

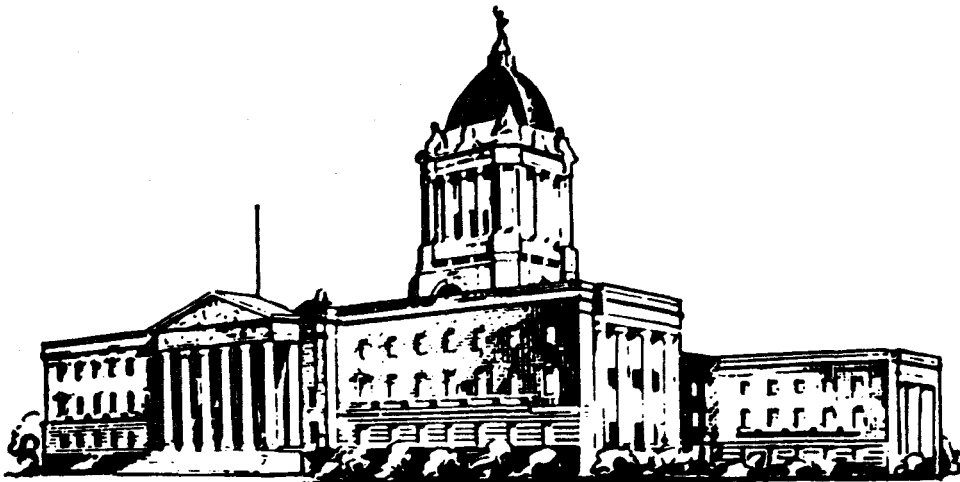


Third Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

39-40 Elizabeth II

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



VOL. XLI No. 25A - 1:30 p.m., MONDAY, MARCH 9, 1992



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, March 9, 1992

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

Commonwealth Day Message

Mr. Speaker: Prior to going into Orders of the Day, I have a message from Her Majesty the Queen, the Head of the Commonwealth.

On this Commonwealth Day, I ask you to remember that we share this world with many other living things. The Earth is a gift to all of us, whoever we are, wherever we live. We have but one planet and all life on it is interdependent.

Our Commonwealth is a partnership of 50 nations, and we are responsible for one-third of this planet. We all share the task of ensuring that our world will remain fit for life and capable of sustaining us and those who will come after us.

For too long, our natural environment has been taken for granted. It is now only too evident that we have to take serious steps to make certain that we cause no further destruction nor permanently degrade the very natural resources on which we depend. For example, unless we take action now to halt the rise in global temperatures, rising sea levels will threaten the very existence of several islands and low-lying Commonwealth countries.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development will be held later this year to draw attention to the many environmental problems that we have either inherited or created for ourselves. At this conference, and in many other ways, Commonwealth countries can make significant contributions. Together we represent a wide variety of climatic landscape and ecological conditions, and we are at all levels of economic and social development. The Commonwealth can truly be described as a cross section of the contemporary world.

Democratic governments reflect the will of their people. In our system, the views of the individual can be translated into government action, so it is possible for everyone to make a contribution, however large or small, to ensure the future health and vitality of the natural world around us. Bringing about the necessary changes will not be easy,

particularly if it involves restraints and sacrifices, but it must be done, and we can all help in one way or another, individually or collectively.

The living world is a God-given heritage, and we have to be more responsible in our stewardship of it. We all need air to breathe, water to drink and food to eat, but we must be careful, not selfish or greedy, about the way we exploit scarce natural resources and about the demands we make on the natural environment. Gradually we are waking up to the challenges, but we especially need the rising generations to help us take the right decisions and actions now.

I ask the young people of the Commonwealth to make themselves aware of the critical problems and issues. There is no time to spare. It is our future that is at stake.

Signed, this 9th day of March, 1992, Her Majesty, the Queen.

* (1335)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member, and it complies 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?

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

THAT child abuse is a crime abhorred by all good citizens of our society, but nonetheless it exists in today's world; and

It is the responsibility of the government to recognize and deal with this most vicious of crimes; and

Programs like the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign raise public awareness and necessary funds to deal with the crime; and

The decision to terminate the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign will hamper the efforts of all good citizens to help abused children.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be

pleased to request that the government of Manitoba show a strong commitment to deal with Child Abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign. (Ms. Barrett)

I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member, and it complies 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?

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

THAT child abuse is a crime abhorred by all good citizens of our society, but nonetheless it exists in today's world; and

It is the responsibility of the government to recognize and deal with this most vicious of crimes; and

Programs like the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign raise public awareness and necessary funds to deal with the crime; and

The decision to terminate the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign will hamper the efforts of all good citizens to help abused children.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba show a strong commitment to deal with Child Abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign. (Mr. Chomiak)

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the First Report of the Committee on Law Amendments.

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

Your committee met on Thursday, March 5, 1992, at 7 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred. At that meeting, your committee elected Mrs. Dacquay as its Chairperson.

Your committee heard representation on Bill 5, The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil consultatif manitobain de la situation de la femme, as follows:

Jean Altemeyer - Choices

Jenny Robinson - Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women

Kathlene Beatson - The Federal P.C. Women's Caucus of Winnipeg and Districts

Margaret Murray - Private Citizen

Brenda Leipsic - Private Citizen

Marilyn Gault - Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Roz Krahn - Private Citizen

Grace Ivey - Private Citizen

Barbara Thompson - Private Citizen

Cathy Doyle - Private Citizen

Monika Feist - The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba

Hilde Schurhoff - Immigrant Women's Association

Written Submissions:

Hazel M. Blennerhasset - Executive Director, Women's Post Treatment Centre Inc.

Gwen Parker - Executive Secretary, Manitoba Women's Institute

Sharon Spinks - Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre

Members of Original Women's Network Inc.

