of the project that motivate this bill. I just want to start off by saying that this bill and the issues surrounding this bill are the kind of things that motivated me to seek election. They are the kind of issues that I abhor. They are the kind of problems related to environment and economics and social issues that

I have dedicated my relatively short career to opposing.

I have been working full time—I will tell the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey)—since I was 23, and in those years I have come to learn a little bit about how the old boys network or club operates, and this bill and the issues around this bill are a classic example. This is one of the things that I want to talk about.

The reasons that I find this bill and the issues around this bill so disgusting is that it is a classic example of how men in positions of power abuse that power, how in an arrogant, macho way they put in place systems, legislation, programs that systematically protect their power and limit the ability for people and members of the public, with far less power, to have some kind of a participatory, democratic right to influence government.

We heard over and over again at the committee hearings on the bill how this government was not going to allow amendments to this bill, how they were going to, no matter what, see that the project at Oak Hammock Marsh and this bill were passed, and we have heard over and over again, throughout the country now, how this bill has no respect or no consideration for environment. This is the kind of legislation that has made people so cynical of politicians and our political process. It is a heavy-handed, authoritarian, dictatorial bill which is giving the minister unreasonable powers and is jeopardizing the wildlife across the province.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) gave me a gift today. It is "The Little Green Book, quotations on the environment." There is one in here: "On the Purpose of Wildlife Management." It says: "Wildlife management consists mainly of raising more animals for hunters to shoot." This was said by George Schaller, a zoologist, in 1984.

I will tell the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) what this has to do with this government and this bill, since he asked the question. That is the old way of dealing with wildlife management areas. Wildlife management areas were constructed so that we could have some areas that were going to protect wildlife, to encourage wildlife to reproduce and reign free so that they would be managed, so when hunters went out and hunted wildlife there was going to be some assurance that

they would not completely wipe out a species or the habitat that the species thrive on and need to live.

I would say that one of the best ways for this government or Ducks Unlimited to ensure that waterfowl, game birds and ducks and other birds are protected would be not to build multimillion dollar complexes, not to build the kind of centre that is going to house ducks so people can go in there and listen to recorded bird sounds. I would suggest a very good way to ensure that we do not wipe out a variety of species of animals would be to, even for one year, have a moratorium on sport hunting.

Today in the paper, on the condemning editorial of this government's action with respect to this bill, it says: "Bird populations that numbered a mere 30 million at the end of the 1930s were nurtured and thrived until the middle of the last decade. Since that time, they have declined from 185 million to a guesstimated 100 million birds."

Now that shows us what all the effects of wetland conservation of wildlife management has done in the last few years, and I would urge the ministers opposite to change their attitude to wildlife management, to listen to the people who presented at the hearings and start to take an ecologically-driven approach to wildlife management areas and truly to protect the wetlands and the other variety of natural habitats in Manitoba and to not put in place this kind of legislation which basically opens up wildlife management areas for business. Any kind of development now can go on in a wildlife management area.

We heard over and over again at the committee hearings on this bill how, perhaps, it was illegal, but if not illegal certainly unethical and not in good sense, to completely reverse the intent and the spirit and the nature of The Wildlife Act by no longer prohibiting development in wildlife management areas, but permitting it. That is what this bill does. It changes, it reverses what wildlife management areas are doing. It says, no longer as a regulation did, that this government was going to bring in—where they were going to limit access to camping or canoeing in wildlife management areas, they were going to limit a lot of other passive uses of wildlife management areas, now what they are doing is they are saying you can build anything you want in a wildlife management area. We know why that is, but to me it shows the arrogance of this government and how far a Conservative government will go to get what it wants.

To me it is unthinkable and totally unethical that one project could motivate a government to put in place legislation that is going to affect all wildlife management areas. They have done this to avoid, some say, the court challenge by the Naturalists Society, they have done this because they want to avoid the headline of having the Naturalists Society taking the government and the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) and the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) to court.

Now, I would think if they had come to their senses a few weeks ago when we began raising this issue, they would have avoided a number of headlines which have been far worse, similar to the one they have had today. They would have avoided the headlines that said that their Minister of Natural Resources was not going to listen to the people of Manitoba, and they would have avoided a number of other headlines which I think are going to become entrenched in the memory of the public of Manitoba, that show that government has no sense of what sustainable development means, they have no sense of what true environmental legislation can do.

It seems like this government's attitude to sustainable development, that there is some Tory notion that environmental projects have to have an economic benefit or turn a profit, and that is sustainable development. That seems to be what this government is saying. We see that over and over again when it comes to funding recycling projects, when it comes to funding environment groups, they will not fund recycling projects or environment groups. They will not give more money to all existing centres like Fort Whyte, but they are putting millions of dollars into this project which, I have said already, I think may give people some education about ecology or environment, but it will certainly not be the kind of education that we want.

We want people to have environmental education that is going to give them an experience of what it is like to understand the relationships in ecology. They are not going to get that by going into a building that has stuffed animals, that has piped-in bird sounds, that has a lot of other glitzy commercial kinds of attractions, souvenir ducks perhaps.

* (1830)

The kind of environmental education I think we want in Manitoba is for people to go out with a knowledgeable interpreter and see wetlands in their

natural state and have someone explain to them what nature is all about, how that ecosystem works, for them to experience the bird sounds, for them to see the wetlands as they naturally are. That to me is environmental education.

Sustainable development applied to environmental education and wetlands conservation would apply the principle of downsizing which is part of sustainable development. Why do we not have a number of interpretative programs at wetland marshes throughout the province? Why are we not having wetland marshes farther north that are going to have an interpretive program so that the people up there can get an education about the importance of wetlands, the importance that they have of conserving and saving and purifying our drinking water? Why do we not have other areas of the province having this kind of a development?

I would say it is because this development at Oak Hammock Marsh used to be in the constituency of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) and there is, they think, going to be an economic benefit to this project that is going to benefit the nearby towns and businesses. That is how they have sold it.

Every presenter who came up in favour of this project at the hearings on Bill 38 said that they were in favour of it because it was going to be good economically for their region. We did not hear one grassroots environmental group in the province come forward in favour of this project, even though it is Ducks Unlimited that is proposing the project. We did hear from rural Chambers of Commerce, from rural economic development organizations. We heard from those people who were in favour of the project. It just goes to show that this project and this bill is motivated by small-time political economic promises or gains.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when I started off I was commenting about how this bill is quite an education on how the old boys network operates. We know that economic development in our country up until this time has been made at the expense of women who go unpaid, traditionally, in working in their home, or are still underpaid. We know that economic development has also been made in this country at the expense of third worlds or developing countries. We also know—and this is what is so exciting about the environment movement. It is showing to people very clearly that old-style

economic development exploits the environment just as it has exploited women, minorities and third world countries. That to me is one of the things that is illustrated by this bill.

That is one of the things that is illustrated by the very outdated way that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) has used his old boys network to push this bill through so he can push through his favourite project at Oak Hammock Marsh. I can just see how he perhaps, and Stewart Morrison, his friend, might have sat down over a few cool ones and come up with this idea. They would have said hey, I bet we could get some money for this from the provincial government. We could get some money for this from all the DU supporters, and we can create a big corporate office right here in the marsh so that when the old boys come in from across the country to talk about wetland habitat and duck hunting, they could have a nice place to visit.

They even went to the federal government and they said, hey, we do not want to have a federal environment impact assessment on this bill even though it involves migratory birds which are a federal environment impact responsibility, even though the Western Diversification Fund is going to give us over \$2 million. We can screen out the federal FEARO process, and we will just have our own made-in-Manitoba environment impact assessment, and the Clean Environment Commission can do that. They did not tell the Oak Hammock Marsh management committee which has been involving environment groups in the area and across the province, consulting with them on managing Oak Hammock Marsh. Those people who have committed their life to this region and understanding this region were excluded at the preliminary stage of any information about this proposal. That is one of the things that has outraged them the most.

So when the first hurdle approached, when the minister realized that he needed some rezoning done so that this project could happen, they ran into some problems because the entire southern Manitoba zoning plan would have to be changed. There was an environment group that launched a challenge and won in the Rural Municipality of Rockwood, when the rural municipality tried to rezone the land so that they could put a corporate office in the marsh. But, the minister said hey, it is Crown land. I can do whatever I want.

They also ran into some problems when they had the Clean Environment Commission hearings. In those hearings there was a 50-50 tie, and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) goes on and on talking about how we had the process, we had the NDP's process intact on this project. I would say that it was a sham. Not only did the committee not have the Bovey report which showed how the environment was going to be adversely impacted by the project; somehow the people responsible for giving them that report magically went on holidays just before the committee hearings. Not only did they not have that, but they did not have the response to the Bovey report, and the agreement that was attached to the Western Diversification Fund application, which had the infamous alligator ponds attached to it, which had the dramatic changes to the viewing mounds in the marsh which showed, not just a building that was going to go up in the marsh, but showed the dramatic changes that were going to take place in the entire marsh once DU was allowed to build and expand there.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Clean Environment Commission hearings on that project were, as I said, tied when the vote came to approve this project. What happened when it was tied? We had five other Clean Environment commissioners who had not even sat in on one single hearing who voted to break the tie. One of them disqualified himself because of a conflict of interest and the other four supported the project. They made that decision, I would say, with extensive political influence.

Still, because environment groups and the national society felt so strongly about this project, they continued to put pressure on the government, and then we had Bill 38. Well, if they cannot win and do what they want under the rules, we will change the rules. We will change The Wildlife Act so we can not only build in wildlife management areas, but we can use Crown land to do whatever we want. All of this has been done in the name of saving ducks and educating people about the environment. I would say that the kind of education this bill is giving people is not the kind of education that the government intended.

What are the other rationales that supporters of this bill have said? Well, they have said there is going to be economic benefit. I have already talked about how all the supporters of this bill have talked about the economic benefit. The other argument that has been used is if we did not have Ducks

Unlimited, we would no longer have Oak Hammock Marsh as it is today. There is that Conservative, male, old-boys attitude: We paid for it, we can do whatever we want in it. That is what people are objecting to. There is that attitude that we can own this piece of land because we have lots of power and lots of friends in high places, so we can do whatever we want.

The other argument that has been used to support this bill and the project it supports is: We are just putting into legislation what the nasty NDP did illegally. Now, that is the kind of logic I love. We did things wrong before and other governments did things wrong before, so, rather than do it right we are going to make it legal. We are going to put into legislation what kind of development was done that was undertaken in wildlife management areas.

* (1840)

Those other developments that were done in wildlife management areas are all outlined in the pamphlet that this government puts out from its Department of Natural Resources, and unfortunately for many wildlife management areas, are legal, so this government has, I think, taken steps to destroy any kind of credibility, any kind of slim credibility they had with relation to environment or natural resources related issues.

I have been quite amazed frankly to see the kind of public interest and outcry on this bill when people understand the implications of the bill, when people understand the nature of what is happening at Oak Hammock Marsh, when they get the full information that this government is so hesitant to give, they are opposed to the bill and to the project, and they are opposed to it because of the heavy-handed, outdated approach that it takes.

I would say that people are going to remember this project and this bill, that this is not the end of the opposition to the bill and to the project. We now have national organizations that are going to keep an eye on this government in terms of the environment. We are going to have national organizations that are going to be in contact with environment activists here locally. Also we have a number of groups in areas where there used not to be environment groups, in areas that are represented by a number of the members opposite, and they are doing the kind of research and co-ordination that I think is extremely wonderful, but I also think it is going to terrify this government.

To sum up, I would encourage the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to change their attitudes to the public and to environmentalists, because one of the things that they have shown is that they do not respect these people. The State of the Environment report shows that clearly, and I put on record during my Estimates in Environment a number of times when they have shown that they do not believe that the public should have a say or should be listened to when it comes to environment protection.

As the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) said earlier, every other province in this country and every other piece of environment legislation is going in the opposite direction, is giving the public more of a say, is giving the public more of an ability to intervene and to make suggestions and to have some power in saving the environment that is so threatened by the kind of politics and the kind of economic policy that we get from across the way.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Just to conclude, I am completely and totally opposed to this bill, and I hope that a number of the members opposite will heed the phone calls that they have been getting and will do the right thing and will not support this bill and will protect the environment and wildlife management areas in this province. Thank you.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Acting Speaker, one is easily tempted to be swayed from one's determination to briefly sum up the comments by the speakers one has just heard, such as the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli). Just let me gently say this lecture on care and concern for the environment comes from a party and from a government that allowed a pulp and paper forestry operation to violate every, every condition of even the then lax environmental laws for 15 years and did nothing about it. Can you imagine, this comes from a party that built a \$1 billion hydro-electric station without any reference to environmental study, and we are being lectured.

The former speaker also—and she accurately, in her presentation, puts in a lot of truth to what has surrounded this whole debate, and I take exception to that. On behalf of the women members of my caucus, she says this is an old boys macho—and she has practised this in front of the mirror about

how to do this, you know, hands on the hips—macho hunter club bill.

An Honourable Member: Disgraceful, absolutely disgraceful.

Mr. Enns: Female members of my caucus take exception to that kind of stereotyping with respect to their role in their support of this bill.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I will now get quickly back to the few notes that I have prepared, because I want to say—and I will understand if members opposite believe these to be cynical remarks, but believe me, they are not—I thank each and every one of them for their participation in this debate. I thank all those who made presentations on Bill 38, for their participation in this debate, because seldom has a particular minister, or indeed the government, been provided with such a benchmark for which to judge his future actions upon. That is always valuable, extremely valuable, in terms of ensuring one's re-election and that of one's government, or simply vindication of one's policy. Believe me, I have some experience in that.

We have been told in the course of this debate that we are gutting The Wildlife Act. We have been told that in the seven and a half million acres of wildlife management acres that have been put—and I might say, immodestly, during the course of my three tenures as Minister of Natural Resources, I had a hand in putting together some of those 72 wildlife management areas. We have been told that on those 72 wildlife management areas they will sprout with McDonald's, with coin-operated laundromats, with shoe manufacturing companies, with you-name-it and, the final statement from the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), pavement. We will pave all seven and a half million acres of it. That is what we have been told.

* (1850)

We have been told that we are deliberately going to ruin a wildlife management area that we can all—certainly the last government, the government of Mr. Schreyer, the government of Mr. Lyon, this government—take some pride in, because it is a demonstrable example that man can do something right, that we can reclaim for the sake of our natural environment an area like Oak Hammock, and that is precisely what we have done.

I place no blame on that, but people know the history. That was an environmentally devastated area during the mid-40s. We all know that. So we

have demonstrated that we can do some things right. Mr. Acting Speaker, when I say that the debate on Bill 38 has provided this government, this minister, my department, Ducks Unlimited Canada, with a valuable benchmark, I want you to remember this, because I may not be the Minister of Natural Resources. That is not in my hands, but I will assure you, God willing and health permitting, I will be somewhere in this Legislature. I will remind you some time in the spring of '95 or later, when next we have that meeting with the people of Manitoba, and when they judge our performance and judge this minister's performance on this matter.

They will ask what has happened to our wildlife management areas, and do you know what they will find? They will find that they have been added to by thousands and thousands of acres; they will find that our wildlife is being looked after in a bigger and better way. They will find that we have retained an important national organization, the premier organization for wetland development, here in Manitoba, firmly rooted in Manitoba because of Bill 38. That organization, together with tax money from time to time, will help us develop other crown jewels that I alluded to the other day in Question Period. There are at least four or five of them that have to be addressed. I do not know the timetable of them. That will depend on resources available.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I am surprised at the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), who at least cannot see the economics of seeking out a partner in these times when monies are hard found by, in these times when the opposition constantly tells us that monies should be spent on the high priorities of Health, of Education, Family Services; that he cannot see—I really do not want to insult his intelligence—that he cannot read a contract that sees the public purse being relieved of future public spending and still having and developing a resource and a centre.

Mark my words, and I hope the cameras of the CBC and other media outlets will be there in the spring of '95, when the Oak Hammock Interpretative Educational Centre receives international acclaim, houses international seminars on wildlife because of our central region here, and will attract the kind of international birders that are now included in the 85,000 people that come and visit Oak Hammock.

Mr. Speaker, I say—I am thankful because these are on record—the benchmark has been

established. We and the people will judge whether or not the actions that have been described in the course of this debate are factual.

In conclusion, there is one other important service, one other important benchmark that has been established. I do not say this with any vindictiveness or any chagrin, but it happens to be very important to the future carryings-on of government in this province. It will establish a benchmark for the credibility of those who appoint themselves as self-righteous protectors of our environment, because if the terrible things do not come to pass that have been prophesied as a result of Bill 38, how much credibility do we attach to the future warnings of those people.

The honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) speaks of credibility—she is fine. That is a legitimate charge that she lays on me as Minister of Natural Resources. She says that my credibility, the credibility of the department that I have the pleasure of serving at this time, the credibility of this government on environmental matters, are at stake. Of course they are, and do you think we do not realize it?

Mr. Speaker, also is the credibility of all those who have made the outlandish and outrageous predictions—the last one coming from the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), that all seven and a half million acres of the 72 wildlife management areas are going to be paved; that is what he said just five minutes ago—that kind of nonsense will also be judged.

I take some personal pride in the privilege that I have had to have introduced The Ecological Reserves Act, in this province, that now encompasses hundreds of thousands of acres that sets aside sensitive ecological areas of this province. I take great privilege that it was again my privilege as a minister to introduce The Endangered Species Act. It was my privilege to introduce a number of other conservation acts. Indeed, the Progressive Conservative record on conservation bears up its own name. We can be extremely proud of our record, Mr. Speaker, as a party. It is the party of Duff Roblin. It was Duff Roblin of the Conservatives who created the first wildlife management areas, enacted the first legislation in 1961. It is the party of the Conservative Party that created virtually every major park in the province of Manitoba—Birds Hill, Spruce Woods, Whiteshell.

The Conservative Party need not be lectured to by anybody with respect to our dedication to conservative measures, but we will allow our actions to speak for ourselves. I am prepared to allow the actions of responsible and dedicated biologists to create something that we will without a doubt all be extremely proud of within a very short time. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question before the House is third reading of Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune. All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, Yeas and Nays, please.
* (1900)

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Prior to putting the question to the House, I think it would be helpful if I remind all honourable members of our Rule No. 40: "When the Speaker is putting a question, no member shall enter, walk out of, or across, the House, or make any noise or disturbance."

The question before the House, third reading of Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune.

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

Yeas

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

Nays

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

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 29, Nays 26.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair for the House to go into Committee of the Whole to consider a report on Capital Supply Bill, that being Bill 72, The Loan Act, 1991; (Loi d'emprunt de 1991) for third reading.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill 72 with the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill 72—The Loan Act, 1991

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of the Whole please come to order to consider Bill 72, The Loan Act, 1991 (Loi d'emprunt de 1991). I would remind members that as the 240 hours allowed for consideration of Supply and Ways and Means resolutions has expired, the bill is not debatable.

* (1910)

We shall proceed to consider Bill 72, clause by clause. Is it the will of the House that the clauses be grouped?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Chairman: Agreed.

Clauses 1 through Clause 5 inclusive, page 2—pass; Clauses 6 through Clause 13 inclusive, page 4—pass; Preamble—pass; Title—pass.

Is it the will of the committee that I report the bill?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Chairman: Agreed and so ordered. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): The Committee of the Whole has considered Bill 72, The Loan Act, 1991 (Loi d'emprunt de 1991).

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

REPORT STAGE

Bill 72—The Loan Act, 1991

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), that Bill 72, The Loan Act, 1991 (Loi d'emprunt de 1991), report from the Committee of the Whole be concurred in.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Finance have leave? Leave? It is agreed.

Motion agreed to.

THIRD READINGS

Bill 72—The Loan Act, 1991

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, with the leave of the House, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), that Bill 72, The Loan Act, 1991 (Loi d'emprunt de 1991), be now read a third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Finance have leave? Leave? It is agreed.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): It is a pleasure to rise and speak on the third reading of Bill 72, dealing with The Loan Act, Mr. Speaker.

This is a tremendous amount of money that the government is asking this Legislature to approve, on top of the \$1,396,000,000 of Loan Authority that is already on the records, authority that has not been expended as of yet. We have some \$855 million being asked for by this government, over \$2 billion in total for various projects, including, I might add, the Conawapa and Bipole III projects and \$500 million in this project, in this year, in this request, \$500 million, half a billion dollars for Conawapa

when there has been no approval by the environment board and environment hearings for this project—rather interesting that the government is already asking for authority from the Legislature to expend a half a billion dollars when they still do not even have authority to go forward with this program.

We will be watching that issue very closely, Mr. Speaker, in the next number of months as we move towards the next sitting of the Legislature. We also will be watching the program for the Manitoba Telephone System, because it is an issue that is very important for rural Manitoba. As a rural MLA, there have been some hearings, I know that my constituents are already going to be paying for the extended area coverage program that is in place, even though in the Dauphin area they will not be getting it for some four or five years. They are going to be paying and paying and paying over that period of time, something that, I am sure, my constituents will become more aware of over the next number of months.

I know the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System (Mr. Findlay) is here and has had many representations particularly in the North, concerns about this program. In rural areas, I think, there has been more acceptance of the need and certainly an indication of the need for an expanded area of coverage. However, this government has turned around the timetable insofar as priorities are concerned, and that is why the Parkland area of the province, the area around Dauphin and Ethelbert and Waterhen and Rorketon and so on has been prioritized very low, again, I believe for political reasons as they have done in the past with decentralization, as they have done with the cuts in jobs that have taken place.

We saw today the questions to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) about the jobs in rural areas that were not taking place. We saw the offloading that was taking place on municipalities, and we have seen a rather cynical approach by this government insofar as what is politically expedient and rewarding for those areas of the province that voted the right way, shall we say, for this government.

In the area of the Telephone System, they have practised the same kind of cynicism on the people. Where they do not feel they have voted properly, they are going to make them wait and pay for years in advance under the Telephone System's improved

services. There is that concern, and there are many others in this authority.

We are talking about the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation, some \$5 million; the Manitoba Water Services Board, an additional \$2 million. The communities are anxious to have programs done, water and sewer programs, both under the Southern Development Initiative, and yet they are unable to afford many of the dollars that have to be brought forward by the municipal level of government because in many cases the projects are so onerous and so heavy that they are not able to afford them.

The town of Dauphin again is an example where a water treatment plant is desperately needed, yet the governments have seen fit to put forward only 66 percent, two-thirds of the money. They are requiring the local taxpayers to come up with one-third, which is prohibitive when you are dealing with a \$9 million project. You are dealing with \$3 million that would have to be placed on debentures over a number of years on the backs of local taxpayers, and they cannot do it. I would say in this case that the government should be asking the Legislature for more authority so that they could expand that program to at least three-quarters of the cost, so that indeed the major communities in this province that are eligible under the Southern Development Initiative could in fact move forward with those projects and would be able to afford them without burdening themselves with debt.

Insofar as the Rural Development Bond Program, there is \$10 million in this authority. The Minister of Northern Affairs and Rural Development (Mr. Downey) has talked about how important this program is going to be. We will wait and see on that. This \$10 million is a very small amount of money.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

* (1920)

I know they do not expect to flow those dollars in this particular year, particularly since the program is not even developed yet. There is only a conceptual stage of some legislation. They have not put the program together. There are no boards in place, and indeed we do not expect that there will be money flowing for many months to come yet.

The \$10 million is certainly a pittance for rural Manitoba when we see the lowest grain prices that we have seen in many, many years in Canada announced today by Charlie Mayer. Many people

who are not in the gross revenue insurance program are not going to be able to benefit from any insurance there and are going to see themselves faced with unprecedented pressures upon them, because this program was not developed to be fair to all programs.

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) knows that sign-up was dismal, and that many farmers are not covered, unfortunately not covered—(interjection)—Yes, 80 percent, he says, of acreage. Let us put it accurately on the table—only about 66 percent of the farmers, 80 percent of the acreage. There are a significant number of producers and a significant amount of acreage that is not included under this program. Those people are going to be faced with a \$2 bushel of wheat by Charlie Mayer and the federal Conservatives. I do not believe that they are going to forget that.

So we see, at a time when we have the lowest prices almost in modern history for farmers, nothing happening in rural Manitoba, contrary to what the Premier (Mr. Filmon) tried to say in Question Period today. He talked about The Rural Development Bonds program, and yet there is no money flowing. There will not be for several months, if not years. On top of it, they are asking the public of rural Manitoba to invest in projects that they have no guarantee of getting any return whatsoever—nothing, zero percent. Inflation will eat away at their investment while they are supposed to take it out of secure investments and put it in risky development plans that might be taking place in communities.

It is unthinkable that the government has not seen fit to in fact ensure that the people of rural Manitoba would have some degree of return, even if it was a modest amount, a percentage of return, but some degree of return on their investment.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, this is a very significant bill. We are talking about a total of \$2 billion dollars, \$855 million in new dollars for this government, and we consider that very risky in the hands of this government, because they have a penchant for taking on programs and governing by decree when not in the House. It is something that is very scary in terms of their priorities, particularly when we look at the environment and their record on the environment as we have seen with Bill 38, and as we have seen in other issues. They did not stand up for Manitoba's interests with the Rafferty-Alameda projects in Saskatchewan and

many other—the Winnipeg water supply. We are very afraid about the kind of authority that they are asking for here, some \$500 million for Conawapa, when the project has not even been approved by the environmental process for this province.

I can assure members of this government that we will take them to task when we see an abuse of the spending authority that has been given to them in this Legislature through this bill, that they can pass simply because of the majority but not because it is necessary or the will of the people. We will watch that carefully, Mr. Acting Speaker. Thank you.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I too would like to add a few words to the debate on this particular loan bill, The Loan Act in third reading stage, Bill 72.

I would recognize, as my colleague from the constituency of Dauphin (Mr. Plohma) has, that we are talking about a lot of money here, Schedule A, new authority for over \$855 million, and of course, continued approval of Schedule B, which is about \$1.4 billion, as well, although I must say that I recognize, in having been granted that authority, the government need not spend this money in a particular amount of time.

To that extent, this type of legislation and this type of authority is hard to pin down in terms of its impact because you cannot say that because \$500 million, for example, has been allocated for Conawapa and Bipole III for Manitoba Hydro that this is what will be spent in this coming year. This procedure, this legislation and the administration of it simply does not work in this way.

The impact of this money, of this authority on the economy is something that one can only guess at because the impact not only depends on when the money is spent, but also on where it is spent and how it is spent, so it would take a lot more knowledge for anyone in the opposition or outside of the Legislature to decide as to what impact these dollars will have on the provincial economy.

I share the concerns expressed by the MLA for Dauphin (Mr. Plohma) on the Rural Development Bonds Program. It has serious limitations. I know that members opposite think that this will be a great step forward for providing business opportunities and more jobs in rural Manitoba, and goodness knows we need more jobs in rural Manitoba because we are suffering serious depopulation in many parts of the province outside of the city of

Winnipeg and possibly other regional centres such as the city of Brandon.

In the rural Manitoba area, in the R.M.s and in the smaller towns and the villages, this is where we are experiencing depopulation, therefore, I guess you could argue that every effort must be made to try to provide that economic stimulus so that we can somehow provide the employment opportunities and therefore enable people to live in their communities if they so desire. What is happening now, of course, is simply the jobs are not there and regrettably, the young people and particularly the young men and the young women having graduated from high school or even having gone to college or university, in no way can they stay in their community or come back to their community to continue to live. They have to go elsewhere.

So while the Rural Development Bond Program is a program that could help in that respect, we think it may not be an effective program in the long run. We will have to wait and see and monitor it. We do not want to prejudge it but it does have serious limitations, and we wonder how many people in Manitoba who have monies saved would be prepared to put their savings into these types of bonds, particularly when they are not guaranteed a rate of return. Particularly, I am thinking of older people, people on modest incomes who cannot afford to take risks and cannot afford to give up interest rates that they might be guaranteed of, say with a guaranteed investment certificate, or even with the money market fund type of investment. So, therefore, Mr. Acting Speaker, we are not going to hold our breath that this program is going to suddenly stop the outflow of people from rural Manitoba.

I note also, Mr. Acting Speaker, that there are funds for additional business support, in particular the Industrial Opportunities Program; \$10,975,000 is being asked for. This is in addition to monies that had been previously provided under business support. There was an Industrial Opportunities Program item—there is an item in Schedule B for over \$17 million for this same program, that is, the Industrial Opportunities Program. It would be useful to have more information on the utilization of these funds in the past and the utilization of the funds in the future. Just how are these monies to be spent, and what has been spent to date? What has been the impact? Has the business sector been benefiting from this in terms of being able to expand

their businesses, being able to employ more Manitobans?

So we do not criticize the effort to assist in small business. We do not criticize in providing the incentives for the private sector, but we are wondering just how effectively these monies are being spent. We do not have as much information as we would like to have on the impact of this capital supply.

* (1930)

An Honourable Member: At least you will have a chance to see what happens, and that would give you all the ammunition you need, or else you have to then quietly apologize.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, we have nothing to apologize for, Mr. Acting Speaker. We are simply raising our concerns at this point, alerting members of the Legislature to these concerns. Really, I am of the opinion that in Manitoba, where we are not experiencing a sufficient rate of economic growth, that what is needed is not necessarily capital supply. I mean, capital supply is necessary, of course, for business investments. It is necessary for economic growth, but what is inhibiting the economic expansion in this province is not lack of capital for investment, but rather lack of market demand for our output. Manitoba industry can produce a lot of good products. The output of our industry is second to none. We have some excellent industries.

We have some excellent companies, excellent employees, but the problem we are having, the sluggishness that we see in our economy is because we—and I say we collectively—those of us in the Manitoba economy or, more specifically, the business sector cannot sell its output. The demand is not there. The effective demand is not there. That is because we have a very small population. We have a very small market, and indeed we are many miles from other population centres, from other major markets. There is such a thing then as transportation cost that enters into it and creates problems for our industries to be able to sell in these other markets.

Having said that, I cannot help but lament at this time that the Mulroney-Reagan trade agreement that is now in effect is causing us to lose a considerable amount of industrial jobs and, at the same time, it is making it more difficult for the small enterprises in Manitoba to compete with the large corporations.

You know, everybody can be in favour of free trade. You can make a sound argument and economic theory for free trade that you, therefore, by free trade model can produce the goods and services, make goods and services available at the lowest cost to all the consumers that are involved in both areas, both sectors or both countries. The fact is, Mr. Acting Speaker, that this model always seems to presume two equal-sized partners, and that is not what we have. We have a giant to the south of us, yes, a friendly giant, but nevertheless a giant, an economic giant, and this is where the industrial might is, this is where the concentration of industry is, this is where the power is. We are in the periphery, and when you are in that situation, the section—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) that he should try and retain his comments towards The Loan Act.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, I am discussing the business support element, \$10.97 million, and what are we getting for it. The problems that we have are not simply supplying this money, but I am observing that the problem that we have is a lack of market demand. I also observe that unfortunately our enterprises are suffering, the manufacturing sector in particular is suffering because we do not live in this Free Trade Agreement in a way that we are of equal size. You have some giants fighting some very small enterprises, and the giants will also win out.

For free trade to work in theory, to be fair to all, you have to have enterprises of rather equal size, so it is no surprise to me—and I am referring specifically to the Industrial Opportunities Program—in spite of this money being there, I say that we are likely to continue to see a loss of industrial jobs.

You know, Toro Industries came here—they manufacture small engines—from Minneapolis, from Minnesota, and one of the reasons they came here was because of the tariff. By producing in Canada they get around the tariff. Once you eliminate that tariff—and that tariff was removed in January of 1989—they were among the first to leave, because the structure was not there, the tariff was removed. It made business sense for them, and I do not fault that company for making that decision. I mean, they have to make a sound

business decision, so they folded up and they moved back to Minnesota, and what do you expect?

That has happened—there are so many examples of that happening right across this country. I do not oppose this money in The Loan Act, the Industrial Opportunities Program, but I just question how effective it has been, because monies have been voted in the past. I wonder how effective it is going to be in the future, because we have some major problems, and not least of which is the Mulroney-Reagan trade agreement which is causing a deindustrialization not only of this province but of this country.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would also like to comment on another element of this bill, by what is not in here. It would have been in my judgment useful to have a program, Capital Supply for a program of assistance to municipalities. I believe that we have done this in the past. Particularly at a time when there are not enough jobs, one good way to create jobs in the rural communities, any community urban or rural, is to give an incentive to the municipalities, to say to the reeves, to the mayors, okay, we have a program; there is a lot of unemployment now; bring forward your public works projects that you have on the shelf, that you have in mind, the garage that you wanted to build or the bridge you wanted to put in place or whatever is a useful project that you want to bring about, because if you will bring it forward and engage in that activity now, we will pay, let us say hypothetically, 60 percent of the cost of construction. That way it alleviates the burden on the municipal taxpayers. They have the incentive to come forward, and jobs are created and wealth is put in place.

I mean, this is not make-work. It is people, construction companies, workers, management together putting in place a needed infrastructure at a municipal level. That program worked years ago in the Schreyer government. It worked in the Pawley government, and it can work now. I really regret that there is no effort made for that, and those types of monies are not included here.

Mr. Acting Speaker, just one last comment on this bill, and that is with regard to the Hydro monies. This is by far the most significant item, the \$745 million approximately out of \$855 million in Schedule A. Obviously, the money is going in large measure to a development, Conawapa, that has not yet passed the environmental hurdle. It has not passed environmental impact study, and I guess

one might question why there should be so much activity in advance. I can appreciate the planners in Hydro concluding that all this preliminary work may be necessary in order to get a start-up, in order to get start-up of construction perhaps in a year and a half, two years or whatever from now in order to meet the timetable of coming onto stream, so that we can have the electricity ready for the market, not only provincial market, but also the market in Ontario or perhaps in the United States.

Nevertheless, it would have been useful to have had more information just as to the wisdom of the amount of money that is being put out at this early stage, whether there is a rush that is taking place, whether the environmental impact study would have some bearing on this that would cause these monies to be poorly spent, to cause these monies to be spent in a way that is not in the best interest of the citizens, not in the best interest of the taxpayers.

Nevertheless, Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe that our hydro resource is one of our most significant resources that we have, that it should be developed, that it is a renewable resource, that it is a nonpolluting resource, that the development of the Nelson River will provide economic stimulus that is badly needed in the province and, ultimately, I would presume, that we will see these developments.

* (1940)

So we are not being negative on this, Mr. Acting Speaker. We are not being negative, but we are raising some concerns which we think are legitimate and should not be ignored. I will conclude with those few remarks. I certainly appreciate the significance of hydro development to economic growth in the province. We would like to have more going for us, but this certainly is one area of potential development that will be very significant to our economic growth.

In conclusion, Mr. Acting Speaker, indeed we will be monitoring as best we can how this money is spent in the future. Hopefully, the people of Manitoba will get a satisfactory return on these monies as they are spent in the future. Thank you.

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Mr. Acting Speaker, we are quite troubled about one entry in The Loan Act in Schedule A, and that is the \$500 million for Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board, Conawapa and Bipole III expenditures. We ask the question rhetorically to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and the Minister responsible for Manitoba

Hydro (Mr. Neufeld), why do they need the borrowing authority? The Minister of Finance, I cannot recall whether it was on the record or in another conversation, said that they just need the borrowing authority in case the Legislature does not meet again and the funds are required. Well, the environmental review for the Conawapa project will not be finished until January of 1993, at the earliest, therefore, the massive borrowing contained within The Loan Act will not be required, or ought not to be required, until after all of the environmental approvals are in place.

I do not even think it is constitutionally possible for this Legislature not to meet sometime between now and January of 1993, which is some 18 months hence. I believe that we are required by law to meet once a year, so it is constitutionally legally impossible for this Legislature not to have another opportunity to pass a borrowing authority for Conawapa and Bipole III. Yet it appears as if the government wants that authority now, and we want to know why.

There are some other facts that ought to be put on the record that are related to this subject, and it does not give us confidence to know that Manitoba Hydro has already either spent or committed \$110 million towards Conawapa in advance of environmental approvals which will not be in place until January of 1993 at the earliest. Well, why would Manitoba Hydro expose the taxpayer or the ratepayer to the tune of \$110 million before they have approval to proceed with the project? The answer we get from ministers is that well, it is a very small percentage of the total that will ultimately be borrowed for the construction of the dam and the Bipole. Mr. Acting Speaker, I do not know about you, but \$110 million is a lot to me, and I expect it is a lot to most Manitobans to be spent in advance of the necessary approvals for a project to go through.

We know from experience that the supreme court of Saskatchewan, in its ruling on the Rafferty-Alameda case, made the argument that we are in this so deep now how can we possibly get out? We do not want to make that mistake here in Manitoba. We do not want to have so much invested in this project and then determine that it is not in the public interest, for whatever reason, and it may not only be environmental. It may be economic, and then for politicians or the courts to say well, even though it may not be in our interests,

we have spent so much money we cannot possibly get out.

This is exactly the kind of fear which is aroused by the \$500 million in The Loan Act that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) wants to be able to borrow just in case he needs it for the Conawapa project. We should also -(interjection)- Well, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), I think he is digging himself in a little bit deeper. He is only going to borrow it if he needs it. He cannot need it before he has a chance to consult the Legislature again. I was trying to make that case. How do we know? The Minister of Finance should know how we know because we must meet at least once a year in this Legislature, and the environmental reviews are not in place until January of 1993. I hope we have answered the Minister of Finance's query.

Then there is also the issue of whether or not we need the power from Conawapa for Manitoba's own consumption. All of the evidence that we have so far is very inconclusive on the issue of whether or not we need the Conawapa-generated power for Manitoba consumption. We had some preliminary figures from Manitoba Hydro just several weeks ago which seemed to suggest—we do not know exactly what the figures are, but we assume that, because of the softening demand—and those are the words of the minister—we may not need the power after all. We may not need it in the year 2000. We may not need it in the year 2001 or 2002 or 2003 or 2004 or 2005 when we get 500 megawatts of powers on stream from the northern states power agreement, so we may not need Conawapa power for our own consumption for a very long time.

The second question is: Is it a good deal on its own? Is the deal signed between Manitoba Hydro and Ontario Hydro economically sound? Well, we do not know that yet. We intend to find out over the next number of weeks and months, but as yet, we do not know whether or not the deal with Ontario is economically sound. So what do we have here? We have a \$6 billion project, the power from which we may not need, we have a major sale to Ontario Hydro, which may or may not be a good deal, and we have, in The Loan Act, \$500 million of borrowing before the necessary environmental approvals are in place. You put all of that together, Mr. Acting Speaker, and you have lots of questions.

We have lots of questions about a major item in The Loan Act: Do we need the power? Is it a good deal with Ontario Hydro? Why are we asking for

authority to borrow the money before the environmental approvals are in place? I am glad the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) acknowledges that they are good questions, and may he rest assured that this is not the last time that they will be asked. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Is the House ready for the question? The question before this House is third reading of Bill 72, The Loans Act, 1991 (Loi d'emprunt de 1991). Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed to.

DEBATE ON THIRD READINGS—AMENDED BILLS

Bill 70—The Public Sector Compensation Management Act

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), Bill 70, The Public Sector Compensation Management Act (Loi sur la gestion des salaires du secteur public), standing in the name of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett).

Motion presented.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): It is with a great deal of sadness that I rise to speak on this bill today. Many of my caucus colleagues have already spoken eloquently on this bill, and I will be very brief in my remarks this evening because I know a large number of members, as well, want to put their thoughts on the record on this very important, momentous and sad occasion.

The people of Canada and Manitoba, as well as other nations in the world today, are very cynical about the political process. They are very cynical about politicians. I am rising today to say that the behaviour of the Leader and the government of Manitoba today and the process and the procedures surrounding Bill 70 have done nothing to make that cynicism decrease. They have only made that cynicism on the part of the people more evident and have given reason for that cynicism to be rampant as it is today.

* (1950)

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) of the province is on record as saying that the free collective bargaining process was not going to be tampered with, was something that the government believed very

strongly in. Then when he gets a majority, what does he do? He follows in the footsteps of his Tory cousin, Mr. Mulroney, who said a sacred trust is a sacred trust is a sacred trust and has spent the last seven years dismantling, one by one, those sacred trusts, those elements of Canada that make us Canadian, that make us unique, that make us proud, that enable us to be a country distinct and unique from any other in the world.

The provincial government under Mr. Filmon is following that line very closely. When Mr. Filmon spoke originally about the free collective bargaining process, and you need not worry, the free collective bargaining process will never be in jeopardy, and then he brings in Bill 70 which effectively takes away the free collective bargaining process that workers in Canada and throughout the world have fought for for hundreds of years.

As well, Mr. Acting Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) in this provincial government has gone on record as saying, just like their federal Tory cousins, that all Manitobans must tighten their belts, must share in trying to work out of the recession that we are all in.

In the federal government, under the seven years of Conservative federal government which this provincial government in its actions on Bill 70 is following, personal tax revenues have increased by over 100 percent while corporate tax revenues have increased by only 17.7 percent—lower than the 29 percent rate of inflation over this period.

In 1980, 40 cents of every federal revenue dollar came from personal income taxes and 16.6 cents from corporate income taxes—a far cry, I might add, from the 1950s when the revenue was virtually even on both sides.

Last year, just under 50 cents came from personal income taxes while corporate taxes provided only 9.3 cents. The share of unemployment insurance contributions increased from 6.8 cents to 10.7 cents, so again we can see on the federal level not everyone is being asked to share and share alike in the revenue generation that provides support for our programs.

Finally, a very interesting statistic that probably has one of the most important and will have one of the deepest impacts and long-lasting impacts on Manitobans and Canadians. For the first time in Canadian history—we certainly are unique in this—unemployment insurance contributions now

exceed total federal corporate taxes. The unemployed are paying more into the federal coffers than are the corporations in Canada. That is what seven years of Tory federal government, following on 20-some years of federal Liberal government, has given the people of Canada.

In Manitoba, as part of the background for Bill 70, the people are being asked to pay for or being forced to pay for Tory federal fiscal and monetary policies and Tory provincial lack of any kind of positive, progressive, programs to create jobs and to have a better economic climate. We are not all being asked to tighten our belts equally.

Doctors in this province—over 50 percent of the 1,400 doctors in this province earn over \$100,000 a year, and all but 180 of those 1,400 doctors earn more than \$50,000 a year. Doctors are not covered by Bill 70.