Members of Ikwewak Justice Society

Members of Aboriginal Women's Unity Coalition

Loma Nash - Private Citizen

Darlene Holl - Private Citizen

Shirley Stoodley - Private Citizen

Bernice Friesen - Private Citizen

Yvonne Moar - Private Citizen

Tina Cameron - Private Citizen

Lorraine Taylor - Private Citizen

Donna Marion - Private Citizen

Dr. Jacqueline Stalker - Director, Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women

Issues Committee - Board of North End Women's Centre

Francine Lee-Matthys - Private Citizen

Staff of Women's Employment Counselling Services & Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling Services

Gloria Mathes - Private Citizen

J.A.M. MacKenzie - Private Citizen

Patti Sullivan - Executive Director, Clinic Community Health Centre

Laurie Allen - Private Citizen

Renate Bublick - Private Citizen

Murielle Gagné-Ouellette - Directrice générale Pluri-elles (Manitoba) Inc.

Tracy Fontaine - Private Citizen

Mary Ann Jesmer - Private Citizen

Nellie Kiristias - Private Citizen

Susan LeClaire - Private Citizen

Linda Bruyere - Private Citizen

Valerie Ginter - Private Citizen

Beverly Cameron - Private Citizen

Dina Auriti - Private Citizen

Korstin Ojah - Private Citizen

Pat Ojah - Private Citizen

Inranny Ojah - Private Citizen

I. Seunarine - Private Citizen

Sharii Riffely - Private Citizen

Arlene Edwards - Private Citizen

Val Noseworthy - Private Citizen

Betty Curnew - Private Citizen

Jackie Suaha - Private Citizen

Eileen Ricketts - Private Citizen

Sharena Betts - Private Citizen

Dianne Hodgson - Private Citizen

Beryle MacJones - Private Citizen

Marilyn Kenny - Private Citizen

Fay Campbell - Private Citizen

Lisa Challinor - Private Citizen

Sue Barnsley - Private Citizen

Elsa Paragas - Private Citizen

E.M. Brazzell - Private Citizen

Liz Archambault - Private Citizen

Jean Terendale - Private Citizen

Shelley Mitchell - Private Citizen

Laura Kilborn - Private Citizen

M.F. Jones - Private Citizen

Leo Sawicki - Private Citizen

Maggie Nishimura - Private Citizen

Cindy Rhodenyir - Private Citizen

Cheryl Albuquerque - Private Citizen

Maria Gallant - Private Citizen

Marion Zubren - Private Citizen

Jacky Cremers - Private Citizen

Shirley Thomasson - Private Citizen

Diana Fawcett - Private Citizen

Rita Cremers - Private Citizen

Donna C. Cuming - Private Citizen

Susan Matsukubo - Private Citizen

Lesia Brooks - Private Citizen

Valerie Friesen - Private Citizen

Geri Taylor - Private Citizen

Jan Gibson - Private Citizen

Gail Hunt - Private Citizen

Betty Jackson - Private Citizen

Suzanne Legault-Desmier - Private Citizen

Susan Fraser - Private Citizen

Patricia Flaws - Private Citizen

Lorraine Turner - Private Citizen

Laurie Marchuk - Private Citizen

Gisele Meilleur - Private Citizen

Louise Reilly - Private Citizen

Violet M. Motheral - Private Citizen

Jan Clayton - Private Citizen

Laurette L'Heureux - Private Citizen

Jean Gray - Private Citizen

Roland Lavallee - Private Citizen

Wendy Bloomfield - Private Citizen

Cecilia Chik - Private Citizen

Kai Tao - Private Citizen

R.M. Landa - Private Citizen

Marianne Buza - Private Citizen

Rosemary Shanks - Private Citizen

JoAnne Findlay - Private Citizen

Jean Anderson - Private Citizen

M.A. Bender - Private Citizen

Carmel Vivier - Private Citizen

Rachael Holder - Private Citizen
 Cecille Paterson - Private Citizen
 Gloria Johns - Private Citizen
 Beth Shore - Private Citizen
 Carolyn Zimmerman - Private Citizen
 Heather Clarke - Private Citizen
 Kathleen Wood - Executive Director, W.I.S.H.
 Inc. (Women-in-Second-Stage-Housing)
 Glenda Hatton - Private Citizen
 Shannon Hatton - Private Citizen
 Paulette Moser - Private Citizen
 Linda Langevin - Private Citizen
 Laura Steiman - The Elizabeth Fry Society of
 Manitoba

Your committee has considered:

Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil consultatif manitobain de la situation de la femme

Bill 7—The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels

Bill 8—The Garnishment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la saisie-arrêt

Bill 46—The Jury Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jurés

and has agreed to report the same without amendment.

Mrs. Dacquay: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I have indeed the great pleasure and honour of tabling Speaking to the Future, A Statement of Government Policy on the Status of Aboriginal Women in Manitoba, March 9, 1992.

I also have a statement for the House, with copies.

Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, March 8, 1992, the world celebrated the 81st Annual International Women's Day. Around the globe, men and women gathered in celebration of the achievements of women.

Just an hour ago, in this Legislative Building, we celebrated International Women's Day on behalf of Manitoba women. This province has a rich history filled with success, countless contributions by women of our political, social, economic and cultural life.

Over the past decade or so, more women have moved into the work force. They have entered a wide variety of nontraditional occupations and have excelled. Canadians recently celebrated with astronaut Roberta Bondar and with Olympic gold medalist, skier Kerrin Lee-Gartner. These women achieved their goals and ambitions through hard work and dedication, just as other Canadian women do every day. Again, it is the individual and personal victories that have measured women's progress over the years.

Improvements to social and family services, child daycare, employee benefits, maternity and paternity packages, as well as more flexible working arrangements, Affirmative Action initiatives and educational opportunities have enabled women to enter, compete and succeed in the workplace. Yes, Mr. Speaker, women have made great progress and will continue to dedicate themselves to promoting equality in the legal, political, cultural and economic realms.