Public servants in the province of Manitoba, those affected by Bill 70, almost half of them earn less than \$25,000 a year, and over 70 percent earn less than \$35,000 a year. These are the people who are being asked to pay the price of the lack of Tory job creation, positive, economic strategies.

Mr. Acting Speaker, fully one-third of the public servants of the province of Manitoba, those people who are being told that they must be the ones to tighten their belts, one-third of them have an income of less than \$20,000 a year. While doctors in the province of Manitoba, corporations in Manitoba and throughout Canada are paying less and less of the burden, the Tory fiscal and monetary policies and the Draconian measures, such as Bill 70, are falling not equally on all Manitobans in Canada, Canadians, but on those least able to pay and to survive under these incredible policies of the new right of the elite, of the corporate fundraising of the development party.

I will end my remarks by putting on record the complete disgust I found in the process of public hearings on Bill 70, the, again, behaviour on the part of this provincial government, which only adds to the reasons for public cynicism, public despair, if you will, Mr. Acting Speaker, about politicians and the political process. People are asking why—why do we even bother to elect people when they behave in this kind of despicable, untrustworthy manner? Time will tell, and we believe very clearly that—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I would ask those members who are debating

across the floor to continue their debate outside the Chamber, and I would recognize that the honourable member for Wellington is still speaking.

Ms. Barrett: I would just like to conclude, Mr. Acting Speaker, by saying that the people of Manitoba, like the people of Canada, while they may be cynical, also have, I believe and I hope, an underlying and abiding faith in the democratic process, a faith that has been severely shaken by the governments of Manitoba and Canada, but a faith which I believe will be rewarded when they next make their decisions as to who will represent them, and what kind of ideals and what kind of policies they believe best supports all the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): It is a pleasure to make my comments on a very unpleasurable topic. Of course, that is this government deciding to freeze the wages of 48,000 employees in this province.

* (2000)

It has also been a very bleak week for the residents of Selkirk. This week I was looking at our newspaper, and this week, the second to last, the government decides to make a very serious error. In their judgment—of course, they have made several; this is just another one—they decided to close the School of Nursing in Selkirk, and it has been estimated that there will be a direct loss to our economy there of \$3 million. Not only that, of course: the other aspects—the instructors and so on, the students—terrible, terrible news.

You turn the page in this paper and it is just an awful, awful indictment of this government's really failed economic policies. The Manitoba Rolling Mills, Selkirk's largest employer—over 464 employees have to give up 10 percent of their wages. It really is, again, a shameful act. They say, of course, it is a desperate act; unfortunately, it is an act related to the high interest rate policy of the federal government, the Free Trade Agreement and the town will lose approximately \$4 million by this wage freeze. So already we have \$3 million out of our economy because of the closure of the school; we have \$4 million taken out of our economy of our town because the rolling mills is asking its workers to take a 10 percent cut in their wages and, of course, we have the town welfare roll doubled in the last year. The number of clients on the town of Selkirk's welfare roll went up by 50 percent from the same time last year. It is a shameful indictment of this government's policies.

It is just again that Bill 70's effect on our local economy, Mr. Acting Speaker, when you consider that the Selkirk economy we have—this is again quoting from the province, the Provincial Electoral Constituency Profile—by industry, communication and utilities, 465 employees; in Government Services, 815; Health and Social Services, we can subtract, say, the medical profession and we are left with 495; add these employees up, we have 1,775 employees.

Now it has been estimated that this wage freeze is going to result in the loss of \$70 million to the provincial economy, and when you divide that by 48,000 employees, it works out to approximately \$1,450 per employee times the amount of employees that we have in my particular riding. That is a \$2.6 million loss again.

So we have the \$5 million from the rolling mills, we have the \$3 million from the Selkirk School of Nursing, we have the \$2.6 million loss due to this wage freeze, and then this is all magnified, I believe, about 10 times over throughout our economy in Selkirk. So it is just again that they are really having an indictment to destroy the Selkirk economy, and unfortunately they are going ahead with it.

Of course, it is other than the glaring obvious problems that this bill presents, such as the undemocratic procedures that it was brought to conclusion, the cutting off of 400 presenters in the middle of the night and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) breaking his word, the before-and-after approach to our politics here. These are the more tangible aspects.

I remember I questioned one of the presenters at the hearings and I asked him what his occupation was. He said he was self-employed. So then I said, well, are any of your customers public sector employees? He said, well, definitely. So how will this affect their ability to purchase your service? He said, well, in a very, very negative way obviously, because this wage increase will cut down on his disposable income, or on their disposable incomes, hence hurting his business. So this government who pretends to be such a supporter and friend of small business in a very, very tangible way is hurting very small business in this province.

You can see this in Selkirk today as again some of the businesses are suffering and they are going through very tight economic times in my riding and, of course, it is throughout the province.

A house in Selkirk—in Selkirk a housekeeping aid earns a maximum of \$9.94 an hour or approximately \$20,000 per year and, of course, the poverty line in an urban area with a population of less than 30,000 is \$23,000 per family of four. I know several individuals in my riding who are single mothers and they have a large—some of them have families that they have to provide for and they work at the Mental Health Centre in Selkirk so they would earn approximately \$20,000 per year. The poverty line is \$23,000 so they are \$3,000 below the poverty line, yet this government is asking them to share in the brunt of their failed economic policies.

This government continuously talks about, of course, its fair taxes and the ability to pay as an argument to bring in this regressive legislation, and we give some suggestions, of course, to this government. If they were to institute fair corporate taxes, they could raise \$7.5 million in provincial revenues. A provincial surtax on those earning over \$50,000 would have raised \$45 million in provincial revenues. A capital gains levy on higher earnings would have raised \$50 million in provincial revenue.

There are alternatives to simply attacking the public sector in this province. You know, they talk about, again, offloading. The federal government offloads on them and they offload, of course, on the municipal governments. Last week I was up at Poplar River, and Felix Holtmann was there. Felix stands up and he yells, and it was so humorous because all the crowd was going after Felix for his failed government's policy. Of course, they had very good reason. So he stands up and he yells at the crowd, he said do not blame me, blame Harry Enns and blame Gary Filmon. It was hilarious.

An Honourable Member: Was he a Conservative?

Mr. Dewar: Well, they both are Conservatives. They are cousins. I asked this guy, are they going to vote for Felix Holtmann the next time, I wonder. Is Harry Enns going to vote for Felix Holtmann? I kind of doubt that—a kind of interesting little comment for Felix to make. Unfortunately, it is true, but you know Felix.

Anyway I want to make before I do conclude today—this government, of course, they talk about their ability to pay and if they were to institute maybe perhaps a fair system of taxation in this province—again, I know this is a really far-fetched idea, but I just want to read this list I have here.

The following is a selected list of corporate donations to the Conservative and Liberal Parties for 1989—the list for 1990 will become public later this summer, so we have something to look forward to, you know, it is great—Amoco Canada, the Tories \$14,000, the Liberals \$15,000—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member to keep his comments relevant to the bill that is being discussed.

Mr. Dewar: Mr. Acting Speaker, as I was stating, if they were to tax corporations—these corporations find that they can give donations away: Then perhaps this government could tax them instead of putting this attack on public sector employees. The Bank of Montreal \$40,000, Liberals \$43,000; the Bank of Nova Scotia \$40,000, the Liberals \$40,000; Canada Packers \$10,000—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I had indicated previously to keep your remarks relevant, please.

Mr. Dewar: Yes, I am. The reason I brought this up, Mr. Acting Speaker, is to say that if this government was to institute a fair system of taxation and tax these corporations, they would not have to make this frontal attack on public sector employees. Canadian Pacific \$62,000, Liberals \$65,000; Great West Life Assurance Company, across the road here, \$10,000 to both of them; Imperial Oil \$45,000 to both the Liberals and the Tories; Inco \$9,000 to both the Liberals and the Tories; John Labatt, \$30,000 to both the Liberals and the Tories; MacMillan Bloedel, \$10,000 to both the Liberals and the Tories; Northern Telecom, \$32,000 to both the Liberals and the Tories; Rogers Communications, \$49,000 to the Tories, only \$5,000 to the Liberals—I do not know what you guys have done wrong there.

An Honourable Member: Is this contributions?

Mr. Dewar: Contributions, yes. Of course, I know why Rogers gave so much to the Tories. It is because Unitel's application now is before the CRTC, and this is now obviously a bribe to the Mulroney cabinet to back Unitel's application to the—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I will not remind the member once more to keep his remarks relevant to the bill, and I would like the honourable member, if he insists, to tell us how the comments that he is making are relevant to Bill 70.

* (2010)

Mr. Dewar: Mr. Acting Speaker, the wage freeze will pay for these contributions like tax breaks to these large corporations.

I would like to conclude my remarks by reading a letter from one of my constituents.

I am writing to let you know I resent the attack on workers in the province of Manitoba by Bill 70, Public Sector Compensation Management Act. The government is stripping away the right to free collective bargaining for many workers in this province. The Filmon government cannot be trusted. It targets the lower-paid workers and excludes government doctors, judges and so on. They hire people such as Oz Pedde, who is involved in the MTX scandal, at a pay rate higher than Reg Bird. Well, most of us do not make that much in a year. Where is the fairness?

That, of course, is the key point in this whole argument: Where is the fairness, Mr. Acting Speaker? She concludes:

I urge you as an MLA to defeat this piece of legislation.

Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, I do not know if we can defeat this legislation, but I will certainly vote against it. Thank you.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Acting Speaker, I am very pleased this evening to get an opportunity to put a few comments on the record regarding this Bill 70, which will freeze the 48,000 civil servants in this province for one-year period.

I believe that this is certainly the end of the beginning of this government, if not the beginning of the end. What we saw with this government, particularly when they were in a minority situation for three years, was a government of a certain amount of moderation. They were very attuned to the public's views on certain matters. They stuck to them, and they managed to cobble together, albeit a very, very narrow majority government last year. I think that was the best case scenario for this government.

Having come through with a rather thin, thin majority, I had thought that this government would continue to act in a similar vein as it had in a minority situation because, after all, they had developed a formula that appeared to be working. They appeared to be doing things right. They appeared to not be getting into trouble with the public of this province, yet it is really, really amazing what the few

extra seats, the bare majority, did to this government. It was a Jekyll-and-Hyde type of situation. Overnight, this caring government turned into almost a serial killer. It turned around and—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would remind the honourable member that we are debating Bill 70, and I have yet to hear a reference made to Bill 70 in your remarks. So I would ask the honourable member for Elmwood to direct his remarks towards the bill.

Mr. Maloway: Well, when I first started to make my remarks on the bill, I did refer to Bill 70 and made reference to what it was about, and I am trying to expand on what this bill is about. I know that the speakers in this Assembly are given the widest latitude, particularly on a bill such as this, which is a very broad, expansive, encompassing bill. It is a very Draconian bill. It is one of the most Draconian bills that we have seen in this House over the years in that it affects everybody in this province, but particularly 48,000 workers.

What I was suggesting, Mr. Acting Speaker, is that this was just the beginning of this government's agenda in that before the election it preached moderation, to a certain extent it practised moderation, and then following the election it turned around and did the exact opposite. I want to tell you why I believe it did the exact opposite because, essentially, it misrepresented to the people before the election as to what its intentions were. Before the election, during the election we had the Premier (Mr. Filmon) sailing around in a two-foot deep creek in a canoe and not talking at all about what he was going to do. What he did when he became government was start to flesh out the true agenda, which we said before the election.

We told people what the true agenda of this government was going to be. We drew conclusions and parallels to the Lyon government of a few years before, and now we are seeing through Bill 70 and other measures in this House exactly what this government intended to do. It hid its agenda in order to win the election.

I spoke to a member before from the other side of the House, before the election who said well, you know, this moderation is here only to win the election. After the election the real agenda is going to come out. We are going to see the hacking and slashing. Of course, he did not put it in those terms, but he couched it in terms of social spending being

too expensive a part of government spending, that the deficit had to be reduced, the taxation levels had to be lowered.

He did not talk in terms of Bill 70 at the time, just in general terms that what the government was intending to do after the election was not what it was doing in the couple years run-up to the election. So what we saw is that when the election was over, the hackers and slashers, led by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and that government, took control of the government. Up until the election the smiling Premier, you know, had a certain amount—the leash was let out. He had a certain amount of leeway to go around the province and to be nice to people and solve this problem, solve that problem and spend money, but members across know exactly what I am talking about, because they sat here for those 18 months knowing full well what was going to happen with a majority government. They just played along. The right wingers, the hackers and slashers played along. -(interjection)- The member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) played along until after that majority government came in.

Election night, the day after the election the hackers and slashers sat down and said, well, we had better rope that Premier in now. He has won the election for us but now is the time for us to bring in our true program and that is what we have seen, starting with the session last fall and particularly this session right now—the fleshing out of the Minister of Finance's (Mr. Manness) program.

You know, in 1983 the Minister of Finance ran for the leadership of the party. He did not finish second. He finished third, but in fact he is in control. He is in control of the government right now. He did not have to win the leadership to control the party and to control the government. He came last, and now he is in charge. He is in control of this government. As a matter of fact, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has very little say, very little control over what this government is doing.

This is just the beginning, and what we are going to see if we follow through on the finance minister's agenda, we are going to see further restrictive labour legislation brought in in the next session of this House. This is just the beginning.

What the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) wants to do, what the ideologists in the Conservative party want to do is establish a level playing field—and it used to be a level playing field with the

United States, but now it is a level playing field with Mexico. So we have got even more harmonization to look at now.

We have to start looking at minimum wages down in the 40 and 50 cent level now. At least with the United States we were looking at dollars. Now we are looking at cents. So the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has got a big job ahead of him to get his colleagues all operating in the same sort of vein heading on their hacker-and-slasher route here, to develop this so-called business environment that he talks about that is going to bring, somehow, business into the province, and it is going to make us competitive with Mexico. That is really the scary part of this whole agenda.

* (2020)

I believe that the people of this province are going to wise up very quickly, and it is starting to show up in the polls. The government has already alienated those 48,000 people that it has frozen the wages for under Bill 70, and those people will remember come the next election. The government has calculated that this is going to be a popular move with the public. They have done a poll, and that is how they are operating these days, by polls, government by polls. They determined that this is popular with the public right now, but what they have not calculated is that the 70 percent that they feel and they say supports them now are going to forget about this in a couple of months, but those 48,000 that they have hurt today are going to remember.

It is those 48,000 who will be out working in my constituency next election, and Point Douglas and Transcona and other constituencies, to make certain that we get re-elected on this side, and that some of the members opposite are no longer around after the next election. That, I think, will prove to be the big miscalculation of the government.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) can sit there safely in his constituency, but within another year or two the Conservatives may have to set up a system where they have multimember constituencies, where they will have 13 members elected in Pembina. That is the only way they are going to be able to hold onto any seats in this House when they get going.

The recent poll that—by the way, the Free Press paid for it. It is very interesting that the Free Press helped pay for this poll, but yet the Sun published it. It was three months later, and we were aware of

these results, and I suppose we were waiting for the publication of same. In the final analysis, it was the Winnipeg Sun who published these results of the poll.

What did it show? It showed the Conservatives had 36 percent, the NDP had 33, and the Liberals had 21. We know from past election scenarios that the Conservatives, because of the inefficiency of their vote, have to be five points ahead just to be equal. What that tells us is that they are three points behind already. This was three months ago. I do not know whether this government by poll is working. I want to advise the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that he might want to take another look at this, because this government by poll is not turning out the way he thought.

I suppose we have some previous experience here in the House that no matter how many apple polishers you hire and polsters you hire, no matter how well you have things organized, the things just do not always work out the way you think they should. I think the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is coming to grips with that right now because, while he is taking control of the caucus, control of the party and control of the government, he still finds the sieve is leaking. The boat is sinking, and he is wondering why. What have I done wrong, he is thinking to himself. -(interjection)-

The Minister of Finance now says the boat is rising, but I do not know where he gets information like that. That certainly does not square with what information we have; regardless, he has set the government on a course that is going to lead to its demise. I think he knows the risk he has taken, but he is here because of a political ideology. I respect that. I mean, I respect people who are here for that purpose because that is what we should be here for; we should be here to develop and implement a program that we think is right for the people of this province.

I think he is wrong and I think their program is wrong for the people of the province, but it is consistent with what Sterling Lyon did. It is consistent with what the Minister of Finance certainly said, but certainly inconsistent with what the Premier (Mr. Filmon) had to say last year and all the media and polling people they had last year who massaged the image of the Premier to give him that temporary blip of popularity which we recognize is a bit temporary.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I know that we have many more speeches to make in this House before this government finally meets its end, and many of us hope it is going to be sooner rather than later. The province is not prepared for an election right now, we understand that, but this government is working its way to an untimely end. Whether it will be by its own hand through a couple of members over there who walk off the edge of a ledge, or whether it is through a proper thrashing at the polls three or four years from now, time will only tell. With those comments, I believe it is time for me to turn the floor over to my friend the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema).

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Acting Speaker, I spoke briefly on second reading on Bill 70, and after that I did have a survey. I sent out about 5,500 cards in my constituency. My constituency—I will give you some views why it is so important for me to speak today—is a middle-income constituency, and most people did not object to the wage freeze, but they said, we do not like the way this government is handling. Most of the people who sent the survey back to me are not specifically—they did not vote for me; some of them are Tory card-carrying members for 20, 40 years. One person was a councillor in that area for a long, long time, and he said that he will not trust this Premier (Mr. Filmon) every again. He said this is one of the most dishonest persons they have ever seen. I agree with them. I think this Premier made a lot of promises.

They made a lot of promises. One promise was to respect people, and they have really done something which is terrible to the democratic process. I think it is very clear that this government has become very arrogant, they have become very dishonest, and above all, they have become almost uncontrollable. We saw that today in how they dealt with Bill 67, of the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis). The bill was for the Salvation Army. This bill was very important for volunteers. It was not important for our party; it was important for people who have been working. It will help the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) in a way that people will work more, their involvement will increase, but they did show their true colours that they do not care.

They only care for themselves and their political philosophy, but not for the people of Manitoba, and that is what this Premier and his campaign—I will go back on that, this Premier is a by-product of the

Meech Lake syndrome. He won the campaign in a dishonest way, on 30-second clips and telling individuals that he is a good guy in a T-shirt with no ties and having a canoe—and a borrowed canoe. Basically, he did not tell them anything. He told them all—I will not use the word "lies"—a lot of things which were false, and it is becoming more and more clear. This Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), he is smiling, and I would like him to hear it very carefully that people who have returned the survey in my area, they do not object basically to a wage freeze, but they object to the way this government is handling the whole process. They think there are two basic things that concern—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member for the Maples again that we are debating Bill 70, and I would like the reference that he makes to be made to Bill 70. I think his remarks so far have been very wide ranging, very broad and have not touched on Bill 70. So would you please make your reference to Bill 70? Thank you.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Speaker, I was telling you what constituents have told me. I am not making it up. I am telling exactly and what I should be telling. That is my job. I am not going to say something that this party would like me to say; I will say what is the truth. I am talking about Bill 70, which is a major problem with the process, and that has been the stand from our party from Day One.

We do not like politicians who stab at the backs of the voters, and that is what has happened. We are lacking the basic thing, honesty, from this government. They should tell people what they are going to do and then carry on their promises. They have failed to carry on their promises. Each and every individual is responsible in Manitoba, and people know it that we do not have money, we do not have extra funds. We will manage with less, but do not come up with such a bill that will basically violate the basic legal rights of a voter of a constituency. That is what this Bill 70 has done. I do not think anybody would disagree with that. I am sure that some members of their caucus even do not disagree with that statement.—(interjection)—

The Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) is very excited to let this bill pass. The bill is going to pass. We know it, but they have to answer in the next election. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) is also frowning.

An Honourable Member: We all face that in time.

* (2030)

Mr. Cheema: Yes, we all face it, and we should face it. We should be honest, and honesty is missing in this bill. That is what I am talking about. We have been, in this House, very fair as a party. We have told you exactly what the common man wants and you are not listening. If you want to have something like this, do not stab at their back, tell them the truth. You did not tell them the truth. Getting 40 percent votes is not a major majority. If you have one person missing here or two persons missing, you are gone, and do not take anything for granted. You do not take anything for granted.

I think it is very sad the way your government is handling the whole issue, and do not—we came from 21 to seven because we had a conscience. We were not going to tell them flip-flop on a major issue, which was the core of this nation, and we carried out our promises. We made hard promises on somebody else but we carried our promise that we listened to people, and then we made a decision that would respect the voters and the honesty which should come with the politician, and I think we should have more like Mrs. Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition). Then we will not have problems like we have today.

Listen carefully, 34 percent votes in the city of Winnipeg is not a less percentage, and do not abuse the democracy by the number in this House. We should look at how people are feeling. Go and ask them. We are the only party who speaks for the common person, and we are proud of that. That is why, if you do something decent, we always support you.

If the NDP will do something decent for the common person, we will support you, but we will not support anything which goes against democracy, and we will—that is a basic thing you do not tell workers of Manitoba and 48,000 families and the relatives that you do not care. You have got 30,000 people to sign and they came yesterday and they gave you a very strong message, and for God's sake never ignore the people you are going to represent.

I wish I had more time to read what people have written to me, and those people have written that they do not -(interjection)- No, no, and they are very concerned about spending. I told you from the beginning they are concerned about spending, but they are also concerned about the basic decency

and antics and honesty in the process, and that is what is missing in Bill 70.

Let us talk about taxes also. -(interjection)- Well, you are doing the same thing that Brian Mulroney did—offloading. In my area—I told you it is a middle-income area—people are paying anywhere from \$2,400 to \$3,600 for property taxes, and money does not grow on trees. They are working hard because you are not taking your own responsibility, you are giving to the municipality and the school boards, and you are asking us to support you on a basic principle of democracy? We will not.

I know the balance sheet, because in this country I have worked very hard in 12 years and I know how to manage those things, but I can tell you that is the opinion of the common person on the street. I am not talking about a political philosophy. I am talking about the basic decency in politics is tell the truth, and tell the truth not in a 35-day short campaign, 30-second clips. Tell the truth about the basic things people would like you to do when you are in power.

In a minority government for two years you did not even blink. You wanted to see how the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) would move and then follow and change and go back and forth, same as the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer). I want to go to Ottawa. Me, too. Me, too. Then you became the saviour of a nation and Meech Lake, saviour of everything else. You are here today, and you know it, because of the decency of one person.

I think what you have to do and what I have to do, and somebody must do it, is to listen to your constituents. I am telling you exactly. If you want to see the surveys, see the surveys. Look what they are telling you. You are Tory card-carrying members for 20-40 years, and they are telling the same thing, please do not overspend. I am not saying that we should be overspending, but do not impose. Do not abuse that very fragile word of democracy. That is what you have done, and that is why we are going to oppose the bill on that basic principle of how you did it, not the outcome. Most people say that wage freeze may be a necessity for this year, but negotiate. Go, make a deal, talk to people. I will not vote for a bill which will create more dishonesty and more arrogance and more distrust in politicians.

Mr. Acting Speaker -(interjection)- Let us not take examples of Newfoundland and every place else, let

us talk about Manitoba in each and every constituency. Let us see what we have today and how we are going to manage our future. Let us not teach the students and the children and the workers. Let us not make them more hostile to politicians. That is what this Bill 70 has done. They have created more distrust to all of us, but they are not listening. Never take anything for granted. A four-year period is not a big deal. Things will change, and they are changing fast.

Look at the surveys and see what people are feeling. Do not tell us that we do not know what we are doing. What we are doing basically is supporting the basic concept of democratic process. You negotiate with somebody, you disagree, you make a deal. You do not stab them in the back. The two concepts which have come out of what I have heard from our constituents—one, you cannot trust Mr. Filmon. The second thing is never, never try to destroy the democratic process.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I will end my remarks by saying that I will again emphasize that this government should change their minds and go back to the negotiating table and withdraw this Bill 70. Thank you.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): I speak against Bill 70 which is a legislation intended not only to freeze the wages of public service employees in the province of Manitoba, but basically it is an attack on the right of unions to negotiate for the working conditions that they want to live under the industrial relations system.

It is often mistakenly assumed that labour or labourers or workers are simply one of the factors of production that have been hired by capital in order to produce goods and services. Therefore labour, according to their idea, is just like any other commodity that can be bought or sold. If we analyze it carefully, we could see that there is capital because there is the application of labour to the material resources of this earth. If labour had not exerted itself on the natural resources of this earth, there would be no capital. Therefore, without labour there could be no capital at all. Therefore, labour is more important than capital, because capital is merely the by-product of the application of labour to the material resources of the earth.

Yet once people become the owners of capital, and they control the means of production, they tend to think that the labourers are just one of those

means by which they could increase their wealth, and that these people have no rights, they have nothing that they enjoy as human beings, but that is not the case.

We live in society, and in our society there are certain rules that are established by people who pretend to speak on behalf of society. In every society mostly, generally speaking, there are people who take control of all the major decision-making roles and powers of that society according to the rules they themselves have established. One of the rules in the olden days in this constant struggle between labour and capital is that rule that the labourers are on their own. They cannot organize.

In the history of labour legislation, once they organized a long time ago, they were indicted for criminal conspiracy. The judges were acting on behalf of the monied interests in society and the judges would prosecute anybody who would try to organize the worker into any group that would try to work for the amelioration of the working conditions in the workplace.

* (2040)

Through constant struggle, because there are people who never give up the fight for justice and for equality, labour had achieved a recognition in our western society that the right to organize, the right to negotiate and the right to strike if necessary are basic and fundamental rights for the protection of the industrial relations system in our society.

The right to organize is given to the worker. The same rights should be given to the owners of capital. Therefore, employers and capitalists also organize themselves, and they have certain organizations among themselves. Chambers of commerce are an example that endure to this day that represent the interests of the owners of capital, but whatever is the good and the right of the worker must necessarily be an equivalent right on the part of the owners of capital. Therefore, it is assumed in our industrial relations system that both sides can find a way by which they can mutually be satisfied by constantly negotiating for the working conditions, the level of wages, the nature of safety and health in the workplace to the satisfaction of both parties.

If this proceeds from voluntary agreement of the parties, there can be no better and lasting working conditions than that will proceed from the parties themselves to determine the conditions of the workplace. We have achieved such a system in our

industrialized society, and we have protected the rights of the labourer and the rights of the worker. There are industrial relation laws in every civilized society that protect the right to organize, that protect the right to negotiate, that protect the right to determine the working conditions under which they would accept their effort in order to produce those goods and services in our society.

Now what are we trying to do with Bill 70? The government has changed its role from being an umpire. The government is supposed to be a neutral umpire, arbitrating all the conflicts of the various groups in society. If there is conflict within labour and capital, it is the function of government to be the neutral arbiter of the conflict so that there will be peace in society, there will be no violence.

Government, being as it is, is one of the largest employers in our modern society. So it has changed its role. It is not only an arbiter; it is also a party to the negotiating agreement, to the collective bargaining process. When it becomes a party to the collective bargaining agreement, it must submit itself by assuming that role to the rules of collective bargaining. By the operation of these established rules of collective bargaining, the government has not achieved what it wanted to achieve through voluntary agreement. Then it suddenly leaves the scene of negotiation, assumes this role as the representative of the state, imposes its will by means of legislation, and destroys this precious right of collective bargaining on the part of the worker.

By assuming the role of an employer, the government voluntarily on its own had agreed to abide by the rules of collective bargaining based on the freedom of contract of the parties to determine the nature of the working conditions under which they want to live together. That is the secret of our industrial relations system. That is the secret of our productivity. That is the secret of our economic advancement. There is peaceful negotiation. There is mutual agreement and—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I have a very difficult time hearing -(interjection)- Order, please. I am having a very difficult time hearing the speaker. I would also at this time like to remind the speaker that the relevance to Bill 70 is questionable at this time.

Mr. Santos: I am talking about industrial relations system, Mr. Acting Speaker, and in this particular

case I am talking about the right of the parties to negotiate.

Point of Order

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): I wonder if the honourable member would yield to a question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): There is no point of order. I would ask the honourable member for Broadway to continue.

Mr. Santos: I would be most willing, Mr. Acting Speaker, were it not for the fact that we do not have enough time. I will be willing to do that afterwards.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order.

Mr. Enns: It is not as though I had a question right now, but I thought one might occur to me as the speaker was speaking.

* * *

Mr. Santos: I am trying to abide by the rules of agreement about time limitations of debate, and I am trying to do my best so that we can make efficient use of our time.

It is established in our laws and our legislation that it is the function of government to foster harmonious relations between labour and capital. Is that what this government is doing? Instead of fostering harmonious relations between labour and capital, the government by its own self-interest is trying to destroy that harmonious relationship.

For many years now, in this province, there have been no strikes and yet by the time this government has achieved its mandate probably there will be a souring of the relationship between labour and capital in this province and the beginning of labour unrest in this province.

It has been stated in the industrial relations system that it is the function of government to encourage the practice and procedure of collective bargaining, but what is this government doing? Is this government encouraging the practice of collective bargaining? Is this government respecting the rights of the parties?

Instead of recognizing and encouraging the practice of collective bargaining for a fiscal industrial relationship, this government is trying to destroy what they consider and what they perceive to be their political enemy, namely organized labour, because labour, being organized for the protection

of the worker and in the interest of safety in the workplace, the labour union in this country is also performing a basic function in our society, namely the protection of labour rights of the individual labourer, so that they can be organized in groups and then result in harmonious industrial relationships in our system.

What is this government trying to achieve? They want a demonstration; they want an experiment. When they succeed in destroying the right of the union to collectively bargain and negotiate, then there will be a chilling effect on all the other unions in this province. They will -(interjection)- chilling effect, yes, so that no one will dare anymore challenge the right of the government, but remember the government is only acting in the name of the people.

The government is in the position of having the mandate of the electorate and the electorate consists of all the workers, as well as the owners of capital themselves. If those rules that establish the peaceful relationship between the workers and the owners of capital have already been destroyed, what is left in our institution? Chaos in this organization and dissatisfaction of all the people who live in this province.

What we see here, actually, is a justification in order for the government to show its fiscal responsibility under the guise of helping solve the problem of the deficit. They actually are trying to destroy the right of collective bargaining of organized labour in this province.

They say they have no money—true. Because the deficit in this province had already been established, we have a deficit in government. Any government will have to find ways and means to make efficient use of its funding of its resources in order to carry out the public services.

They say they have no money. How come they can give, in the course of years, \$50 million to big businesses yet they have no money for health care. They have no money for the poor, for those who are on social assistance; they are caught in the funding of education. How come they can give several millions assistance to the elite private schools, and yet cut out funding from all the students, even student aid?

All we can deduce from this—how come they say we need the money from the seniors, we have to cut that natural increase in the 55-Plus, but they can

give a \$20,000 increase to a man who already makes \$130,000? Is that a rational kind of decision making? No, it is not. They were driven by a desire to destroy who they perceived to be their political enemies and in doing so, they destroy themselves. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

* (2050)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I want to make it, if I can quote the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), perfectly clear what the Liberal Party's position is on this particular bill, and that is we oppose it.

We oppose it because this government, I believe, does not know what it is doing. It is unable to negotiate. It is unable to sit down and talk to people; it has double standards. We have many civil servants who earn less than \$20,000 a year. They are not going to be receiving an increase this year, while at the same time we have civil servants such as Oz Pedde who is receiving—how much of an increase?—15.4 percent increase.

What kind of justice is that? What type of a government would do that to our civil service? This government has no respect for the Civil Service. I disagree with the zero percent increase that is being so highly touted as this is what the public wants. I do not believe the majority of the public wants someone that is making \$20,000 a year to have no increase this year. I do not believe the public wants that.

Why did the government not choose to sit down with the MGEA and try or attempt to try to negotiate some type of a deal if they want a zero percent increase? It has been done before. It has been negotiated before, but this government did not have the will to negotiate because they knew well in advance, they knew back in December that they were going to be bringing forward Bill 70, maybe not the number, but they knew what it was that they were going to do. They believe by introducing a bill of this nature that they will be able to score political points because they believe that the majority of the public wants to see a freeze on civil service wages.

Mr. Acting Speaker, to a certain degree the government might be right, but I would suggest to you that the government is dead wrong on two accounts. I do not believe that the public of Manitoba believes an individual making less than \$23,000, \$20,000 a year should have a freeze when we have the cost of living in Canada increasing at the rate it is.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Just look at the GST, our hydro bills, all of the bills, Mr. Acting Speaker, that come in every month, that are going up and up and up. The person who is making \$23,000 a year is the person, the civil servant, who is going to be hurt the most by this bill. What kind of a government would do that to an individual in the Civil Service?

I will tell you what type of government—an uncaring government. That is what it would have to be. One has to ask the question. Did they run on it?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Lamoureux: They did not indicate whatsoever that this is in fact what they were going to do. If it was such a popular thing as they proclaim it to be, why did they not at least be honest with Manitobans? Why did they not tell Manitobans that this is in fact what their real agenda is?

Mr. Acting Speaker, I can recall reading a letter last year where the Tories were trying to raise money, and they said, in order for us to implement phase two, we need a majority government, and this is part of phase two. They got their majority government, and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is quite right. A majority is a majority is a majority. Unfortunately, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is right in that Bill 70 will pass.

I think that is sad for many Manitobans, many civil servants. I believe that the civil servants and the MGEA are very, very responsible, and this government has taken away the opportunity to sit down and negotiate in good faith with the MGEA, with the civil servants of this Province of Manitoba, at least to allow an increase to those that are on the low-paying scale, but what do they do, Mr. Acting Speaker? They do the exact opposite.

We see the political offices receiving the increases. We see people such as Oz Pedde receiving the increases of 15 percent. We had one presenter, when I was sitting till 5:30 in the morning—at 5:30 in the morning, we had one presenter who came here, made presentation, said that she had to get back to work at 7:45. Her wage was less than \$24,000 a year. What did the government have to say to this individual?

In fairness to that lady, whatever she said, they were not listening. They knew what they were going to do. They know what they are doing, and the member from Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) is not

helping, is not helping those who are on the lower end of our Civil Service.

An Honourable Member: What about those who are below \$20,000?

Mr. Lamoureux: Exactly—what about those below \$20,000 -(interjection)- Well, if they are a senior or a civil servant, they are making less than \$20,000. We should be caring for them all. We should all want to see some type of an increase. They deserve that. Their bills are going up. Their disposable income is going down. This government is not helping. They say, Mr. Acting Speaker, we are going to keep the taxes down. Not only do they offload them, they make it tougher for those who are on lower income.

This government has got to start to be more responsible with what they do. What did they do about the free bargaining process? They completely abandoned it. What happened? We had an agreement that unions that chose to go into final offer selection could go all the way up to March 31. In fact, the casino workers went on strike. They were walking the picket line for two months. They walked the picket line, and they fought for what they believed they were entitled to. At the same time, the government makes an agreement to extend it to March 31, and then they retract it retroactively. What those who went out on strike fought for and won, legitimately won, this government took away from them.

I can understand the arguments of wanting to be accountable to Manitobans. We all want governments to be accountable with taxpayers' money, but we all want government to be responsible, fair and honest. I do not believe that the government has been honest with the civil servants of this province. If this government was going to be honest, they would have sat down, they would have negotiated a deal. The MGEA is, and can be, very responsible, even with a Conservative government. We have seen a negotiated agreement. I would imagine that, had the government persisted, they would have been able to reach an agreement that would have been satisfactory to the government.

One of the things that we opposed about Bill 70, another aspect, is the way that it was dealt through in the committee process. We saw people who were wanting to make presentation who were denied the ability to make that presentation because

their names were in fact called at two o'clock, three o'clock in the morning, not once, but twice. Even though the parties at the time had agreed to the rules, I do not believe anyone had anticipated that we would be sitting till 5:30 in the morning, as I did on my first sitting.

* (2100)

I would like to comment on all of those who took the time to come forward to make their presentations, that they did do a fantastic job by sitting and waiting around into those wee hours of the morning to make sure that they put forward their message. -(interjection)- The Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) says that in fact it was orchestrated. To some degree, some individuals, I believe, were organized, but I am not going to name individuals. I can say that there were people who did sincerely want to make presentation, but were denied that presentation sheerly because of the inconvenience of what the government was doing on that particular bill. So in fact it is a sad day.

I did want to conclude my remarks by saying that the civil servants will not forget what the government has done. We have seen, I believe it was 30,000 ballots that were brought to the NDP caucus, and I would hope that the NDP caucus would share those ballots with us so that we can be in contact with those individuals. -(interjection)- The member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) says that we can.

I appreciate the offer, because I know that I would like to be in contact with the constituents that I represent, and I can assure the member for Transcona that I will make the follow-up. I appreciate his offer, and some time during the recess I will be giving him a phone call. The member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) is going to be doing the same thing.

Mr. Acting Speaker, on that note, unfortunately, I will have to sit down and this bill will pass, but if I had my choice, I would ask the government to withdraw this bill.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): This is indeed a sad day for Manitobans, a sad day for a province that has a long history of co-operation and consultation between all sectors in the economy. It is a sad day for a province that has a long history of peaceful, harmonious labour relations. It is a sad day for working families in Manitoba, many of whom will be driven further and further into economic hardship and many of those driven to below the

poverty line. It is a sad day for our economy as a whole because the loss of those earnings, the loss of that productive enterprise in our economy, will mean hardships for everyone in Manitoba.

At the beginning of this session, after we received the Speech from the Throne, I reminded members in this House across the way, members of the Conservative Party, of a quotation of a famous Conservative, Benjamin Disraeli, who described the Conservative Party as an organized hypocrisy. Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, that description is even more fitting today when faced with the likes of Bill 70 with its devastating consequences for working families in the province of Manitoba. Let us elaborate a little bit on what that means, an organized hypocrisy. I will go back to another famous commentator, thinker, of years gone by, Walter Bagehot, who wrote years ago, and this was in the 1800s: Years ago, Mr. Disraeli called Sir Robert Peel's ministry an organized hypocrisy, so much did the ideas of its head differ from the sensations of its tail.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think the application of that description, of that quotation is perfect in terms of today's scenario, in terms of the activities and actions and legislation of this government. What does that mean? What does hypocrisy mean? What does an organized hypocrisy mean?

According to a standard dictionary definition, it is the postulation of moral standards to which one's own behavior does not conform. It is pretence. It is saying one thing before the election and saying another thing after the election. It is saying one thing one day and doing the opposite the next day. It is suggesting that we should all share in the burden of these difficult times but, in reality, imposing that burden on particular groups in our society today.

Is it not organized hypocrisy when, in this year, the deputy minister of Health has seen an increase of some 20 percent in his salary, going from \$75,600 to \$92,100. That is in a space of one short year, the same year that this government has brought in Bill 70 and applied a zero percent increase to health care workers, to homemakers, housekeepers in health care facilities, who are earning on average \$20,000 a year.

I ask again, is it not organized hypocrisy to see a 20 percent increase to the deputy minister of Health to bring him up to \$92,100 and a zero percent

increase for a housekeeping aide at Health Sciences Centre who earns a maximum of \$9.99 an hour. That is pure, unadulterated hypocrisy.

One of the most overwhelming features of this bill, of Bill 70, is that it attacks particular groups in our society. It imposes the burdens on the lowest income earners in our society, hits those at the bottom end of the scale. We oppose that approach to our economy these days. We oppose that in the best of circumstances, but we oppose it particularly in these difficult economic times. Time and time again we have suggested to this government, that a reasonable economic policy in these difficult economic times is a policy that spreads the burdens and sacrifices as widely as possible, rather than imposing them on particular groups, especially the weak and defenceless groups.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is clear, as was said over and over again to members of this government throughout the committee hearings, that Bill 70, this wage freeze, will have its biggest impact on low income public sector workers. It is absolutely important to note for the benefit of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) and others who have spoken so often about addressing inequalities in our society today, to remind him and others that that kind of policy will therefore have its greatest impact on women in our society today. One of the biggest mistakes, wrongdoings of Bill 70 is that it entrenches inequalities in our society today.

Rather than working to close the wage gap, to deal with the widening gap in terms of women and men in our labour force, this government has chosen to entrench the gap, to entrench the inequalities. -(interjection)- Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Driedger) says he wants more emotion. I do not know if I can get any more emotional, because for us this is a very sad day because of the impact it has on the lowest income earners in our society. Particularly, we are concerned about its impact on women workers who now, as the minister knows, earn still only on average 65 to 60 cents for every dollar that a man makes.

* (2110)

Let me remind ministers and members opposite of some of the horrible consequences of Bill 70. Let us look at the average annual income of a single-parent family, most of whom are headed by women. The average salary for such a family in this

day and age is \$20,000 a year. That is a family; that is not a single person. That is a person with one or more children to care for, mouths to feed, and this government is saying, make do on \$20,000 a year; do not expect any kind of increase to keep up with the cost of living to keep your children fed, clothed and housed in any kind of decent circumstances.

Let me make one other point that is of serious consequences for our society today, and that is the impact of Bill 70 on our health care system because indeed, Mr. Acting Speaker, a significant number of the workers affected by Bill 70 work in the health care field. This government, through Bill 70, has not only entrenched inequalities but entrenched chaos in the health care system. We are left with some nurses in, some out, some doctors in, some out. We have operating engineers who were promised by this government and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) that this government would live up to final offer selection, only to find that they were prepared to break their word with the stroke of a pen and a signature to Bill 70.

Let me just give one example of the chaos in the health care system as a result of Bill 70. There are two personal care homes in Winnipeg, private personal care homes. One is the Fort Garry Care Centre, and it signed an agreement on July 1, 1990. It was able to sign an agreement before the deadline imposed by Bill 70 and able to, through free collective bargaining, ensure an increase in benefits and wages for health care workers working in personal care homes.

Mr. Acting Speaker, just on the other side of town, the Vista Park Lodge, a private personal care home, organized at the same time as the Fort Garry Centre, with the identical contract, the identical provisions and, in the past, having a history of leapfrogging with each other in terms of salary increases, has a contract that expires March 31, 1991—not able to bargain collectively and freely, and bound by Bill 70.

So we have a group of personal care home workers on this side of the city who are able to bargain collectively and ensure that they are able to keep up with the cost of living and, on the other side of the town, a group of workers restrained and restricted by Bill 70 and the actions of this government from being able to bargain collectively and ensure that they are able to get some benefits to keep up with the current economic situation.