Despite our gains, however, we have much to do. One of the areas of greatest concern to me and to our government is the issue of domestic violence and violence against women. Our government has taken a strong stand on this issue. We will not tolerate violence against women. We initiated the Domestic Violence Review, which involved a consultative process and resulted in a report which detailed recommendations to our government.

* (1340)

We look forward later today to unanimous support for our government's resolution to make Manitoba a domestic violence-free zone, a province where partner abuse is viewed as a criminal offence. We established a community advisory committee and an interdepartmental implementation committee to assist our government in addressing the recommendations made in the report. As the members may be aware, many of these recommendations have been or currently are being acted upon.

The Manitoba Women's Directorate has compiled and released a national listing of violence prevention materials that will prove to be a very

effective educational support tool in schools across the country. The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women has also undertaken a number of initiatives in keeping with its mandate to represent Manitoba's women and promote equality. The council has concentrated its efforts on issues related to substance abuse, gun control, the economy, single-parent families and the current constitutional debate.

Unfortunately, our government and its departments and community agencies cannot alone change harmful and destructive attitudes and values. Manitobans must work together to foster healthy and positive attitudes and values that will ensure all women live lives free of fear, anger and violence.

Violence against women is a serious societal problem that must be addressed by educators, employers, groups and organizations, the media, professional associations, women and men, by all segments of our society. Working together we can make a difference. We must make a difference, and we must bring about change.

Mr. Speaker, I want to underscore the fact that issues related to education, child care, health and welfare and violence against women are not solely women's issues, nor are issues related to finance, business, the economy and political process solely men's issues. We must each take equal responsibility for issues and concerns that affect us.

Our government cannot sit in isolation and single-handedly bring about economic prosperity, change social values and attitudes, establish equality, eradicate violence and end poverty. As citizens of Manitoba, Canada and the world, we are major stakeholders in the future. We must recognize and accept the benefits and responsibilities of world membership.

In celebrating International Women's Day, we are recognizing women's achievements and progress, and have underscored the necessity of vigilance and determination in meeting the challenges that the future surely holds.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of International Women's Day and to underscore our government's commitment to the women of Manitoba, today at 11 a.m., the Honourable Jim Downey, the Minister of Native Affairs, and I had the pleasure of introducing Speaking to the Future, A Statement of Government Policy on the Status of Aboriginal Women in Manitoba. The establishment of this policy is an

achievement in itself, and aboriginal women are to be commended for their participation in the policy-making process.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the important role aboriginal women played during the policy exploration phase and in its development. Over 200 aboriginal women participated in the provincial forum, five regional meetings and numerous local and individual meetings which were held throughout Manitoba. Elders, political leaders, educators, social service workers, tradeswomen, homemakers, students, artists, health care professionals, businesswomen, rural, northern and urban aboriginal women all participated in this process.

As I have already noted, the establishment of our government's policy on aboriginal women was not accomplished in isolation. It was done, in large part, with the help and input from groups and individuals from across the province. Through this policy, our government acknowledges the aspirations of aboriginal women in Manitoba. It recognizes the potential of aboriginal women and supports the special measures that are necessary to ensure that their contributions and abilities are recognized and affirmed.

The government of Manitoba, its departments and agencies, in all their future actions and programs, shall be guided by eight fundamental principles with respect to government activity and Manitoba's aboriginal women. I would like to review those principles.

Manitoba recognizes that the federal government has a special trust or fiduciary relationship with Status Indian peoples, and nothing in this policy is intended to reduce, interfere with or in any way abrogate that special trust relationship. The government of Manitoba is committed to establishing a partnership with aboriginal women.

* (1345)

The government further recognizes this partnership is the cornerstone in successfully developing provincial policies, programs and services. This policy shall encompass those provincial programs, services and activities within provincial authority and jurisdiction. Recognizing that economic independence remains an important goal for aboriginal women, the government of Manitoba will continue to work with aboriginal women to enhance their opportunities.

Aboriginal women, including those who live in remote and isolated areas, have the right to access and benefit fully from provincial programs, services and activities along with all Manitoba citizens. The government acknowledges that aboriginal women face special challenges. Accordingly, government programs and services, in their design and implementation, will continue to enhance opportunities for aboriginal women to develop to their fullest potential. To increase the participation of aboriginal women in provincial decision-making processes, they will be actively recruited as members of provincial boards and commissions. They will participate in the development of provincial policies and strategies for aboriginal women.

Government will focus its own resources in two main areas: those that have shown positive results for aboriginal women; and those that demonstrate untapped potential for aboriginal women's presence, benefit and contributions. As we celebrate past achievements, we must also consider the future of all women in Manitoba. Our government also recognizes challenges presented to aboriginal women, and we are committed to responding to those challenges. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I also rise to acknowledge International Women's Day, which we celebrated yesterday, and to share some of the same ideas that the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson) has listed in her ministerial statement.

I would like to add another congratulatory message to the astronaut Roberta Bondar and Olympic gold medalist Kerrin Lee-Gartner, and that is Connie Laliberte, from Manitoba, who just became the Canadian women's curling champion.

Mr. Speaker, I will be brief in my comments. There is a great deal of content and thought-provoking comments made by the minister, and I will very briefly speak to just a couple of them. We talked about the domestic violence review and the resolution to make Manitoba a domestic violence-free zone. I would like to speak to that in the context that last year in Manitoba 10 women were murdered; a hundred women are murdered in Canada. The issues of domestic violence cannot be separated from the issues of social, economic and political violence as well.

Two-thirds of the women over the age of 65 are poor. Over half of the people living in poverty, who

are increasing daily, are women with children. Women still make up less than half of the major jobs in many of the major job categories in this province. Women are still paid less than 70 cents for every dollar that men earn, on average. We have come a long way, but we have an enormously long way to go. We on this side of the House look forward, with a great deal of interest and not a little skepticism, to the actual implementation of some of the concepts that this government has shared with us over the last several International Women's Days and in other ministerial statements and discussions in this House.

We will be looking forward to the actual implementation of the recommendations in the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. We will be looking forward to the actual programs and policies that will be resulting from the Pedlar commission. We look forward, as women who work in government, to the actual implementation of the Hay report recommendations. We look forward to the actual implementation of the policies as first brought forward today on the status of aboriginal women in Manitoba.

We have shared our concerns many times with the government over their lack of follow-through, their lack of programs that actually respond to the needs that they address. We will be looking forward to discussing those concerns and those issues in great detail, and I am confident that we will have a much better idea of the government's actual commitment to women and children and violence and equality when we see the budget.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

* (1350)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the comments the minister has put on the record on the celebration of International Women's Day, the day of bread and roses.

Mr. Speaker, the government made an announcement today with regard to a policy. I have no difficulty with the policy as such, but I have a great deal of difficulty with a policy which is announced with great fanfare and which has no performance guarantee attached to it—none.

They said they wanted to develop a partnership to develop provincial policies, programs and services. This is the same government that has turned down an independent aboriginal justice system. That is the most fundamental policy need

of aboriginal women as well as aboriginal men. They said they wanted to help aboriginal women achieve economic independence by creating equality of opportunity. The way to ensure equality of opportunity is through educational programming, and yet this is the government that has cut ACCESS programs. This is the government who has sat by and watched while the University of Manitoba has increased its tuition fees by 54.8 percent with no additional funding for student bursaries so that those aboriginal women who need it the most are not denied the equality of opportunity in getting into an educational program.

They said they want to ensure that aboriginal women have access to provincial services and programs. Well, I was hoping today that maybe we would see an announcement about some money for some safe houses and some shelters in remote aboriginal communities, but that tragically was not announced today.

Mr. Speaker, words are cheap. They cost nothing except the paper they are printed on. The community requirement is for programming initiative, and programming initiative was not announced today, sadly. I see nothing in this wonderful announcement, with all of its fanfare, that is going to ensure that one aboriginal woman would be better off tomorrow than she is today.

While I would have liked to have joined in this announcement today congratulating the government, I cannot congratulate a government that has only rhetoric and not action to offer.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister responsible for Sport): Mr. Speaker, I have a ministerial statement as well.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise before the members today, on this day, as we are honouring International Women's Day, and on behalf of the province and citizens of Manitoba, extend congratulations to five Manitoban women: Connie Laliberte and her Fort Rouge rink of Laurie Allen, Cathy Gauthier, Janet Arnott and Arlene MacLeod, on winning the Scott Tournament of Hearts Canadian women's curling championship in Halifax this past weekend.

I am certain, Mr. Speaker, those who followed the rink's progress throughout the week, and all who watched Saturday afternoon's nationally televised final, will agree that Manitoba's representatives were most deserving of the victory and the

championship over the defending champions from British Columbia. Manitoba played an exceptionally strong game, highlighted by a number of key precision-made shots. This is indeed a credit to the skill and abilities of our Manitoba champions who have once again brought pride and distinction to themselves, their families, Fort Rouge Curling Club and our province.

It was in 1984 that another Fort Rouge rink, skipped by Connie Laliberte and with Janet Arnott, graced Manitoba with a world women's championship. Now, as Canadian champions once again, Connie and Janet have an opportunity to do it again. The added significance of their victory means Manitoba will have two rinks in the Canadian championship next year when the 1993 Scott Tournament of Hearts takes place in Brandon, because the defending champion returns as Team Canada.

I want to ask all members to join me in extending congratulations to the Laliberte rink and in extending best wishes to Connie, Laurie, Cathy, Janet and Arlene as they represent Manitoba and Canada at the world championships at Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany, March 28 to April 5.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

*(1355)

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the official opposition, to join with the minister in congratulating this great team that has just won the Scott Tournament of Hearts, the Canadian women's curling championship in Halifax this past weekend. The team played extremely well, Mr. Speaker, and virtually walked away with the championship in the final game. We do wish the team the very best in the future, the world curling championship which is coming up in Germany, I believe, from March 28 to April 5. We will all look forward with great anticipation to the performance of Connie and her team.

Regardless, as the minister indicated, Connie and her team will be in Brandon next year. I want to assure all members of the House that the city of Brandon, as usual, will roll out the red carpet for Connie and her team. Brandon has excellent facilities, the Keystone Centre and many, many support facilities in the community, and the community at large is known for its hospitality and for many people who will pitch in to make sure that

the game goes well and that the general championships are well performed in that city.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the team, and we certainly wish them the very best in the upcoming world event in Germany. Thank you.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with the members from the other two parties in congratulating the rink. It seems that Fort Rouge has a history of producing champions. We had quite a celebration yesterday afternoon that I think is still going on in some parts of the area.

I would also like to join with the House in extending our congratulations to Connie and Laurie, Cathy, Janet and Arlene. I would also point out that two other champion teams came home yesterday, and that was the men's and women's rinks from the deaf curling championships that won both the men's and the women's. I would like to add their names to the list of people who we are congratulating today. Thank you very much.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 36—The Health Care Records Act

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), that Bill 36, The Health Care Records Act; Loi sur les dossiers médicaux, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, this bill reflects our changing health care system. Nowhere is such change more apparent or more necessary than when it comes to patient rights and self-determination among health care consumers. Bill 36 is in the spirit of that consumer movement and consistent with health care reform. It provides for a legislative mechanism to enable health care consumers to have access to their own medical records and it proposes to enshrine the principle of confidentiality in law. The bill can only mean, in our view, better informed health care consumers, more openness and trust between patients and health care providers and a higher quality and more effective health care system.

Motion agreed to.

* (1400)

Bill 56—The Public Health Amendment Act (2)

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), that Bill 56, The Public Health Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, Bill 56 recognizes mandatory reporting of adverse reactions to vaccinations and calls for information on both the benefits and the risks of vaccinations to be provided. This bill accepts that immunization has been a factor leading to reduction of many diseases but recognizes the evidence linking vaccinations with disability and death in some healthy infants.