That, Mr. Acting Speaker, is the kind of chaos that this government has imposed upon our health care system, and that is an indication of the hardship that it has brought to bear on working families everywhere. That hardship is being felt most by those at the bottom end of the scale, and most of those are women. It is an insidious, destructive, regressive legislation. It takes us back years in the history of this province. It is absolutely wrong and we will continue to oppose this kind of measure and any other measure of this government that comes in the way of decent economic situations for our working families in the province of Manitoba, and any legislation that denies workers and working families the right to free collective bargaining, free association and free democratic association in the province of Manitoba. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Acting Speaker, I do not intend to be lengthy in what I have to say about this bill. This bill has already been the subject of hundreds of hours, literally, in this Legislature and in the committees of debate, the vast majority of it negative, about this bill and about its impact. A lot has been said. All of the arguments have come forward. All of them have been ignored, I might add, against this piece of legislation. I think it is clear to everyone that the government has made up its mind. Whatever the cost, not just now but in the future, whatever the cost they are going to push this ahead. They are going to do it. That is clear. They have the majority. They have the mandate legislatively to do that and to achieve that, and I have no doubt they will.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is an appropriate time to put some comments on the record again about what this bill does. The minister casts this bill and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) does, and he did today in Question Period, as a fiscally responsible piece of legislation. Now, I am prepared to dispute that because I think that whatever savings this government thinks they have gotten out of this bill is false in the extreme, and the error of their ways will come back to haunt them very quickly, I believe.

In any event, that decision is one the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has taken, and I believe is not at the root of what is the worst about this piece of legislation. What is the worst about this piece of legislation, and it is hard to distinguish because there is not much good about this piece of legislation, is the dishonesty which it represents in

this government's dealings with the civil servants of this province.

There is no doubt that it is a politically saleable piece of legislation. There is no doubt about that. The political wisdom at the level that the minister seeks to indulge his government and himself is clear, and he has chosen that path. Mr. Acting Speaker, that path is one which says and buys into the argument that our civil servants are there to be kicked, and this minister has seen fit to ride that political football and do the dirty deed. He is more than willing to do that, and that is what he is doing in this bill. Today in this province it does not come with political cost, and that is the key phrase, political cost. It does not.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

His political instincts, Mr. Acting Speaker, are accurate in that sense and that sense alone. What this bill does, however, is set the stage for a fundamental difference in the way labour relations are carried out in this province, in particular with civil servants of course, but indeed, I think, with all working Manitobans. What it tells those 48,000 directly affected and all of those others who are watching, is that the government cannot be trusted.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that is the bottom line. You know, I think a lot of people who came before that committee, I think a lot of people who sat on that committee, myself included, acknowledge the results of the election. This government, this party, the Progressive Conservative Party got a majority. I can live with that. That was the result of the election. It was narrow, but they got a majority, and that gave them the right to make policy decisions, including how to negotiate and what terms they were willing to negotiate with civil servants.

That gave them that democratic mandate, and I am willing to concede that here today as I have always been, but what I will not concede, and what I will not accept, because I do not believe the people in the last election voted for it, is a fundamentally dishonest government. What they got and what has been exposed in this piece of legislation is a Minister of Finance who does not tell the truth. It is that simple.

* (2120)

I hear members saying I have gone too far. I hear them saying no, no, that is not our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Well, let us look at what he has done. Let us assess exactly what the minister

did. -(interjection)- He did freeze the lawyers' rates, for the interest of the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), and they are taking him to the Labour Board accordingly. Actually, it was in the paper.

In any event, the minister entered into negotiations with the MGEA and many other bargaining units, and his agents through the Crown corporations also entered into negotiations under a certain regime which included final offer selection. That was the legislative regime. Whatever one feels about final offer selection, it was there. Anybody not using it in the best interests of their workers whom they represented, or if they were a lawyer, in the best interests of their clients, would be negligent in not using it.

Whatever we politically feel about it, you cannot criticize a party for using, to the full extent, the laws in place. It was there. It was there to be used as was the arbitration provision in The Civil Service Act. It was there. The minister does not like it today, but he did not repeal it. It was there. So he started down a road, and he said he called on them for good faith. I remember his saying many times, all I want is good faith bargaining. I want them to come in good faith to the bargaining table. That is what he said: In good faith, and I will too. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) stood up and said exactly that in this House repeatedly: We will negotiate in good faith. That is what they said and that did not guarantee an easy road. No, sir. That did not guarantee that there was an open cheque book. That did not suggest anything like that.

In fact, it was the opposite. They said: These are going to be tough negotiations. Get ready. They are going to be tough negotiations but they are going to be negotiations, and we accept the law of the land. We accept the regime we are functioning under and we will take the risks of tough negotiating which may involve a strike.

Those bargaining with them accepted the same risks which may have been not getting what they wanted, which may have been going on strike and staying on strike and staying on strike some more. Those are the rules that they functioned under. With respect to these civil servants, the MGEA, they had the option for arbitration. Others had the option for final offer selection, and they took it. The minister did not say a word when they took it. He did not say: Oh, no, no, no, do not apply for final offer selection or arbitration, I am in the Legislature.

Did he say that? No, he let them do it. He said: This is the system, we are going to live with it.

They started down the road, and they did not just start down the road, did they, Mr. Acting Speaker? No, they got to the end of the road. They got decisions from arbitrators. You know what? Surprise, surprise, the government did not win some of those. They did not lose them, but they did not get everything they wanted. No, there were minor increases. All of their arguments were not accepted—some were, some were not.

The fact is, after the process had gone on for many months for all kinds of workers, including workers who went on strike and took the risk of walking the picket line and lost the wages to walk the picket line, including a bargaining unit that signed an agreement with the government, an agreement in writing which said: We will by-pass final offer selection to go to arbitration instead, interest arbitration—that agreement, by the way, did not mention a word about putting capacity, ability to pay in front of the arbitrator—this minister says oh, the arbitrators were not listening to our ability-to-pay-arguments. Well, the fact is they were not working. That is the bottom line. They were listening, they did not accept them.

How interesting that the one written agreement he signed, sending the matter to arbitration, he did not require in that agreement that the ability to pay even be put before the arbitrator. He could have done that. He could have written into that agreement and said: We are going to go to interest arbitration; you are going to by-pass final offer selection and ability to pay is going to be a factor for the arbitrator. He did not even raise it.

We had a presenter before us who told us this minister did not even raise ability-to-pay when he signed an agreement with them to send the matter to arbitration. That is the unbelievable hypocrisy of this minister. He stands up thinking he is some kind of hero. Six months after the process starts: I am a hero, I am protecting the taxpayer. Mr. Acting Speaker, the fact is, yes, today he is a hero for many of those people who buy into the fact that we should kick civil servants. He is a hero, that is true. Politically he is a hero, but the truth is he is a liar. The truth is—

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Acting Speaker, probably some other

member from the government's side should rise on this point. I do not know if the member is playing to the TV camera that is perched in the gallery or not, but he has said something that has never been used in this House for many years that I have been here. He called me a liar, and I would ask him to withdraw it because, again, in the many years I have been here, I have never heard quite that direct of a statement. I would think that he would want to withdraw that or, indeed, he may have even more difficulty taking legislation through this House than he has in the past.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): I would ask the honourable member to withdraw the reference that he made to the—I am not quite sure whether I heard the specific reference to "liar," but I would ask the honourable member to withdraw it.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Acting Speaker, let me clear that up for you. You did hear that. I did do that and I was not speaking to the TV cameras. I was speaking to the Minister of Finance, and I will withdraw the word "liar."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Thank you. Proceed.

* * *

Mr. Edwards: The minister is a stranger to the truth, however you want to put it. I challenge the minister—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order.

Mr. Edwards: I do not come by that allegation lightly. I sat through 50 hours of committee hearings. I sat through hearings where people came up and told the minister just that and he had no defence. I do not come by that conclusion lightly. He sat there when people came up explaining to him the bargaining process and how they had been, in their words—to be careful here—deceived. He had no defence and when he tried, it failed. I do not come by that conclusion lightly.

What else do you call it when you say to somebody, let us go down a road, let us see it through to the conclusion, here is what we are going to offer, and you take the risk and you go on strike and you take the loss. We will sign agreements and we will go to arbitrations. We will spend money and we will give arguments, and at the end of the day you say, sorry, I did not like the result—too bad, it is all off.

What do you call that? I think it is pretty clear and that is what this bill is about. This bill is about heading down a road and changing your mind because you do not like the rules, you do not like the result, you do not like what is coming out. That is what this Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) does, and you know what, this Minister of Finance was fortunate enough, at least in my eyes until this bill, to have a fair amount of credibility. I did not agree with what he did very often, but the fact is I always considered him to have a fair amount of integrity.

Mr. Acting Speaker, after this, after the pathetic efforts to defend this legislation over many, many hours of hearings on the important issues of integrity in a bargaining process, I do not have that same respect for this minister. Let the record show that the economic, the fiscal decisions, are this minister's to make—absolutely.

Bargaining in bad faith is the prerogative of no government. It is important to note, it is the prerogative of no employer. There is not another employer in this province that would get away with the kind of crap this Minister of Finance has foisted upon the working people of this province.

* (2130)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for St. James that the language in this House should be parliamentary, and I would ask him to withdraw the word "crap."

Mr. Edwards: There is not another employer in this province—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. I asked you to withdraw the reference to the word "crap," please.

Mr. Edwards: I will withdraw that word and replace it with a synonym, "garbage." Mr. Acting Speaker, there is not another employer in this province that would not be hauled in front of the Manitoba Labour Board. -(interjection)- The member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) is getting—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order. I had recognized the honourable member for St. James.

Mr. Edwards: As I was saying, there is not another employer that would not be hauled in front of the Labour Board and severely reprimanded and punished for this type of activity. This is bad faith in the extreme. There is not another offence that an

employer or a bargaining agent can create that is worse than bad faith.

Bad faith is dealt with in an extremely serious fashion. I see the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) speaking to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). I hope he is making him aware of that, Mr. Acting Speaker. I think what really happened here was that the Minister of Finance and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) do not know anything about collective bargaining and really do not understand the way the system works.

They believe that they have authority, ultimate authority, and they can do what they want when they want, but they entered into a system which was foreign to them and which ultimately, to the extent that Bill 70 is bad faith, was beyond their control. They entered into a system which had rules, time-honoured rules, decades of precedents which were breached by this government.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have heard a lot about free collective bargaining. Free collective bargaining is tossed around this Legislature and tossed around the committee like it was motherhood itself. Free collective bargaining, a wonderful phrase—everybody recites it glowingly.

It gives me some pause and I must reflect that it is almost -(interjection)- I am tempted to raise a matter of privilege, given the comments of the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) but I will not. It is interesting that exactly the same phrase has now issued from his lips.

There is not another employer who would get away with this. Free collective bargaining is not something which I have any faith that the NDP particularly understand, but it appears also that the Conservative Party does not understand free collective bargaining, and they are the ones who heralded it week on week on week. They heralded free collective bargaining.

What happened to free collective bargaining under Bill 70? It is eradicated by Bill 70. It is not just modified; it is eradicated, it is destroyed. There is no such thing as free collective bargaining under Bill 70. It is legislated wage rates. That is what it is. Bargaining is over. Any bargaining that has occurred is null and void, over, finished. So let us not ever hear again from this government about free collective bargaining. They do not know what it means, Mr. Acting Speaker. They have not the first hint of what it means, except perhaps they think it

means free collective bargaining, freedom for the government, free hand, free, do whatever you want. That is word that I think that attracts them, is "free." Collective bargaining, I do not think they understand. "Free" they like.

Mr. Acting Speaker, combined with the bad faith, combined with the deception of the bargaining process was an element of outright hypocrisy which was illustrated most poignantly by the payment to Mr. Oz Pedde roughly a couple of weeks before Bill 70 of a 15.4 percent increase, \$20,000. Now, we heard from a lot of people who said they do not even make \$20,000 a year. We heard a lot of people from MTS saying that—they do not even make \$20,000. Oz Pedde got a \$20,000 increase. You know what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said? -(interjection)- Yes, it is here again—a decrease. This is the logic of the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery). He thinks \$20,000 is a decrease. Oh, I could live with that decrease, believe me. Give it to me any day of the week.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if there is any clear indication of the member for Portage la Prairie or indeed the Premier (Mr. Filmon) who also said the same thing of their total lack of touch with reality, it is that \$20,000 is a decrease.

The Minister of Finance—and I want to reiterate to him and I would like an explanation—the Minister of Finance said in defence of a \$20,000 increase, we had to pay it to get the best. That is what he said. We had to pay it; if we wanted to get the best, we had to pay it. Forty-eight thousand civil servants obviously are not the best in this minister's eyes, that is what he told them. Yes, we have to pay him 20 grand, a 15.4 percent increase.

Did they pay 14.4, 12.4, 10.4, 2.4, 0.4? They did not pay anything. More than that, they did not even bargain in good faith. They outright changed the rules halfway through the process. For the rest of the civil servants that will leave a legacy, because the message is clear from this government. The civil servants, according to them, are second or third rate. That is what this minister thinks, that is what he said. This will leave a legacy of unrest between this minister of government, which obviously he does not care much about.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that is what this bill was about. This bill is about more than this year, more than this set of negotiations. This is about the integrity of this government, and this bill speaks

louder than any other bill before the Legislature about the total lack of integrity of this government. Thank you.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I look forward to addressing Bill 70, and I must admit it is somewhat different speaking on this now than on second reading since I am faced with a time limit, although I want to say in retrospect that I am extremely glad that our Leader was able to designate me, to give me that opportunity to speak the six days that I did—or seven days, I forget the exact number of days, six or seven, whatever it was—because in many ways at that time, I did not realize that I was speaking not just for myself and our caucus, but I was going to be speaking for the many hundreds of Manitobans who were cut off by this government when the public hearing process was ended, Mr. Acting Speaker, at four o'clock in the morning on a Sunday morning because this government is so desperate to ram through Bill 70.

When I spoke the six or seven days on behalf of our caucus, little did I realize I would be speaking on behalf of hundreds of Manitobans who were stifled in their opposition, who had closure brought on them in a way that is unprecedented in this province, by this government that is so power hungry, it will stoop to nothing to distort our democratic process; in this case, to ram through an odious piece of legislation, an item of legislation that I have described as fascist legislation.

Indeed, when I look at the tactics that were used to have this bill pass through, I regret none of the statements that we made in debate on second reading, because indeed we saw the proof in committee just how little that this applied. Indeed, when I used that term, fascist legislation, it was advisedly. In fact, the Speaker ruled that it was parliamentary. I realize it is strong language, but we have strong feelings about the democratic process in this province, a process that no Conservative majority government can choose to ignore, except at its peril—except at its peril.

* (2140)

I want to say that I found myself in agreement with a Free Press editorial. It is amazing, when they described this government as an arrogant government, when they tore apart the pathetic arguments of the Premier (Mr. Filmon), what did the Premier say about the committee? He said there was a tyranny of the minority, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The minority on the committee was not able to prevent the government from ramming through Bill 70 at four o'clock in the morning on a Sunday morning, but let us deal with this tyranny of the minority. Tyranny of the minority to do what? To speak out? Is it tyranny for us in the opposition to speak out in debate as is the custom in this House under our rules and its centuries of parliamentary tradition? What was the tyranny of the minority—the tyranny of the hundreds of Manitoba who made representation or would have made representation to the committee if they had not been cut off? Was that the tyranny?

Then we heard talk about they were trying to block the democratic process. By what? By making presentations? By filibustering, I believe was the word used by the Premier? Mr. Acting Speaker, what is the difference between democracy and dictatorship? One of the fundamental differences is the freedom of speech, and one of the fundamental features of any democratic system is open debate that recognizes not just the power of the majority, but also the rights of the minority—and in this case we believe actually probably even a majority of people, because it is the government that is the only one that has a majority in this House on this issue—but it is the right for open debate and free debate. That is a tradition that is especially enshrined in the parliamentary system of democracy.

What has become of this Conservative Party, this pathetic reflection of the old Conservative Party that I did not agree with politically, but I could at least admire, Mr. Acting Speaker? I reference just how far they have sunk. Nine percent in the polls in the prairies, federally. The Progressive Conservative Party—

An Honourable Member: The once proud party of John Diefenbaker.

Mr. Ashton: The party of John Diefenbaker, indeed—9 percent in the polls. Look how far they have sunk. If John Diefenbaker was alive today, I think he would not only look at disgust at his federal party, but he would look here in the province of Manitoba. John Diefenbaker, the man who brought in the Bill of Rights. John Diefenbaker, who reflected the whole tradition of parliamentary democracy, who was one of the great parliamentarians of our time. What would he have said for this so-called Conservative party and its callous disregard for the democratic process in this

province when it shut down committee hearings at four o'clock on a Sunday morning? What would John Diefenbaker have said, Mr. Acting Speaker?

I ask the question, not just in terms of the process, but just how low has this government sunk? Just how far has it strayed from Conservative principles? I mentioned John Diefenbaker. Let us talk about Duff Roblin. Duff Roblin—and there is indeed a member of this House who served with Duff Roblin in this Chamber. What was the philosophy and approach of Duff Roblin when it came to labour relations? Well, it was the Roblin government that enshrined the process that we have currently in the Civil Service, whereby the process of arbitration is available as an alternative to the right to strike. It is a right that has never been eliminated in statute, but in practice has not been used because of the arbitration process.

We heard this Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and this Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) in front of the committee saying how terrible it was that the Manitoba Government Employees' Association had done what? What did they do? Did they go on strike? Did they put up the picket lines? Did they blockade the Legislature? Did they do that? No, they did not.

What did they do that was so terrible according to the Conservative government? They applied for arbitration. They applied for arbitration. The process that was put in by Duff Roblin is what they applied for, and this government considers it a horrendous destruction of labour relations in this province. Indeed, Mr. Acting Speaker. Well, that was Duff Roblin.

Here I go again, Mr. Acting Speaker—Sterling Lyon. What did Sterling Lyon do in terms of labour relations in this province? What did he do in terms of the Civil Service?

An Honourable Member: He bargained. He negotiated.

Mr. Ashton: He bargained and negotiated, exactly as the Leader of the Opposition said. There was not the same sort of attitude of this government. In fact, they did not roll back a single item of labour legislation with the minor exception of the time-and-three-quarter overtime in the special session in 1977. The person who I defeated in the election in 1981, who I had many disagreements with, one thing I will say and I have said before, Mr. Ken MacMaster did not do the kind of things that this

Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) is doing in terms of labour relations in this province.

He did not roll back a single item of labour legislation. That was the government of Sterling Lyon. That was the government of Ken McMaster. Then we get to the government of the member for Tuxedo. For a couple of years we had one type of Filmon government. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) talked about free collective bargaining, respecting free collective bargaining. Mr. Acting Speaker, if I had the time, I could read dozens of quotes from the Premier indicating his commitment to free collective bargaining.

An Honourable Member: He would not use a club.

Mr. Ashton: Oh, he would not use a club, indeed. He would not use a club. He would respect the hands-off tradition in terms of negotiations within the Crown corporations. How many more quotes do we have to read in the record to remind people? Can anyone forget those fateful words on election night—a Tory is a Tory, a majority is a majority, a majority is a majority.

Mr. Acting Speaker, guess what? Surprise, surprise, we find now with a majority government that all those words in terms of labour relations and negotiations in the public sector mean absolutely nothing. I ask you to reflect back. I mentioned previous Conservatives. How can some of these members elected, the Conservative members, new members elected on that platform of more of the same, how can they sit here and support a government that has not told the truth to not only the people of Manitoba but to them in particular? When they put their name on the Filmon team for more of the same, were they bargaining for this type of duplicatous government, this kind of action by government, this kind of vicious attack on labour relations in this province? Was that exactly what they were bargaining for?

Mr. Acting Speaker, I referred earlier, in the debate on workers compensation, that there were hints, but the only hints were that the Conservative Party was raising money for—and I mentioned a letter which was sent out before the 1990 election saying, yes, we have a government, a minority government, but we need a majority to finish the job. Why? Because they wanted a probusiness government. I never heard that phrase in the 1990 election. It was not the Filmon team probusiness government. Never once was that mentioned.

They said, in fact told their Conservative fundraising list what we have always said about this Conservative Party under the Premier, you get one agenda before the election and you get one afterwards.

Sometimes, I must admit, Mr. Acting Speaker, I felt like I was getting a little bit paranoid after having sat here for 10 years across the way from the Conservatives, and I must admit there were a number of times when I got up and questioned whether there was a hidden agenda. I started to wonder if maybe, maybe the Conservative Party had learned its lessons from history. Maybe it had changed. Maybe the Premier actually meant what he said. I was not paranoid. I was absolutely right on. Our caucus was not paranoid. They were right on. This Conservative Party always had a hidden agenda for the province of Manitoba, and we are seeing it with Bill 70.

* (2150)

I mentioned those members who ran under a certain platform, and I appealed in committee to those who made presentations to speak directly if they could as if they were speaking directly to members of the Conservative caucus who might consider voting with their conscience on this, who might just have an open mind, who might consider voting in a way that would reflect not the party line of their Premier and their front bench, but the reality of what they are doing to the public sector and to working people in this province.