Like Bill 36, Bill 56 proposes to ensure that active involvement by consumers in our health care system leads to more informed consent, decision making and enhanced quality of health care services. For both Bills 36 and 56, I acknowledge the hard work of the health care consumer's rights committee of MARL, Manitoba Association of Rights and Liberties, and other organizations, as well as the efforts of a former colleague Jay Cowan, who was our health care critic and who did most of the work involving the drafting and consulting around these bills. I hope these bills form the basis for all-party collaboration and co-operation in this important policy area. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of all members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon 47 visitors from Minnesota. They are from the Richfield High School Choir, and they are under the direction of Mr. Kevin Erickson.

On behalf of all the members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Cross-Border Shopping Government Actions

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): On February 21 in this Chamber, the Premier said to

questions that were asked on the issue of cross-border shopping that thousands of jobs have been removed from Manitoba's retail operations and put into operations on the other side of the border where they do not pay taxes, where they do not support our medicare or anything else. You cannot have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. Yet, on Friday, it appears that his own ministers in government want to have it both ways. They are calling work going out of the country, south of the border a, quote: win-win situation.

I ask the Premier, what action is he going to take to ensure that his leadership and his words in this Chamber will be followed through by his own ministers so that taxes will remain in Manitoba, so that medicare will be supported in Canada and that we will not try to have it both ways, as the Premier indicated we could not?

Hon. Gary Fillmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition brings forward an interesting point of view. When between eight and 10 jobs are created by a new company in competition with Canada Post, offering services out of Winnipeg—eight to 10 additional jobs in Winnipeg—he takes the position that this is not good, that these are not jobs that should be supporting our economy. He is out there only because they are unionized jobs at Canada Post, taking his typical position that only union jobs are valid jobs in this economy.

Here you have a new company with eight to 10 new jobs in Winnipeg, saving the taxpayers of Manitoba, I might say, \$20,000 in a fiscal year and creating eight to 10 additional jobs, he says those are not valid jobs and that there is a problem with them. I say, shame on the Leader of the Opposition for taking sides as to whether or not unionized jobs are better than other jobs in the economy. We will support having jobs in the economy in Winnipeg and saving money for the taxpayer at the same time.

Manitoba-U.S. Trade Deficit Government Strategy

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in 1988, prior to free trade, a position supported by the Premier, the deficit of trade in Manitoba with the United States was \$537 million. The recent statistics produced by his own Bureau of Statistics indicate the deficit of trade right now with the United States is \$1.024 billion.

Will the Premier tell the people of Manitoba, in light of his conflicting rhetoric every day, what he is going to do about the \$500-million increase in deficit of trade with this province and the United States so that we can get Manitobans working again? What is he going to do about the \$500-million change since he has been in government?

Hon. Gary Fillmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, like Rip Van Winkle, has obviously been sleeping for a long, long time. He does not recognize that there is a recession out there and that 80 percent of the exports from Canada go to the United States. Our biggest trading partner has been in a serious recession and has not been consuming the goods and services from any of its trading partners, but particularly since Canada is so dependent on trade with the United States, Canada has suffered substantially as a result of the recession that has affected the United States. It has backed up into the sales from Manitoba and Canadian producers.

He does not want to recognize that. He is not aware of these patterns throughout the world. Hopefully, somebody will inform him about the things that are happening out there so that he will not ask questions of this nature that ignore the reality of what is happening throughout the world.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised the First Minister of this province would trivialize a \$500-million increase in deficit of trade, not with Canada and the United States, with Manitoba and the United States. Let us be very, very factual. The increase has gone from \$537 million in 1988, to \$1.024 billion in 1990.

I would ask the Premier to tell Manitobans and advise Manitobans, what is his government going to do to reverse the situation with a \$500-million change in the balance of trade with the United States before the GST came in? What he will do in his budget to start dealing with the Manitoba economy and the Manitoba deficit of trade with the United States, a trade arrangement that he supported with the Prime Minister in terms of free trade two years ago?

Mr. Fillmon: Mr. Speaker, firstly, again, the Leader of the Opposition does not recognize that same pattern is reflective of the entire pattern of trade between Canada and the United States. That is because the United States, our biggest trading partner, has been in recession and has not had the

demand for goods from Canada that it has had in the past.

The fact of the matter is that, unlike the previous NDP government that raised taxes and made this province uncompetitive, what we are doing is keeping taxes down and making this province more competitive so that organizations and operations such as Versatile are now able to get an entire two-wheel drive tractor operation here so that there will be more sales to the United States and to all of our trading partners, as there will be with many of our corporations who are now becoming more competitive because we have kept taxes down for four straight years.

Community Colleges Funding

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, every Manitoban knows that education is the basis for our economic recovery, yet this Minister of Education has refused to commit herself to even restore the more than 10 percent cuts her government made to community colleges last year. The reason is now clear.

Mr. Speaker, we have learned today that the Minister of Education is this year requesting additional cuts of \$4.6 million, amounting to a further 8 percent decrease in support for community colleges.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister what, in her mind, can possibly justify this further attack on community colleges?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I will remind the member that the information regarding funding for community colleges will be released when the budget is released this Wednesday in this House.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, we have seen the numbers.

Will the minister explain to the House why she proposes a 57 percent increase for departmental administrative purposes and yet believes that our community colleges and their programs, with their long waiting list, must be cut even further?

* (1410)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I will simply remind the member again that the initiatives relating to community colleges will be revealed on Wednesday of this week when the budget has been revealed.

Post-Secondary Education Funding Restoration

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, will the minister change the course of her predecessor, the privatization of post-secondary education? Will she go back to Treasury Board and demand that these funds for post-secondary education, for community colleges, for young Manitobans who have nowhere else to go—will she restore those funds?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I think it is important again for me to remind my honourable friend of the commitment of this government to education for all Manitobans and education in the post-secondary level, access to training programs at our community colleges. Our commitment to those community colleges will be seen on Wednesday when our budget is tabled in this House.

Child Care Centres Funding Formula

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is to the Minister of Family Services. It is unfortunate that the minister has been neglected in the same way that our children are being neglected.

Can the Minister of Family Services tell us with—

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Is that a confession?

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, the Premier of the province, in his usual north-end street-fighting style—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, it is clear that our child care centres are suffering. They are suffering as a result of a recession which has required many parents to withdraw their children because they have no job, and therefore, they have no monies to pay for fees.

We also know that they are suffering as a direct result of actions taken by this minister. As of last July, he restructured the way in which child care centres are funded. Can the minister stand in the House today and tell this House how many child care centres in the province receive less dollars than they received prior to his restructuring proposals?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): I welcome the opportunity to respond to that question on the daycare centres. This

government has put a substantial amount of new dollars into daycare in Manitoba, some 60 percent over four budgets.

The restructuring we did last year was to put more dollars into subsidies and less into grants for those centres, but by the amount of money that we increased our funding to daycare last year, centres had the ability, if they followed the provincial standards, to increase their funding by some 2 percent. The variable that perhaps the member does not understand is that that amount of income is dependent on the fact that those spaces are full. We do have centres at this time with spaces that are not occupied, but I would mention to the member that some of them have had to draw on their surpluses to tide them through, and some have had to make adjustments in their staffing complement.

During this time, no centres have closed, and I noted a comment made today that some centres have had to tighten their belts. I say to the member, it is the same belt tightening that small businesses and individuals across this province have done. In meeting with the executive of the MCCA just last week, one of the positive things that came out of it was a very good working relationship that exists between the government, the daycare directorate and the MCCA.

Staff Layoffs

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): The minister knows full well that centres have received far less in operating grants, from a couple of hundred dollars up to \$24,000 less for our children. Can the minister tell the House today how many trained staff have been laid off in child care centres across this province because of his and his government's unwillingness to ensure that there is 100 percent trained staff at centres?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I indicated in my previous answer that the grants to the centres were reduced but that the subsidies were dramatically increased and that in our view of daycare—and I thought shared by the Leader of the Liberal Party from statements that she had made previously—that funding should go to individuals, to children, to families. That was the direction that we took and one that she is on record of supporting.

In respect to the trained staff, this province has the highest standards for daycare training and staffing throughout North America. We have given

the daycare centres and daycares the ability to achieve revenue to support those standards. If in fact daycare centres have exceeded those standards, they may have had to make some adjustments to their staffing patterns.

Mrs. Carstairs: In other words, inferior-quality training is acceptable to this Minister of Family Services.

Subsidized Space Allocation

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party is on record as saying—

An Honourable Member: Anything.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, it is better than nothing.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party in Manitoba is on record as saying that money should go to private spaces if there were no public spaces available. There are now lots of public spaces available. Will this minister now commit to ensuring no additional subsidized spaces in private child care centres until the public spaces are filled?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Well, Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to follow policy that is being created by the Liberal Party moment by moment. We have certainly, self-admittedly, some vacancies in the daycare centres and daycares at this time. We have agreed not to license any more positions in those centres until later in this year.

There are a number of reasons why we do have some vacancies. There is a recession in place. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of licensed spaces. We will be monitoring how the uptake goes and monitoring the situation, and we have agreed with the MCCA to review this some time in June of this year.

Aboriginal Women Program Accessibility

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, today, with a great deal of fanfare, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson) and the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) unveiled Speaking to the Future, A Statement of Government Policy on the Status of Aboriginal Women in Manitoba.

One of the eight platform statements in this policy was, aboriginal women, including those who live in

remote and isolated areas, have the right to access and benefit fully from provincial programs, services and activities along with all Manitoba citizens. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) has cast doubt on that principle by stating that it is not practical for full access to be available to all aboriginal women in remote and isolated circumstances, that the full range of service might not always be available.

How, in the light of this flip-flop, can Manitoba women, and particularly aboriginal Manitoba women, be assured that this government will actually follow up on any of these principles?

* (1420)

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for that question and their interest in the policy which has received general acceptance from the aboriginal women of this province after two years of hard work.

I take this opportunity to say that I am extremely disappointed in the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) in the negative approach of after two years of hard work from the aboriginal community and in putting this policy forward.

Dealing specifically with it, I really am putting forward that not necessarily speaking of the aboriginal women in isolated remote communities where in fact it is not possible to deliver a provincial program. Whether it is the remote North or anywhere else, one has to say it as it is, and one does not want to try to mislead. There are other parts of the province where programs are not available as they would be in the North, so that is what I want to bring forward to the member.

Ms. Barrett: Then the principle perhaps should have been—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is not a time for debate.

ACCESS Program

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, also in this principle is given the stated commitment of the government to economic independence for aboriginal women. Will they now restore the \$260,000 they cut in last year's budget for the student ACCESS programs whose students last year were 65 percent women and 70 percent aboriginal?

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is my

understanding that the provincial government maintained our funding for the ACCESS programs, that it was the reduction from the federal government that the reductions took place.

Let me as well say, and the member should be aware of this, that the changes to the Communities Economic Development Fund clearly speaks to the support for aboriginal people, not only off of reserves but on reserves as well, in support under that program. Through the exercise of further announcements today dealing with the awareness of programs like that, we encourage the aboriginal women to participate fully in those provincial programs which are available through economic development activities.

Training Programs

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, how do the Department of Education cuts to special programs for women at Keewatin Community College and employment orientation for women programs at Red River Community College, which have been available for aboriginal women, match the government's stated aim in its policy, Speaking to the Future, today that they will put in place training programs for aboriginal women so that they can achieve equality of opportunity and economic independence? Which is it? Are you going to cut, or are you going put in—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. James Downey (Minister responsible for Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am quite prepared to put the record of this government against the record of the former ministers. It was this government which gave the first support to the indigenous women of this province. The first funding ever for the indigenous women of Manitoba came from this government, so that they could organize themselves and put forward issues and work on policies which are developed like we have seen today. I will put our record next to theirs anytime.