You know what they said, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I know you sat through many of those hearings. We heard single parents—I will never forget one single parent earning not even \$20,000 a year, two children, working as a nurse's aide. She came to the committee. She sat there all night. She made her presentation at 3:30 in the morning. She had to be at work in three hours, indeed, in her second job.

Do you know what she said when I asked her what she would say? She basically said to the Conservatives that she had a tough enough time making it. She had been in her workplace I believe for 17 years, the highest paid in her classification, and she had a tough enough time as it was.

There was another presenter, too, Mr. Acting Speaker, who came before the committee, who told the committee it was the first time she had made a presentation. She indicated she had just recently declared personal bankruptcy. What does she

earn? Less than \$20,000 a year, and this was before this bill. When I asked her how much it was going to cost her, she estimated it was \$1,000 or so. When I asked her how she was going to pay for it, she said on credit, if she could get it. That was not money even coming out of her pocket. It was going to come out of overdrafts on credit cards.

This is what people spoke about in that committee, from their own direct personal experience. That is why I asked the people in that committee to voice their personal concerns, what it is like to be out—and let us not lose sight of the fact that when this government says they took no great comfort in making that move, I say to that, that is complete and absolute nonsense. One only had to look today to the questions about MTS, one only has to have sat in this debate, with the broad smiles on the Conservatives as they sit there and say to themselves, aha, we have a scapegoat here, we have a politically popular issue.

Mr. Acting Speaker, they take great comfort in this particular bill but I wonder how those members, if they vote for this bill, are going to face those people who came before the committee, and there were many. How are they going to look them in the eye and explain how to deal with the financial and economic circumstances in this province, how are they going to live up to what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) keeps talking about, keeping taxes down.

We have to bring in what is essentially a new tax. This bill is a tax on public sector workers. It is one of the worst taxes I have ever seen in terms of ability to pay. It takes \$1,000 and \$2,000 out of the pocket of every public sector worker, partly for the ideology of this government, but partly for reasons of political opportunism.

Let the record show that this government feels that it has a political winner in this. It takes great pride in this bill. It gloats at every single opportunity, and it will take this bill all the way to the bank—

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Not true.

Mr. Ashton: —and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says "not true." The Minister of Finance should have sat in the debate here and listened to the comments of his own members. I will never forget the derisory way they were singing "solidarity forever" as we spoke, making fun of the labour movement, making fun of solidarity forever. They

had a great time, Mr. Acting Speaker, in committee as well. What was recorded was one thing, and some of the comments I heard, too, made about presenters—and I give the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) for having the courtesy at least to put his comment on the record—the attitude expressed to those individuals, I felt very, very ashamed of in terms of this process.

The record has to show that this government is doing this for one reason and one reason only, for reasons of political opportunism. You know, Mr. Acting Speaker, there is one thing about governments that use the scapegoat strategy. They start with easy-to-pick-on targets. We have seen that in this session. This session has been characterized by scapegoatism. Let us just list some of the scapegoats of this particular session, and indeed, there are many: students, nurses, special needs kids, English as second language students, high school bursaries, aboriginal people, those on welfare, psychiatric nurses, Northerners, people in the inner city. Conveniently, people who have not traditionally supported the Conservative Party, and I believe this is why public sector workers were the next on agenda. They have one thing in common.

There were two groups singled out in this session for legislative targeting by this government. Two scapegoats, and what do they have in common, the MMA and public sector workers? What did they have in common? They had in common one thing. Both of those groups spoke out against this government. Both of those groups advertised against this government, and that is the other reason they are being punished. They dared to speak out against this government.

This is a session when we have seen a vindictive level of government that I have never seen before. Reporters called "smarmy weasels." For doing what? I believe the appropriate word should have been "ferrets" if we want to use analogies, because I believe ferrets are known to find rats in their nests and get them out of that, and I believe all the press has done in this particular case is get this rat-infested government out of its nest, showing for once and for all its true colours in terms of this—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please.

Mr. Ashton: I say, let us look at those true colours. We have seen the list of scapegoats, and they all

have one thing in common. They are easy to identify. They are easy to put up publicly as people who are scapegoats for our problems. They are people who do not support this government by and large, and if they did before, they will not now. Those are people who are easy to identify.

You know, there is something that happens when you do that. You go and you say, well, this group is only 20 percent of the population, and this group is only ten, and this group is only five, and this group is only 35 percent. Do you know what happens? This is what happens with Conservative governments. When they run through their list of scapegoats, there is nobody left. Then they do not know—well, except maybe the Conservative Party, its supporters, cronies and political appointments. I should not leave them out, they are loyal to the end. I mean, Brian Mulroney has 9 percent on the Prairies. This government at the end of its term may indeed still have 9 percent of support or thereabouts.

There will always be a base, but this government's base is increasingly becoming people who want something from this government, and we know that is the way that government thinks. I mean, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), when he said that he thought the Northerners did not know how to vote right, he feels that by saying that he is going to persuade them to vote for him. That is what they do not understand. They run around with a club. They run around scapegoating people, and they cannot understand afterwards, for example, with this bill, when we are dealing with public sector workers and the MMA—you know, stood up on this bill. They said the public sector workers support them, Mr. Acting Speaker. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) had the gall to say that. He had a discussion with a few public sector workers, he said—

An Honourable Member: There is no Minister of Labour in this Chamber.

* (2200)

Mr. Ashton: Well, the minister responsible for big business, my apologies. Then he is surprised when they find people do not agree with them. When they do not agree with them, they question their credibility; when they do not agree with them, they accuse them of being organized.

I hate to say this, Mr. Acting Speaker, but with what happened in the committee, with the

comments about being organized, I will say one thing. Those people are not going to be organized over the next number of years in terms of the politics of this province. They are going to be the organizers, because I spoke to many people at that committee who went in there and said they had never been political before, and they walked out of there saying one thing. They said, whatever they do, the thing they are going to work for the hardest over the next year is to get rid of this government. They were not organized. They are now.

I remind that of the minister. I know he was in Carman, and I believe he had some expressions of that from some of the Hydro workers in the area, and I want to say that I thought the Hydro workers summed it up best, because IBEW, their union, is not political. They are not affiliated with any political party and their staff rep got up at the committee hearing and he said: Well, we do not tell our people how to vote, but believe you me next time we are sure going to know who not to vote for.

That indeed is the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and this government, but that is where this bill came from. This is a scapegoat bill, and I appeal to the conscience of the Conservatives across the way. I appeal to the member for Portage (Mr. Connery) who only a few hours ago said no to this government on the MMA, when he abstained from the bill. He said no to making the MMA a scapegoat.

I ask the member for Portage to join with his constituents. As I indicated before, his constituents, his own Daily Graphic, the Portage Daily Graphic—I appeal to him to join with his own constituents on this bill and vote down this bill.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I look to other members, I look to other members newly elected who ran on this so-called Filmon team for more of the same, who believed the Premier I am sure. I hope they believed him when he said he believed in free collective bargaining. I appeal to them to vote with their conscience, to listen to their public sector workers, to say no to making them a scapegoat, and vote against Bill 70. I appeal to them, Mr. Speaker, to vote against Bill 70.

An Honourable Member: Just say no.

Mr. Ashton: Just say no, indeed, just say no.

If this government and its members are intent on moving on this course, I want to say, Mr. Speaker, they do not know what they had done. This

government has united the labour movement in a way that it has not been united since 1919, and just as in 1919, the right-wing-conservative, big-business elements of this community crushed the strike. Just as, following 1919, while they could break the strike, they could not break the ideas. Just after 1919, as we saw then, that event led to the establishment of the many socialist and labour parties and eventually the CCF and NDP, particularly in the north end of Winnipeg, the forerunner of this party. Just as many people will never forget that, Mr. Speaker, I will predict that with the passage of Bill 70, in the year 1991, the same process will happen. The labour movement is united; working people are seeing increasingly what the Conservatives stand for.

It is going to lead, unfortunately, to a period of labour unrest that we have never seen in this province since 1919. It is also going to lead, however, first and foremost, to the overthrow of this government in the next election by people who are going to vote against Bill 70, who are going to vote against Draconian legislation at this time, people, who may be broken on this bill, but their spirit and their ideas will live on and the working people of this province will never forget what this Conservative government has done. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, in fairness to the hour, my remarks will be brief.

Mr. Speaker, as I said many times in committee when we were dealing with Bill 70, I do not purport to be a labour expert.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Manness: I am particularly happy to see the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) rise to that, because he says I never tell the truth. Mr. Speaker, I found the Bill 70 process—I found it very much a learning experience. I found it most interesting—a very, very interesting exercise.

Mr. Speaker, as I said many times, Bill 70 is about sharing. It is about maintaining the integrity of provincial finances. It is about maintaining good government and good management. That is the essence of Bill 70. I have listened to 50 hours-plus of presentation over several sittings, some of them very late at night, and I have listened to many of the speeches given in this House on second and third reading on Bill 70, and the theme seems to be, as I listened to members opposite, using their words,

that we are targeting the poor and those of lesser income.

That seems to be their greatest consternation and their greatest concern besides, of course, the philosophical issue around whether or not free collective bargaining, however defined, is attacked. Mr. Speaker, of course, the members in opposition are trying to set up the economic class warfare, and that was made apparent, particularly, by my good friend—I like to say good friend, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton)—because he used this scapegoatism concept. He says we are against the doctors. He says we are against the nurses. He says we are against the public sector.

The member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) says we are against the farmers. The member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) says we are against the social workers, and, indeed, the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) says we are against the rural people. Other people have said we are against the inner city people. The member for the The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) says we are against the northerners. The member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) says we are against those that have ailments in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I know we are against the politicians because of Bill 33, so I would have to say the member is not properly and successfully stating his case that we are targeting groups in society. If you listen to everybody, we are targeting everybody and that is the essence of Bill 70.

The essence of Bill 70 is sharing. When the members talk about targeting, I will never forget in the 1987 budget, when Mr. Kostyra brought down the 2 percent tax on net income. Who was targeted then? The \$11-thousand-a-year stockroom worker at Safeway was viciously attacked with a 2 percent tax on net income—targeted. The pensioner would work all his or her life to set aside \$50,000 to \$75,000—viciously targeted and attacked by the 2 percent tax on net income.

Mr. Speaker, the members across the way do not have to talk to us about targeting those in society because I will say to them, just like my predecessor, Mr. Kostyra, he did not bring in a 2 percent tax on net income because it was going to garner votes or favour with the public. He did it because he had to do it. I would submit Bill 70 is here because there was compulsion on this government to create an

essence of sharing in our community, and that is why Bill 70 came.

* (2210)

Members accuse us of singling out those 48,000 Manitobans. Why did we do it? Did we do it for votes? How many votes is in a measure like Bill 70 when you bring it in? You bring it in, and members opposite first of all say it is going to overlap into the private sector. It is going to have an impact on the communities. We have a member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) who says it is going to hit his community to the tune of \$4 million. If there is truth to that, what is the politics of bringing in Bill 70? How many votes will you garner? Well, if you listen to the members opposite, none.

So who did we do it for? Did we do it for public favour? What possibly can be the public favour? Maybe, just maybe, this province is on the verge of not being able to borrow an awful lot more money. Will the members believe that? Maybe, just maybe, we cannot afford to increase taxes any more. Maybe we just cannot do it.

Members will not accept this, but I tabled yesterday the Unaudited Fourth Quarter, and it showed members exactly the reality of what corporation income tax our businesses are paying, and the fall-off was phenomenal—\$80 million. So maybe, just maybe, we cannot heap another tax load on our corporations in our community.

Maybe, just maybe, the portrayal of provincial finances that started on December 14, followed up by January 21, followed by the announcements that we made with respect to what we were prepared to offer the MGEA, maybe, just maybe, it was accurate and maybe it was correct, and maybe there was truth to it. In spite of what the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) says, maybe it was accurate.

Mr. Speaker, maybe, just maybe, some notable people of the Canadian community are correct. Maybe the person who said this, and I quote: The amount of the deficit is almost the same as the interest on the public debt. This is an academic point perhaps, but there would not be much of a deficit if that past debt had not been allowed to rise so high.

Who said that? Was it the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard)? Was it the member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay)? No, it was Lynn McDonald, former member of Parliament for Broadview-Greenwood,

in the book, *The Party That Changed Canada*, pages 182 to 186.

I quote again, maybe, just maybe, some other Canadians in our community at large have looked at it too, and I quote again: The main thing I learned is that to be in the government of the '90s is going to be tough because there is no money. You cannot do everything you want to. It is not a matter of add-ons. It is a question of trade-offs.

Who said that? Was it the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae), some radical right wingers in our group, the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld)? Who was it who said that? No, it was Arlene Wortsman, NDP research director, in the book, *Ed Broadbent: The Pursuit of Power*, page 301, former co-ordinator of policy research, executive council of the national party.

Maybe, Mr. Speaker, we should listen to some other Canadians who said, and I quote: The Saskatchewan government has to look where it can to raise revenue. We cannot sustain deficits year in and year out.

Was that the member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon)? Was that the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer)? No, that was Allan Blakeney in the *Estevan Mercury*, April 10, 1985, and he also said in 1986: it is time for the Saskatchewan government to practise the restraint.

Maybe, maybe there are some notable Canadians outside of this House, outside of this province, who know the reality of the day, and if the members do not, the members on this side do, and that is the essence of Bill 70.

On March 20, the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) said by question, he called the tuition a tax, and he seemed to suggest that he wanted free university education, cost by my rough analysis, \$200 million.

The member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), on March 20, said to us, top up the provincial-municipal tax sharing. In other words, do not reflect the 13.4 percent reduction in PMTS sharing to municipalities. Cost, another \$10 million or \$15 million. The member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), who likes to chirp constantly, said on March 22: Scuttle GRIP, bring cost to production in the formula. Cost, \$200 million plus.

So, Mr. Speaker, we had three or four choices. We could listen to the members opposite and spend more and increase taxes in a merciless fashion. We

could either borrow more, which is deferred taxes, or we could lay off hundreds of more out of the very strict envelope available for increase. We rejected all three of those, and we went to the only sensible option there was. We asked everybody to share starting with those of us in this House in Bill 33. We have asked everybody to share.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to you that we did nothing any differently than Ed Schreyer did in Order-in-Council on January 14, 1976 when he asked Manitobans to share. He did not bring in Bill 70. He did not bring a bill in at all. He did not have committee hearings to listen to public presentations. He passed an Order-in-Council because he realized that to maintain the integrity of the finances of the province of the day that Manitobans had to share. We have done nothing less in Bill 70.

Mr. Speaker, we did nothing less than Premier Blakeney did in 1975 and '76 when he also took a freeze to all Saskatchewan people, people of the same ilk, people of the same ideology. The reality is, this is not the first time this has happened in the province of Manitoba, and where were the members then? Were they hollering about how free collective bargaining was taken off into the swamp somewhere? I did not hear them. Where were they? Yet, I have asked the members to research the revenues that were available to the government in 1975-76 as compared to what this government has to deal with in 1990 and 1991. The report I tabled yesterday shows that the increase in revenue last year was between 1 percent and 2 percent. This year, it is under 1 percent before the drawing from the Stabilization Fund. That is reality.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition, as I have listened to them, have no solutions. The only solutions I have heard over the last number of days are to spend, spend and spend some more. Spend your way out of the recession. We have laid out our finances openly. For the first time in the history of this province, we have laid out the finances—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the honourable Minister of Finance, especially when he is in full flight, but I am having great difficulty in hearing the remarks of the honourable minister. I am sure you want to give the honourable minister the same courtesy that we grant one another.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I do not think my throat will carry it much longer than about two minutes anyway.

We lay out the finances of this province openly. It has never been done this way before, and it has not been done this way in Canada that I am aware of in any fashion. We have tried to be consistent from Day One since we have taken over majority government, and in the minds of most Manitobans we have been, in spite of what the members are trying to orchestrate on a daily basis.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is what Manitobans want: They want fairness; they want all Manitobans to share; they want their politicians to take the lead; they want this government to make responsible decisions. That is what, however, troubles the opposition, because they have not been able to attack the legislative package of this government to date. They can attack it, but they do not have the people behind them because the people are behind this government.

* (2220)

That is what I say to you, Mr. Speaker, in closing, is what troubles the opposition, because Bill 70 was a bill built on fairness. It was a bill built on sharing, and that is what Manitobans are calling for at this point in time, a government that will give them that type of leadership. Bill 70 encompasses that type of leadership, and I commend it to the members of the House. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is third reading of Bill 70, The Public Sector Compensation Management Act; Loi sur la gestion des salaires du secteur public. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: The question therefore before the House is third reading of Bill 70, The Public Sector Compensation Management Act; Loi sur la gestion des salaires du secteur public. All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

The question before the House is third reading of Bill 70, The Public Sector Compensation Management Act; Loi sur la gestion des salaires du secteur public. All those in favour of the motion will please rise.

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

Yeas

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

Nays

Ashton, Barrett, Carr, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Interlake), Evans (Brandon East), Friesen, Gaudry, Harper, Hickes, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylycia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 29, Nays 26.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* (2230)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

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

SUPPLY—CAPITAL SUPPLY

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that the Committee of Supply concur in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991, which have been adopted at this session by the two sections of the Committee of Supply, sitting separately, and by the full committee.

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), seconded by the honourable Minister of Justice, that the Committee of Supply concur in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991, which have been adopted for this session by the two sections of the Committee of Supply, sitting separately, and by the full committee.

Agreed? All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Yes, I request a recorded vote.

Madam Deputy Speaker: A recorded vote has been requested. Call in the members.

A COUNTED VOTE was taken, the results being as follows:

Yeas 28, Nays 26.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered and adopted the concurrence motion relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991, which have been adopted at this session.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay), seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye, that the report of the committee be received. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question before the House is: It has been moved by the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay), seconded

by the honourable member for La Verendrye, that the report of the committee be received. All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On division, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: On division. The record shall show, on division.

* * *

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings), that this House concur and the report of the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence and all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), seconded by the honourable Minister of the Environment, that this House concur in the report to the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence and all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question before the House: That this House concur in the report of the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence and all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991. All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

* (2240)

Mr. Ashton: Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

The question before the House is that this House concur in the report to the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence in all Supply resolutions

relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1991.

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

Yeas

Connery, Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gillehammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, Manness, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Neufeld, Orchard, Penner, Praznik, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey.

Nays

Ashton, Barrett, Carr, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Interlake), Evans (Brandon East), Friesen, Gaudry, Harper, Hicke, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylycia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 29, Nays 26.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Point of Order

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would like to have you look at those motions and ascertain the date on the motions, and, indeed, if it says 1991 and does not indicate April—pardon me, March 31, 1992, I would submit the motions are in error, and they should therefore be redrawn and we will vote again.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, indeed, I believe the motion that was read was for last year's Estimates. It was read four times. I remember members on that side talking about governments not knowing how to run a peanut stand. This government is just passing the last year. I suggest that we have the votes on the proper Estimates, or else the whole government will not be funded for the upcoming year.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised, there was an error in the printing. The Clerk's Office, indeed, did write "March 31, 1991." I will therefore -(interjection)- exactly, their typo—declare the votes null and void. I am going to ask the honourable government House leader to resubmit the same motion with a printed—I am going to correct the date, and I will ask the honourable government House leader to redo said motion with correction.

The honourable government House leader will have to redo two motions, one being the concurrence motion that was adopted in Committee of Supply. The typo was identical to the one, "that the House do now concur." I have made the corrections.

Mr. Speaker: Return them to the honourable government House leader.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that the Committee of Supply concur on all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of expenditure of the fiscal year ending March 31—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable government House leader will have to get us back into Supply in order to do said motion.

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

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

* (2250)

SUPPLY—CAPITAL SUPPLY COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Madam Chair, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Mr. McCrae), that the Committee of Supply concur in all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1992, which have been adopted at this session by the two sections of the Committee of Supply sitting separately and by the full committee.

Motion presented.

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Chairman: All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairman: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairman: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Recorded vote, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairman: A recorded vote has been requested. Call in the members.

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

Yeas 28, Nays 26.

Madam Chairman: I declare the motion carried. Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee Of Supply has considered and adopted the concurrence motion relating to the Estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1992, which have been adopted at this session.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay), seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. The question before the House, on the motion of the honourable member for Seine River, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye, that the report of the committee be received. All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Yeas and Nays. Call in the members.

The question before the House, shall the report of the committee be received.

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

Yeas

Connery, Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gillshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, Manness, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Neufeld, Orchard, Penner, Praznik, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey.

Nays

Ashton, Barrett, Carr, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Interlake), Evans (Brandon East), Friesen, Gaudry, Harper, Hickes, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylycia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 29, Nays 26.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

* * *

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that this House concur in the report of the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence and all Supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1992.

Motion presented.

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is that this House concur in the report of the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence and all supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1992.

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

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

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

Mr. Ashton: Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

The question before the House is that this House concur in the report of the Committee of Supply respecting concurrence and all supply resolutions relating to the Estimates of expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1992. All those in favour of the motion will please rise.

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

Yeas

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

Nays

Ashton, Barrett, Carr, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Interlake), Evans (Brandon East), Friesen, Gaudry, Harper, Hikes, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylycia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 29, Nays 26.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried. I thank all honourable members for their indulgence.