Employment Resources Regional Offices Closure

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey). Employment Resources Regional Offices are involved in administering the CareerStart Program, among others, and in

assisting labour adjustment committees in dealing with plant shutdowns and major layoffs.

Given that unemployment is still at unacceptably high levels in the city of Brandon, and others are pending at the Brandon General Hospital and the Brandon Mental Health Centre, why has the government of Manitoba closed down the Employment Resources Regional Office in the city of Brandon, which used to have a staff of seven people?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, we are in the process of making some budget decisions which will be announced on Wednesday when the budget is tabled. I can assure the member that the CareerStart Program will be in place and that there will be jobs for youth on the same basis as the previous years.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I invite the minister to go to Brandon, and the office is empty. There is nobody in it. Is this jobs for Brandon?

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister tell the House whether this government plans to close the Employment Resources Regional Offices in Dauphin, Steinbach, Winkler, Teulon and Killarney, as well as the city of Brandon?

Mr. Gillehammer: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) indicated how many sleeps there were last week before we get into the budget, and we are down to two more. Some of the details that the member is looking for will be contained in the budget which will be tabled on Wednesday.

Decentralization Brandon, Manitoba

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): How can this government even begin to pretend that it is decentralizing jobs to the city of Brandon when it has already eliminated more than it is planning to bring there?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, it was not more than a week and a half ago that the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), the Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey), myself and, I believe, the member for Brandon East were in attendance of the opening of a new office in Brandon. There was a creation of eight more jobs, and I can assure you that the decentralization program is working well. There

have been a number of offices opened, not only in Brandon, but other rural centres as well.

Hay Commission Report Government Response

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister responsible for the Civil Service. I would like to quote from a report from the Manitoba Civil Service in which we cite one of the senior managers, and I quote: The minister knows whenever there is a vacancy and can ensure that an individual of the right party colour will be hired or that an individual of the wrong party colour will not be hired.

Mr. Speaker, this is—[interjection] It is true. It is a report that the minister himself has tabled. The Minister of Labour responsible for the Civil Service said that, and I quote: I am going to act as quickly as possible, he said; we have a long way to go.

Well, this minister is going backwards. I am going to ask the minister quite specifically. When does he plan to act on his commitments that he has made, not only to the Legislature of this Chamber, but to the people of Manitoba?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for and charged with the administration of The Civil Service Act): Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with what report the member for Inkster is referring to. He did not identify it in his question. There are numerous reports on various subjects. He has not identified which report it is. I have tabled a lot of reports in this House. Beside the point, operations of government currently to hire for a position requires the approval of the minister to open up that position for competition. What happens after that is the responsibility of the department, if they had delegated the authority, and the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. Lamoureux: This review, for the minister, if he wants to know, is the Review of the Recruitment, Selection and Classification Process within the Manitoba Civil Service. It was the Hay Management Consultants—familiar with the report? I would advise the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Question, please.

Women's Directorate Hiring Process

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Status

of Women. Can the minister tell the House what kind of qualifications the rejected candidates had and what qualifications Ms. Harvey had that the others did not?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I have to say with great dismay that the questioning from the ethics critic from the Liberal Party is quite unethical.

Mr. Speaker, this is a serious issue, and rather than members of the Liberal opposition laughing, I would appreciate their listening to the answer so that in fact they can understand. Obviously, from the critic's comments in the paper last week, he has absolutely no understanding of a Civil Service process. An open competition was held for the position of ADM of the Women's Directorate. A Civil Service board was held, who screened the applicants, and their recommendation to the minister was that there was only one person who should be interviewed by the minister.

Minister of Culture Hiring Authority

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the Premier, and it is a question of perception, and the perception of—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the honourable member have a question?

* (1430)

Mr. Lamoureux: I ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker: Will he today agree to have an independent Civil Service study of the whole matter regarding the hiring, not of this particular case, but additional cases through this particular minister? He has a responsibility here. Will he live up to his responsibilities?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I just point out the contradiction in the member's questioning that, when he starts out by quoting the Hay commission report, the Hay report was commissioned by this government as an independent study at the request of the Manitoba Women in Government at a meeting that was attended by all three Leaders. They all said this independent commission should come up with a report. That report indicated that there were not enough women being promoted into senior levels of the Civil Service, among other things. This government has appointed a long-term civil servant who has been there for almost 15 years and is

eminently well qualified to an assistant deputy minister position within the framework of the responsibility of this government, in a manner that is available to the government, to ensure that qualified people can be appointed to senior levels of government.

Here we are increasing the numbers of people at senior levels of government, who are women in senior responsibility, and we have the Liberal Party criticizing it. I cannot believe it, Mr. Speaker. I cannot believe the contradiction. They are all over the map, and they do not know where they are on any issue.

Economic Growth Wage Levels

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson) Mr. Speaker, this government has had some difficulty in understanding just how hard hit Manitobans have been by the recession, seeing day after day the impact on average Manitobans. Now the news from Stats Canada that, during the last year, Manitoba had the lowest growth in wages and salaries of any province in the country, at .7 percent well below the national average, well below many other provinces.