* (2300)

* * *

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

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

SUPPLY—CAPITAL SUPPLY

COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of Ways and Means please come to order. We have before us for our consideration resolutions respecting the main

Supply Bill. I would remind all honourable members that as the 240 hours allowed for consideration of Supply and Ways and Means resolutions has expired, pursuant to Rule 64.1(1), these resolutions are not debatable.

RESOLVED that towards making good certain sums of money granted to Her Majesty for the public service of the Province of Manitoba for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992, the sum of \$4,802,132,800 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Chairman: All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairman: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairman: In my opinion, the Yeas have it. The resolution is accordingly passed. On division.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Ways and Means has adopted a certain resolution, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

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

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question before the House is shall the report of the committee be received. All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

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

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it. Motion carried on division.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 76—The Appropriation Act, 1991

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that leave be given to introduce a Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits), and that the same be now received, read a first time and be ordered for second reading immediately.

I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that leave be given to introduce a Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1992 (Loi de 1992 portant affectation de crédits), and that the same be now received, read a first time and be ordered for second reading immediately.

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable government House leader (Mr. Manness), seconded by the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that leave be given to introduce a Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1992; Loi de 1992 portant affectation de crédits, and that the same be now received, read a first time and be ordered for second reading immediately.

The original motion as moved by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), seconded by the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that leave be given to introduce a Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991; Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits, and that the same be now received, read a first time and be ordered for second reading immediately.

Point of Order

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, are we dealing with a 1991 bill or a 1992 bill, just for some clarity?

Mr. Speaker: For some clarity, on the point of order raised, the bill which is going to be distributed is Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991.

On the point of order that was raised, all honourable members understand it is Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991; Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits.

* * *

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

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 76—The Appropriation Act, 1991

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) that Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits), be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme) that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair for the House to go into Committee of the Whole to consider and report of the Main Supply Bill, Bill 76, for third reading.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report of the Main Supply Bill, Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991; Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits, for third reading with the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair.

* (2310)

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill 76—The Appropriation Act, 1991

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of the Whole please come to order to consider Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits).

Does the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) have an opening statement?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): No, I do not.

Madam Chairman: We shall proceed to consider Bill 76 clause by clause. Is it the will of the House that the clauses be blocked?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Chairman: Agreed. Clauses 1 through 14 inclusive, page 5—pass; Schedule A—pass; Preamble—pass; Title—pass. Bill be reported.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Report

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits), and has directed me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), that Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits), as reported from the Committee of the Whole, be concurred in, by leave.

Motion agreed to.

House Business

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, before I move to third reading, I am wondering whether or not there is a will to extend the sitting beyond 12 a.m. if necessary.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to sit beyond the hour of midnight? No? Is there leave to sit past the hour of midnight?

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I do not believe it will be necessary in terms of this in the House, but if it is for the purpose of Royal Assent, I do not think there will be difficulty. Perhaps if we can assess it again at midnight.

Mr. Speaker: Leave is denied at this time.

THIRD READINGS

Bill 76—The Appropriation Act, 1991

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, with the leave of the House, I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), that you now call for third reading of Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991 (Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits).

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable minister have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: It is agreed.

Motion presented.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments at this time on third reading of Bill 76 before the Chamber. I will keep my comments short, because I know at this point the House has given leave to sit past six to midnight. I think given the fact that we have been debating bills for the last eight or nine weeks and debating Estimates for the last five months perhaps a few minutes can surmise the points that we want to raise.

First of all, this is traditionally a time to raise a number of issues at the end of the session. On behalf of our caucus and the New Democratic Party, Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to you, Sir, in the job that you have been assigned and elected to perform on behalf of all members of this Chamber. This can be a pretty feisty place from time to time, and as I have said in past sessions, we have always found you, Sir, to be very fair, very reasonable, to have a sense of humour when necessary and to have a sense of firmness when also necessary. Both qualities, I think, are essential in the role of the Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, also I want to pay tribute to the staff of the Legislative Assembly, all the staff, the staff who are present in the Assembly this evening, the staff who work in the Clerk's Office on a continuous basis. We have relied on them heavily. They have had to sit to four or five o'clock in the morning with the rest of us. They cannot debate like the rest of us can. It must be a very frustrating job from time to time to have to listen to us. I want to pay tribute on behalf of our caucus to all members of the Legislative Assembly staff. We really appreciate all of your work on our behalf.

Mr. Speaker, while the members of the Fifth Estate are here, of course, and I would like to say I would like to thank you for all the nice things you have written about the New Democratic Party. I would like to criticize you for all the things that we did not agree with. All in all, we have a competitive and fair media in the Assembly. I think Manitobans are well served. We would like to thank you for reporting the stories with accuracy, integrity and decency. There is a kind of a symbiotic relationship from time to time between the media and members of the Legislature. We disagree and we agree from time to time, but I think Manitobans are on the whole very well served by the members of the media in this Chamber. It is tempting to go further, but I will not on that point.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to pay tribute to the legislative counsel. We, as private members, from time to time have bills drafted on our behalf, and we have often proposed numerous amendments throughout the night. The staff have always performed very well on our behalf. We would like to thank them again for that.

* (2320)

I would also like to pay personal best wishes to all members of the Chamber, all 57 members of the Chamber, on behalf of our caucus and our party. We wish you all the best on a personal basis. We do not always wish you the best on a political basis, as you can well understand. I want to say to each and every one of you and your families, we wish you a safe period of time before the session is called back again. We wish you—

An Honourable Member: Merry Christmas.

Mr. Doer: Well, Merry Christmas. I guess the government is scared to come back in this Chamber at an early point. I am not surprised, Mr. Speaker, after this last session.

I guess there are two options when a session wraps up for closing comments. The first option is to provide a self-serving speech about how great your own caucus is and how terrible the other people are and have a little revisionist history throughout the session. I guess we have all been part of those debates that have gone on for hours in the past. Or we could talk a little bit about the issues that are facing our province and our people in the future and talk a little bit about how we would best like those issues to be dealt with.

We, in this caucus, after the long hard debate we have had over the last number of months and over the last year from the last time we had an election, would like to just put a few comments on the record of the issues that we will collectively have to deal with in the future.

There can be no more important issue than this Chamber is dealing with right now as the Constitutional Task Force that is still wrestling with its business and its report arising from—and I would emphasize this point—the committee hearings that took place, the public hearings that took place in the province of Manitoba in the early part of the 1991 year.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge all members of this Chamber to remember very well and very carefully what the public of Manitoba said. I would also urge all people in this Chamber to remember that the priorities that were stated by the public should indeed be reflected in the Constitutional Task Force that is eventually presented to the government and should form the basis of the constitutional position that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the government and this Legislature takes to First Ministers' tables or Premiers' tables in the months ahead.

We should not inject our own words and our own feelings into the constitutional debate. We should remember that Manitobans had two very strong priorities throughout the public hearings. They wanted fair and reasonable constitutional reform for our aboriginal people, for Canada's first peoples. We want to see that reflected in the report, because that was the first and foremost priority of the people of the province of Manitoba. We would like to see that reflected in this report.

As Manitobans have done in the past in the Meech Lake report and as they did in previous discussions from years gone by, Manitobans again spoke out of a strong central government in a strong and united Canada. They spoke passionately about the need and the vision for strong central institutions from sea to sea to sea. We urge that this Legislature, in every dealings it has across all party lines, remember that Manitobans want first and foremost a strong national Canadian government with strong national powers to maintain strong national programs across this country.

Mr. Speaker, one can go on about the values that were expressed in Manitoba, the values that were expressed in Canada in the Spicer commission

report. I would urge all members of this Chamber to read page 117 of the Spicer report, when there were recommendations in the Spicer report to have a sense of vision of our country, that talked about a role of government in our economy, a role of our federal government in our social services, especially medicare and a role for our Canadian government in the walks of life of Canadians, something that Canadians have felt and Manitobans have felt that has been eroded over the last number of years. It is very important that those values and those ideals that Canadians hold so dearly and Manitobans hold so dearly as Canadians, it is very important that we reflect that in the work that we have ahead of us. We would urge that on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the process of constitutional debate, and nowhere was that process more in fine display and more in evidence in the country than in the Manitoba Legislature in the Meech Lake debate. The process of a public debate, a public process and public ownership is also a very important issue for this Chamber and for the people of Canada. I would express a personal bias and a bias of our party that we believe the next stage of constitutional building in Canada should be owned by all of the people. That is why we in the New Democratic Party and others were pleased to hear the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has also agreed to have a position where constituent assemblies are utilized to develop the Constitution prior to First Ministers and Assemblies having to deal with it. We must develop ownership for our Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, our economy is in trouble in Canada. We believe that the factors leading to economic decline have been well spelled out by our members in the Legislature over the last nine months. I would urge caution at this point in the provincial government's deliberations in the free trade deal with Mexico.

This is something we raised in the last provincial election. We asked the Premier to oppose the free trade deal with Mexico. We are still urging this government, do not go in there and be a surrogate to Michael Wilson as we did in the last Free Trade Agreement. Let us go in there with a free and sovereign Canada, and let us not give our sovereignty away with a North American continental agreement. We have not recovered from the Free Trade Agreement with the United States.

Mr. Speaker, our economy is blessed with many strengths, the most important of which is our people. We are also blessed with many resources. We continue to have the offer to this provincial government that in dealing in tough economic times, recession and the tough economic situations that we have today, we are urging the government, as the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) did previously, to look at the idea of an all-party task force dealing with the economy.

We think Manitobans have lots of good ideas dealing with our economic challenges and that is why we in the New Democratic Party have suggested an all-party task force dealing with our economy. If the Constitution is important enough to have town hall meetings and it is, surely the economy of our province, the jobs, the livelihoods, the incomes of our families and the quality of life of our families is worthy of deliberations by all members. Maybe we can agree on a few things that we can do collectively to reduce the unemployment rates, to reduce the poverty rates in our province and give greater opportunity to working people and their families in the 1991-92 year in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, over the next few months we are going to have the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report, a committee that we established a couple of years ago that will finally report this year. We have a great deal of confidence in the chairs of those committees, Justice Sinclair and Justice Hamilton, and again we would urge the government of the day and all the people of Manitoba to work to implement the various recommendations that come down in the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry.

We cannot deny the fact that our justice system for aboriginal people does not work. It does not just need incremental change. We need radical change to return the justice system and the traditional values of the justice system back to aboriginal people. We have failed in our justice system and we must change that, Mr. Speaker.

We would urge the government not to just have those recommendations buried in the bureaucracy, but let us open up the windows once the report is done. Let us not just have one press conference and one set of reactions. Let us make sure that the report and the recommendations get implemented in this province.

We would also urge the government to heed the Hughes Inquiry. We applauded the government when they finally established it, and we promise to work with the government on the recommendations. Restoring integrity in the criminal justice is a paramount concern for all members of this Legislature, because it is a paramount concern for all our citizens.

* (2330)

Mr. Speaker, in the education area, the government will be going out on a number of consultative bodies in the education system. We would just ask this government to note that whether it is post-secondary education or the public education system, there is a considerable degree of concern about the erosion of the public school system in the province of Manitoba. I would urge the government, when they sit before their briefing books and their Treasury books over the early fall period of time, to remember the fact that the public school system is bleeding and it cannot take any more body blows from government. We must restore the confidence in the public school system, and no more cutbacks in public education.

Mr. Speaker, the social services area is an area that we have identified across the session. This government has chosen to unilaterally implement a super agency. I just want to say to you that even though we disagree with what you are doing and how you are doing it and we will disagree with you from the bottom of our hearts, we will also work with the people of Manitoba to ensure that the best services are available to our children and to our families in our community. Our disagreement with the government does not mean that we will not work with children and families in crisis. That we want to pledge to the members opposite and to all people in Manitoba, in the Chamber here again today.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is a province of consensus, of fairness, of decency and integrity. It is a province with great hope, and it is a province where people reject the politics of despair. In terms of our brief closing statements today, Manitobans want to work in a co-operative way, in a consensus way together. They do not want a society where there are major winners and major losers. They want to work arm in arm together with all members of our society.

I would just like to say, Mr. Speaker, that our party, the New Democratic Party, rejects the politics of

despair. We reject the politics that are negative with people. I want to pledge to the people of Manitoba and to the members of this Chamber again tonight, that we want to provide an opposition of hope, because we believe Manitoba is a province of hope and a province of opportunity. We believe that very strongly. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Liberal Party, I, too, would like to open my remarks by giving some heartfelt thank you's to a number of people who have worked very hard. First of all, to you, Mr. Speaker, who has not had an easy session in terms of some of the decorum of the Legislature, but I think we can all count on you for your fairness as well as your even temper.

I would like to give thanks also to all of the Assembly staff, many of whom are here and some of whom are not here, because many of the pages are not on duty tonight. I thank them for all of their duties. I am sure that the number of kilometres many of them have walked between this Chamber, committee rooms and caucus rooms would end up putting them in rather good shape if they counted those kilometres. I would also like to thank my own personal and caucus staff, some of whom are gathered in the gallery tonight because they have served me, not only well, but with great affection and loyalty.

I was very touched some weeks ago when the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) stood in this House and talked about the fact that that weekend he would be celebrating his 40th wedding anniversary. He spoke about his wife and he spoke about his daughters. As I mentioned at that time, I also have an important anniversary on the 6th of August. John and I will be celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary and, like the Minister of Energy and Mines, I may get a little emotional at this point, because I would like to talk about the individual in my life who has been there and supported me for over half of my life at this point.

When I married John, I was 24 and I am now 49. The moment that I met him—and if my daughters, I must say, ever came home and told me they were going to marry a young man whom they had only known for six weeks, I would be horrified, but that is indeed what I did to my parents. I had my first date on the 17th of March. I agreed to marry him on the 30th of April. I was married to him on the 6th of

August, and I have never regretted a single second of that.

Perhaps that was because the first night of our relationship, the very first night, Mr. Speaker, we spoke—nobody will believe us, but I swear it is true—we debated politics until four in the morning. We discovered that we were both Liberals.

An Honourable Member: You are making this up.

Mrs. Carstairs: No, I am not making this up. He announced to a friend of his apparently several days later that he had met the first woman that he could talk politics nonstop to for eight hours and that it had to be a made-in-heaven relationship. I have to tell you that Cathi was conceived in the 1968 election campaign and Jennie was conceived in the 1972 election campaign, and there are not many events in our married life that we cannot attach to a political event at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, I think that I have been very blessed. I have been very blessed because I am married to who I believe is the most special human being who occupies the surface of the earth. He is a self-made man in terms of his economic well-being, struggling to put himself through high school and university because he came from a family that had no money, but he has never lost his sense of warmth and generosity to those who particularly are more vulnerable. Most particularly, he is a genuine believer in equality of the sexes.

I became the Leader of the Liberal Party in Manitoba in 1984 because he encouraged me to become the Leader of the Liberal Party, and he has always been, as everyone in my party knows, my strongest supporter. He is, above all else, my very close friend, and I am only half a person without John Esdale Carstairs, and so when I reflect on my marriage, I also reflect on my family and the two daughters which we have and of whom, like the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), we are incredibly proud. They bear their kindness, their gentleness and their spirit of generosity from their father.

It is when I think of my own family and how truly blessed we have been that I reflect on the dynamic in Manitoba as well, because we have never had a serious illness and so we have not had to deal with the pressures faced by families who do suffer a serious illness. We have not had a child who was in any way born disabled and, therefore, we have been lucky, very lucky.

Some of the things which this government has done in this past session causes me great concern. It causes me concern because I know that when Jennie would have an asthma attack, it would not matter to me whether it would have cost me \$50, \$100 or \$200 for me to take her to see a doctor. I would have done it because I had the \$50, or the \$100 or the \$200, and when she was six years old, that sometimes meant three and four visits a week.

* (2340)

I worry about people who live in communities who are remote from medical services, and I worry if there is going to be a parent who says, well, maybe this is not an acute attack, so maybe I do not have to get this child to a doctor, because they do not have the \$50. If they make that decision and something happens to that child, then I think all of us will feel that this was a tragedy that should have been averted.

When I look at what the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) says is the cosmetic removal of a wart or a mole, I think of a conversation I had a couple of weeks ago with someone who told me she had had a mole removed because she thought it was unattractive, but it was cancerous.

I do not want a young girl who has perhaps overexposed herself to sun, who says, well, I do not like the looks of that, but if I have to pay for it, I guess I can live with it. It is not something she should have lived with. She should have had that mole removed.

It is not a simple matter of saying it is cosmetic, because what you are asking people to do is diagnose for themselves. I am not qualified to diagnose if my daughter's wart or mole is benign. I do not have that quality. I can tell you that I would take them to a doctor and I would have it removed. I would not worry about the cost, but I am among the fortunate who does not have to worry about the cost. I worry about those who do have to worry about the cost.

I am concerned about the parent who has a child with multiple handicaps who watches their programs within their school setting being eroded because of the cutbacks to special needs funding. I worry about the young adult who wants to get off the welfare cycle and knows the only way they can get off the welfare cycle is to go back to school and complete their education. Now they have been told, no, you will have more money if you stay home and you do not try to go to school because your bursary

has been cut, your allowance has been cut, so according to this government, it would appear, it is better to stay home. I do not think it is better to stay home. I think it is better for that young person to learn to stand on their own two feet.

When I look at what we have done with such things as our community colleges, I hope the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) is right. I really do hope that, but I am very afraid that he is wrong, and the monies that he is diverting into new governance models could have been used to educate more young people. There was a choice involved there. The choice was to set up new bureaucracies instead of new educational programs for young people.

I worry about the senior citizen who will buy one less quart of milk, one less loaf of bread, one less can of perhaps a meat product because they are not getting the 55-Plus benefit.

Mr. Speaker, I will close tonight by saying that I consider myself a very blessed Manitoban. I am blessed with the love, warmth and support of a family. I am blessed with more than most have in terms of economic well being. I have been blessed with a wonderful education, but I will always remember, and I challenge all of us to remember, there are many in our province who are not so well blessed.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, firstly, I am delighted to be able to add some closing comments to the session. I would ask leave to be able to conclude my remarks by 12:15. I have not spoken in the last three days on any of the bills. I have some concluding comments I would like to make.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable First Minister have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, tonight we come to the conclusion of a very tumultuous and difficult session, perhaps the most tumultuous one we have experienced since 1988.

Mr. Speaker, in case I am distracted from my intentions to stay on the high road this evening, I want to certainly add to the comments that have been made by both opposition Leaders in terms of my appreciation for your fine work in this Chamber under difficult circumstances; also, as well, for the

very hard work, long hours, that have been put in by the table officers and the staff of the Chamber, those who are not here, including the Legislative Counsel and many others who have contributed to an enormous volume of work that has been done in a relatively short period of time. I certainly appreciate all of their work, and that of the pages who have been here for many, many long hours in recent weeks and really served us very well.

I want to extend my congratulations to the Leader of the Liberal Party and John on the impending celebration of the 25th wedding anniversary. It is indeed a milestone and I think it is an even greater milestone for those who have to endure the pressures of public office. It does take its toll on families, on relationships, on marriages, and as someone who has already passed that milestone, I say welcome to the club. I know that you and John will enjoy very much the opportunity to celebrate with some leisure and relaxing time over the next month. I might say that I have written a personal note, but I did not want you to know that because my secretary will be delivering it tomorrow, after we are gone. I do not want to get emotional here.

I also want to wish all of the members of the Chamber and indeed, the media, yes, -(interjection)- Well, like Santa Claus, I have my lists, and I will check them twice. I do want to wish all of them the opportunity for a little rest and relaxation. I was recounting with some of the media recently about the long and arduous time that we have had in the last while. Those of us who have been here since '88, it seems as though we have either been fighting elections or been in session or been at constitutional conferences or involved in preparation of Estimates or whatever. It has been a long haul. I would hope that we have a little bit of time off this fall to be rightfully spent in recharging our batteries and finding opportunities to spend with family and friends.

In two weeks, it will be a full year since the call of the last election. All of us who have participated in the session in the House since then have gone through essentially two full sessions, two throne speeches, two budgets, and a fairly extensive agenda of public policy.

For members of the Treasury Board and members of the all-party constitutional committee, there really was not even a break between sessions because the work went on. There were some long hours, seven days a week in some cases for most.

I know that members are tired. Comments have been biting. I do not know if they have bitten the others as much as they have bitten me, but like the mosquitoes, Mr. Speaker, it has been a bit of a challenge keeping one's perspective over the last few weeks.

* (2350)

At this stage of the session, I think it is easy to see what divides us. Perhaps, it is a little bit more difficult to attempt to recall what unites us. First of all, I think we should recall that all of us share the responsibility of serving as elected representatives of the people. Unfortunately, it is a calling that has fallen somewhat into disrepute, not just in this province, perhaps more particularly right across the country. I, for one, believe that it does not have to be that way.

I have come to learn that most members of this House are very deeply committed to serving the public, whatever their political affiliation. I might say that in some of the speeches that I have listened to very closely, and even when I have not been in body in the Chamber I have had the monitor on in my office, and listened to some very sincere and well-intentioned speeches being made by members on both sides of the House over the last few days.

Certainly, I believe that all members in this House regardless of their political stripe are committed very deeply to serving the public. I think that it is unfortunate that from time to time we get distracted from that honourable intention. We sometimes feel the need to score political points against one another, but I think the arguments that have been made in this Chamber over the last few days have been valid about the positions that we take, about the differences of views that we hold, but above all—for instance in the debate and discussion about the point of order last week—about the way in which we treat each other and ourselves as members of this Legislature.

This is not Ottawa. I hope it never gets to be, in some respects, like Ottawa. I know that the Leaders opposite shared my revulsion at the tactics and perhaps the morals that we experienced in the Meech Lake process. In the words, I might share with you, of former Auditor General Ken Dye, there is a certain deviousness to Ottawa, he once said. I think that may have been understating it given some of the experience that we had. We have not slipped to that level and I hope that we do not. As members

of this Chamber, I hope that we all use the time off to perhaps evaluate some of the things and some of the antics that we have gone through in recent weeks.

As I said in my reply to the throne speech, I know that all of us in this Chamber share the goal of building a stronger Manitoba. We all want to leave this province a better place than when we found it. We all want to work to ensure that our children have a better life than ourselves. I said that then and I believe it even more strongly today. Our goals are really not so different regardless of our party. Perhaps we, most importantly though, we see a different way of achieving those goals. We all want a thriving economy that creates jobs and opportunities so that our children can stay here to achieve their goals, their ambitions, their desires for the future. We all want to protect and improve the quality of our air, our water and our environment. All of us want to be sure that our health care system is there for our families when they need it, not only for our families but for families of all the people we represent.

I take very sincerely the comments of the Leader of the Liberal Party earlier. I think the only difference among us is how we see, as I said earlier, achieving those goals, the path to that end. None of us can escape the fiscal reality that is rather brutally facing us in the immediate future, the present circumstances that we are in. For too long our province very simply has been spending much more money than it has, than it takes in. We simply are paying the price for that today.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) said not too long ago in this House, and I will quote him: Governments over the years whether they are Conservative or New Democrat or under the former federal Liberal government have been forced to deal with the situation that has developed in the '70s and '80s of diminishing revenues in a relative sense and very, very hard challenges. The days of just being able to spend your way out of problems had to change over the '80s. Ministers of Finance and, indeed, governments of all political stripes had to begin to manage their way out of those problems, often with some very unpopular decisions, whether they be taxation or cuts or a combination of both, but often Ministers of Finance have been faced with very, very tough times in terms of the decisions that they have to make and present to this Legislature and to Legislatures across the country.

I certainly agree with the Leader of the Opposition's comments. I thought that they were certainly very rational, very clear and certainly very honest comments about the difficult situations that face governments today. I will repeat what I have said on a number of occasions over the past six months. These are the most difficult fiscal times that we have faced in the 12 years that I have been in this Legislature. I do not think that anybody should expect that they could be faced by just following old procedures, old policies and old ways of doing things, old thinking. They have to be faced with new challenges, perhaps different approaches, to get us out of a rut that inexorably was drawing us down into far more difficult circumstances in future if we did not come to grips with them now.

There is no question that we have reached the limit of the taxpayers' endurance. We have all the government we can afford, as our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said in his budget speech earlier this year. It is time we lived within our means.

That is what we have been hearing, despite all of the rhetoric that has gone on in this House during this session, despite the rallies that have been staged on the steps of the Legislature and various committee hearings and so on, when we go out into what I call the real world, listening to people, talking with them face to face, whether it be at coffee and conversation town hall meetings that we have had throughout May and June, whether it be at the summer fairs and exhibitions or in the local coffee shops that members go home to each weekend, whether it be door knocking, and we have done a fair bit of that in many of your constituencies I might say. We have been hearing face to face a message. That message is, I think, the same message that has been given to you. I do not think there is any question about that. You must be receiving the same messages we are.

I know the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) has been receiving that message, because he conducted a survey last fall where that message came through loud and clear. I have a copy of the results. Although I did not receive the fridge magnet that he promised me in his letter, I did get the results.

The member for Inkster asked his constituents, quote: If government had to choose between doing one of the following three things, which would you prefer? Nineteen said, increase taxes; 20 said, increase the debt; 829 said, cut government

expenditures. That is what the constituents in Inkster urged their member to do in this House.

The member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) has also been conducting similar surveys of the fiscal challenge facing us with his constituents. In a recent letter, which incidentally came to some of my constituents from the member for Osborne—he is recruiting in my constituency, I might say. In that letter he said—

An Honourable Member: He is going to run against you.

Mr. Filmon: No, he is running federally. He told me. It is okay.

In that letter to my constituents, the member for Osborne indicated that, when asked to choose between government economic stimulation, in other words make-work jobs, and deficit reduction, the results were—in that member's own words—overwhelming. He said, fully 87 percent of those who responded wanted the government to reduce the deficit—the member for Osborne.

The member for Osborne also asked people to indicate, department by department, whether they would like the budget reduced, frozen, increased to meet inflation or expanded. Only six departments received more than 50 percent support for growth: Seniors, Health, Education, Family Services, Environment and Agriculture.

* (0000)

An Honourable Member: That is two-thirds of the budget.

Mr. Filmon: Okay, I understand. We are dealing with the numbers so we know them.

Those six departments that they asked for increased expenditures, I believe, all got increased expenditures in our budget. Again quoting the member for Osborne: In the remainder, people are willing to accept reductions in the level of service in all the other departments.

Mr. Speaker that virtually mirrors the priorities that we selected when we developed our budget for this year. I might say, in tribute to the member for Osborne, I think he let out his personal feelings when he was on Peter Warren's show just the day before the budget was issued, and he said that he agreed with the direction that had been laid out by the Minister of Finance and that he felt that he had chosen the right priorities and he had selected the

right way to deal and come to grips with the serious challenges that faced us.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I think that he got caught in the politics of his own party, and they convinced him, unfortunately, that he ought to vote against what he really believed in principle what was the right thing to do. If we listened to the people, then we would have cut most of the government departments in spending, and that means, when you make reductions in those departments, the most direct impact is on the salaries of the people who are there, so you either have to remove people from the budget or reduce their salaries or in some way impact the salary package that is there. There is no other way around it, because the salaries are the large component of every single one of those departments.

So we did just that. We reduced 958 positions within the public service, and I might say that despite the fact that many members opposite said the sky was falling and that we had done it in a terrible way, the latest numbers are that fewer than 200 people will ultimately be laid off permanently or for a period of time by this government because with the use of the vacancies in government that had been developed, with the incentives for early retirement and for a separation package, we are left with fewer than 200 people who really have to be separated from work in government, because it was planned in as thoughtful and caring a way as we possibly could.

Mr. Speaker, members opposite may not agree with that, but that is the fact. We then had to have a balancing act ultimately. We had to also have the second component because we could not get all of the savings from reducing positions, so some of it had to come from either a voluntary wage freeze or, regrettably in the final analysis, an imposed wage freeze. This is not easy to do, but when faced with the alternative of raising taxes or the deficit, and that is just deferred taxes—deficits have to be paid and paid with interest—we chose the difficult course because we know that in the long run, Manitoba will be stronger as a result of it. Our economic development prospects, our attractiveness to investment, everything else.

We are seeing the fruits of that in today's paper with the announcement that the direct impact on public utilities is that the Telephone System increase will only be one and a half percent this year. The same impact will take place on Manitoba Hydro.

Their rate increase will be lower, substantially lower, as a result of that.

Mr. Speaker, that keeps down the cost of living, that makes it possible for people to make their way through the difficult economic times in a national recession. It is the only thing to do because people understand that we have lived beyond our means for too long. They are telling their elected representatives to do the right thing in the long term: stop mortgaging the future; stop trying to be all things to all people; and start trying to be straight with the people of this province. That is what we have done in this session.

We have held the increase in government spending to just around 3 percent. We have kept our promise to freeze personal taxes. We have showed leadership at the top by extending a ministerial salary freeze that has been in place now for a decade, and also having that freeze imposed on all of us as MLAs—so that we did not take any increases—and by cutting our expenditures as MLAs. And we did it while keeping our priorities straight, as I said earlier, the same priorities that we are being told—to the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), and I am sure are being told to everyone else.

We said health care was our No. 1 priority. We increased its budget by \$90 million, despite a \$32 million cutback in federal EPF transfers. We spent \$37 million more on Family Services. We spent \$23 million more on Education. The program that we brought forward in this session mirrors the message that voters across this province are telling each and every one of their elected representatives. Is it any wonder that throughout much of this session opposition members have avoided debating the substance of our agenda, and instead have gone off onto other issues, Mr. Speaker?

I know that we will be criticized in the after-session comments by opposition members for not doing enough. That is what opposition members do, but I have been greatly disappointed—(interjection)—Well, there is the member opposite continuing with the kind of remarks, personally based, innuendo and all of those things. You know, we have had members of the New Democratic Party, including one who ran for office, who was the campaign manager for the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), who was charged and went to jail. Mr. Speaker, —(interjection)— Well, this is the kind of thing that we are doing, and we get into this kind of remark. This

is the substance of the New Democratic Party in this session. I will tell you, there is no consistency and there is not a great deal of integrity in the kind of criticism through innuendo that we have been receiving.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say, this is not Ontario. No minister here has been forced to resign as has happened in the New Democratic government in Ontario. No one has given any cause in this government.

I heard the comments of the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) while debate was taking place tonight, mentioning personal names of individuals who have been reviewed by not only the court, not only by a judge, but by the Auditor—and the Auditor's comment that there was no indication whatsoever of evidence of interference, political or otherwise in the decision—and he still repeats the allegation, unsubstantiated.

Mr. Speaker, do they ever pause to think of what they are doing to the families of the people who are involved? Do they ever pause to think of what it means to the children of these individuals to be slandered on the front page with no substance whatsoever, that their only cause for being slandered is that they have contributed money to this party or have been a supporter of the party in government? Guilt by association, they are slandered because of that.

* (0010)

The member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis), they know full well about public appointments, about appointments to the public service without competition. They have been through it, Mr. Speaker. These are all things that were done under the Schreyer government in spades, that were done—(interjection)—That is right. How about it? You are naming all the names, and you know the people who were appointed by your government, who were straight out and out political appointments to senior public service positions, listed in all of the contributions to the New Democratic Party.

Did they pay for their jobs? Is that what they were doing? Members opposite know; members opposite have experienced it. We have appointees sitting there who were appointed by Liberals to various boards and commissions. We have people who were doing it under Lloyd Axworthy, all of the army of people he put into the public service.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the thing of which true debate and real substantive concern is made. None of us will win in a mud fight. The people of this province deserve more. They deserve a competition of ideas. They deserve honest acceptance and recognition of the challenges that face us, and they deserve, in my judgment, an honest approach to the solution of those concerns.

You cannot say on Monday that you want us to spend more on this matter; then on Tuesday that you want us to keep taxes down; then on Wednesday that you want us to keep the deficit down; then on Thursday that you want us to spend more money. You cannot keep doing it. You cannot take the position that these difficult times that we are in do not require difficult measures. You cannot say that we can just keep running up the deficit like they did in Ontario.

I just have one final comment to make for the newcomers opposite because I think they come with a great deal of idealism. I heard the comments that were made, for instance, on Bill 38 by the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli). I just invite her to take a look at some of the headlines from Ontario, where the Minister of Environment there approves a massive extension to a landfill site without any environmental assessment and review.

It mirrors exactly what New Democrats did in government in the '80s here: Manfor, one of the greatest pollutions of the environment—tolerated by the New Democrats throughout the years; no environmental assessment or review process on the Limestone project; 10 out of 10 on the environment, and now preaching to us to protect the environment.

I might say the same thing about some of the preaching that we got about openness, about democracy, from the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) and the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen). I say to you, read your speeches and compare them to your actions in government throughout the '80s and throughout the '70s. Please, when we come back next time, let us have debate on substance; let us have debate on reality; and let us not have the kind of freewheeling, easy, rhetorical debate that does not provide any answers to the problems that we face, because we have tough problems that face us and it is going to take several more years. We are going to need, in opposition, an opposition that comes here ready to provide constructive criticism, viable alternatives and not just rhetoric, Mr. Speaker.

Point of Order

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): On a point of order, the honourable First Minister put a false statement in his speech -(interjection)- more than one, but one that offends me very personally. That is, he said that my campaign manager went to jail. The individual he spoke of, we know the gentleman's name. We all know his name. He was not my campaign manager, and he does not live in my riding. I want the First Minister to withdraw that statement.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, he was a federal NDP candidate in Brandon-Souris, and the rest of it I will withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable First Minister.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the honourable government House leader, seconded by the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), that Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991; Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits, be now read a third time and passed. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Debate on Motion

Comprehensive Review Re:

Operation of Freedom of Information Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections be instructed to undertake a comprehensive review of the operation of The Freedom of Information Act by holding such public meetings at such times and places as it may deem advisable to receive briefs and to hear presentations, and that the said committee report back to the Legislative Assembly not later than June 30, 1992, by leave.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Attorney General have leave? Leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Motion agreed to.

Report of Standing Committee on Private Bills

Bills 32 and 66, Refund of Fees Paid

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Mr. McCrae), that the First Report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be concurred in.

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

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave.

Motion agreed to.

* (0020)

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Mr. McCrae), that the fees paid with respect to the following bills be refunded less the cost of printing: Bill 32, The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la "Mount Carmel Clinic"); Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation "The Winnipeg Canoe Club").

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable minister have leave? Leave.

Motion agreed to.

ROYAL ASSENT

Mr. Speaker: I am advised that His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor is about to enter to grant Royal Assent.

All rise.

Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms (Mr. Roy MacGillivray): His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

His Honour George Johnson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House at 12:21 a.m. and being seated on the Throne, Mr. Speaker addressed His Honour in the following words:

Mr. Speaker: May it please Your Honour:

The Legislative Assembly, at its present session, passed bills, which in the name of the Assembly, I present to Your Honour and to which bills I respectfully request Your Honour's Assent:

Bill 2, The Amusements Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les divertissements

Bill 4, The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie

Bill 6, The Mines and Minerals and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les mines et les minéraux et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives

Bill 8, The Vital Statistics Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les statistiques de l'état civil

Bill 12, The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le recouvrement des petites créances à la Cour du Banc de la Reine

Bill 18, The Municipal Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités

Bill 19, The Local Authorities Election Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'élection des autorités locales

Bill 20, The Animal Husbandry Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'élevage

Bill 32, The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la "Mount Carmel Clinic"

Bill 35, The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg

Bill 36, The Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'aide juridique du Manitoba

Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune

Bill 39, The Summary Convictions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les poursuites sommaires

Bill 40, The Education Administration Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'administration scolaire

Bill 41, The Public Schools Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques

Bill 42, The Public Schools Finance Board Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur a Commission des finances des écoles publiques

Bill 45, The Securities Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les valeurs mobilières

Bill 46, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route

Bill 47, The Highway Traffic Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route et d'autres dispositions législatives

Bill 48, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant le Code de la route

Bill 49, The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les collèges et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives

Bill 50, The Liquor Control Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réglementation des alcools

Bill 51, The Pharmaceutical Act; Loi sur les pharmacies

Bill 52, The Family Maintenance Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'obligation alimentaire

Bill 53, The Natural Products Marketing Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la commercialisation des produits naturels

Bill 54, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1991; Loi de 1991 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité

Bill 55, The Employment Standards Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les normes l'emploi

Bill 56, The Payment of Wages Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le paiement des salaires

Bill 57, The Horse Racing Commission Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Commission hippique

Bill 58, The Development Corporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société de développement

Bill 59, The Workers Compensation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail et diverses dispositions législatives

Bill 60, The Law Society Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société du Barreau

Bill 61, The Communities Economic Development Fund Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Fonds de développement économique local

Bill 63, The Northern Affairs Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les Affaires du Nord

Bill 64, The Energy Rate Stabilization Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la stabilisation des emprunts d'Hydro-Manitoba à l'étranger

Bill 65, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1991; Loi de 1991 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives

Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation "The Winnipeg Canoe Club"

Bill 68, The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg

Bill 69, The Manitoba Medical Association Fees Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur les droits de l'Association médicale du Manitoba

Bill 70, The Public Sector Compensation Management Act; Loi sur la gestion des salaires du secteur public

Bill 71, The Mineral Exploration Incentive Program Act; Loi sur le Programme l'encouragement à l'exploration minière

Bill 73, The Rural Development Bonds Act; Loi sur les obligations de développement rural

Bill 75, The Manitoba Employee Ownership Fund Corporation and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi constituant en corporation le Fonds de participation des travailleurs du Manitoba et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): In Her Majesty's name, His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor doth assent to these bills.

Mr. Speaker: May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and faithful subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in session assembled, approach Your Honour with sentiments of unfeigned devotion and loyalty to Her Majesty's person and government, and beg for Your Honour the acceptance of these bills:

Bill 72, The Loan Act, 1991; Loi d'emprunt de 1991 portant affectation de crédits.

Bill 76, The Appropriation Act, 1991; Loi de 1991 portant affectation de crédits

Mr. Clerk: His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor doth thank Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, accepts their benevolence and assents to these bills in Her Majesty's name.

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

(God Save the Queen was sung)

(O Canada was sung)

Mr. Speaker: Please be seated.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Mr. McCrae), that when the House adjourns today, it shall stand adjourned until a time fixed by Mr. Speaker upon the request of the government.

Motion agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, July 25, 1991

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PROCLAMATION

"George Johnson"
Lieutenant Governor

CANADA
PROVINCE OF MANITOBA

ELIZABETH THE SECOND, by the grace of God of The United Kingdom, Canada and Her other Realms and Territories, QUEEN, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.

PROCLAMATION

To our beloved and faithful the Members elected to serve in the Legislative Assembly of our Province of Manitoba, and to each and every of you — GREETING.

WHEREAS the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Manitoba now stands adjourned;

AND WHEREAS it is deemed appropriate to request His Honour the Lieutenant Governor by a Royal Proclamation effective on the fourth day of December, 1991, to prorogue the Second Session of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Province of Manitoba and to summon the said Legislature for the dispatch of business on the fifth day of December, 1991.

NOW KNOW YE THAT, for divers causes and consideration, and taking into consideration the ease and convenience of our loving subjects, we have thought fit, by and with the advice and consent of our Executive Council of our Province of Manitoba, to hereby prorogue the Second Session of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Province of Manitoba effective on Wednesday, the fourth day of December, 1991, and to convene the Third Session of the Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Province of Manitoba on Thursday, the fifth day of December, 1991, at the hour of 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon for the dispatch of business in our Legislative Assembly of our Province of Manitoba, in our City of Winnipeg, there to take into consideration the state and welfare of our said Province of Manitoba and therein to do as may seem necessary.

HEREIN FAIL NOT.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent, and the Great Seal of Our Province of Manitoba to be hereunto affixed;

WITNESS, His Honour George Johnson, Lieutenant Governor of Our said Province of Manitoba;

AT OUR GOVERNMENT HOUSE, at Our City of Winnipeg, in the Province of Manitoba, this twenty-third day of October, in the year of Our Lord one thousand nine hundred and ninety-one, and in the fortieth year of Our Reign.

BY COMMAND,

"J.C. McCRAE",
Minister of Justice and Attorney-General.

"George Johnson"
Lieutenant-gouverneur

CANADA
PROVINCE DU MANITOBA

ELIZABETH II, par la grâce de Dieu, REINE du Royaume-Uni, du Canada et de ses autres royaumes et territoires, Chef du Commonwealth, Défenseur de la Foi.

PROCLAMATION

À nos bien-aimés et fidèles députés élus à l'Assemblée législative de Notre province du Manitoba, et à chacun d'entre vous, SALUT.

ATTENDU QUE l'Assemblée législative de la province du Manitoba est actuellement ajournée;

ET ATTENDU QU'il est jugé opportun de demander à Son Honneur le lieutenant-gouverneur de lancer une proclamation fixant au quatre décembre 1991 la date de clôture de la deuxième session de la trente-cinquième législature de la province du Manitoba et convoquant la Législature pour la reprise des travaux le cinq décembre 1991;

SACHEZ DONC MAINTENANT QUE, pour divers motifs et de l'intérêt de Nos aimés sujets, Nous avons jugé à-propos, sur l'avis et du consentement de Notre Conseil exécutif pour la province du Manitoba, par les présentes de clore la deuxième session de la trente-cinquième législature de la province du Manitoba le mercredi quatre décembre 1991 et de vous convoquer à l'ouverture de la troisième session de la trente-cinquième législature le jeudi cinq décembre 1991, à treize heures trente, en Notre Assemblée législative pour la province du Manitoba, en Notre Ville de Winnipeg, pour la reprise des travaux, ce afin de porter votre attention sur l'état et le bien-être de la province du Manitoba et de poser les actes appropriés.

CE À QUOI VOUS NE DEVEZ FAILLIR.

EN FOI DE QUOI Nous avons fait délivrer les présentes Lettres patentes et à icelles fait apposer le Grand Sceau de Notre province du Manitoba.

TÉMOIN: Son Honneur George Johnson, lieutenant-gouverneur de Notre province du Manitoba.

EN NOTRE PALAIS DU GOUVERNEMENT, en Notre Ville de Winnipeg, dans la province du Manitoba, ce vingt-troisième jour d'octobre de l'an de grâce mil neuf cent quatre-vingt-onze, dans la quarantième année de Notre Règne.

PAR ORDRE.

Le ministre de la Justice et procureur général,
"J.C. McCRAE".