My question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism. I am wondering if the minister has studied the impact of this depression level of wage growth in the province, the impact on the Manitoba economy specifically in terms of lost jobs, because of the fact that we are 10th out of 10 in terms of average income growth over the past year.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I have difficulty in tying the honourable member's logic to the figures that he is quoting to job creation in terms of the percentage increase in wage levels to the actual creation of jobs. He is quoting from Statistics Canada, and I would hope that he has had an opportunity to read all of Statistics Canada's projections for the economy of Manitoba. When he looks at issues like capital investment projection by Statistics Canada in 1992, Manitoba will have the highest manufacturing percentage increase in all of Canada and about the second highest private sector investment in all of Canada. Those are the kinds of indicators that will lead to job creation and opportunities for all Manitobans.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, is the minister not concerned about what is happening, the fact that Manitobans are 10th out of 10 in terms of income

growth and the fact that it is killing the retail sector, killing the Manitoba economy? Does he have no concern about what is happening to average Manitobans?

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, obviously I do not accept any of the preamble of the honourable member from across the way. Clearly we do have concerns, and that is why we have taken the kinds of steps that we have over the last four years in this province to create the positive economic climate for individual Manitobans. That is why the Conference Board of Canada is predicting in 1992 that Manitoba will have the third largest growth rate in all of Canada.

I have already cited the statistics in private sector investment, the second highest in Canada; manufacturing investment, the highest in all of Canada; the unemployment rate, the second lowest in all of Canada. Clearly, some of the numbers, Mr. Speaker, we would prefer to see better, but you have to put issues in perspective in terms of what is happening in all of Canada.

When you compare Manitoba to the rest of Canada, and you look at all of the economic indicators, Mr. Speaker, the outlook for Manitoba is very positive.

Borden Company Ltd. Closure

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, how can this minister continue to say that when even just this very minute I have received news that another plant—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member kindly put your question, please.

Mr. Ashton: I asked how the minister can say what he just said when we have just received news that another plant, the Borden Catelli pasta plant, in Winnipeg is being closed, another plant closure, Mr. Speaker, while this minister ignores the reality of the economy in Manitoba.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): I am not sure what the question was there, Mr. Speaker, but clearly the member need look no further than a week ago and the kinds of positive announcements that are also taking place in this province. Once again, far too often, members from across the way always attempt to dwell on the negative instead of the Versatile announcement of a week ago whereby 600 to 700 Manitobans will

retain their jobs, and 100 new jobs will be created through a company that will distribute throughout the world by relocating an outfit from Belgium here to Manitoba. We have Advance Acoustics manufacturing, 25 new jobs announced last week.

There are all kinds of positive announcements out there. I have already cited the economic indicators, Mr. Speaker, that Manitoba is positioned well to move ahead in the '90s.

Indian Birch Reserve Child-Welfare Worker Ban

Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital): My question is for the Minister of Justice. In Saturday's paper, there was an article which alleges that a Native child welfare worker and her family were expelled from the Indian Birch Reserve. The same article goes on to allege that that woman's social assistance was cut off by the chief and council. It also goes on to say that this child welfare worker was assaulted by members of the band councillor's family. Now, it seems as if there was an abusive action against this woman and, perhaps, an abuse of power. I am sure that all members in this Chamber share a concern with me. Could the Minister of Justice tell us what he is going to do about it?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, if the allegations contained in the weekend's news media are true, then more than ever, we need to get aboriginal leadership involved with the kinds of issues discussed earlier today by our Premier (Mr. Filmon) and by the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson) respecting the status of aboriginal women.

The reports that I have seen are shocking indeed. The allegations are shocking in terms of the way aboriginal women are going to view their situation in this province on reserves. The allegations such as that the chief and band councillors are uncles of the children apprehended, allegations like one of the band councillors is the stepfather of the people alleged to have beaten this worker, the fact that this worker is a mother herself with six children and alleged to have been banished from her residence are all extremely serious matters which I propose to take up with the chief of the band, and if I do not receive satisfactory explanation, to take it further.

Workers Compensation Board Medical Specialist Reports

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, for at least the last two years, there have been ongoing concerns of injured workers and others in Manitoba as to the conduct of some medical staff employed by the WCB, the Workers Compensation Board in Manitoba.

Threatening letters, Mr. Speaker sent by WCB lawyers to worker representatives only inflame the already serious situation that we have here.

Will the minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board explain the policy of his department when the dispute arises between reports from independent medical specialists versus that of paid WCB medical staff?

* (1440)

Hon. Darren Praznlk (Minister responsible for and charged with the administration of the Workers Compensation Act): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would be very pleased to explain the process to members of this House and to the member for Transcona.

Mr. Speaker, medical staff for the Workers Compensation Board, which have been in place there for many, many years, going back to various administrations including the last administration of the member for Transcona, are advisors to the board. They do not make decisions in individuals' cases of adjudication. Adjudication is conducted by the adjudicators. Of approximately 85,000 cases that can be dealt with at the board during a year, about 50,000 new ones and about 35,000 ongoing in any given year, only about less than 5 percent have a review by the board medical branch.

Wherever there is a dispute, the actual adjudication, as I said, is made by adjudicators, not by medical practitioners at the board. Where there is a difference of opinion between board doctors and outside doctors, the claimant is entitled to a medical review panel. Of all of those claims, there were only 32 medical review panels conducted last year. Certainly there are procedures in place, processes in place, and the recommendation or commentary by an individual board doctor would not be the deciding factor, or would not be the place where a decision is made.

Mr. Reid: Can the minister explain then why the WCB can refuse to accept the unanimous opinions of three independent medical specialists and,

instead, reject an injured worker's claim of recurring injury resulting in the loss of income and the break up of the family unit?

Mr. Praznlk: Mr. Speaker, the member for Transcona is bringing an individual case, I gather, on which a situation is based. I will tell him, of 85,000 potential cases that are handled in a year, there are about 300 appeals and about 32 medical review panels. Just to put it in perspective, again, where there is a difference of opinion between medical practitioners, either inside or outside of the board, claimants are entitled to medical review panels, adjudicators make their decision.

There is also an appeal process in place where a claimant unhappy with the decision can make an appeal to the appeal commission on which there is a commissioner nominated by labour. I can tell the member, in some of the cases which he has raised with my office, some of the issues that he has raised, the appeal has resulted in a unanimous decision by the appeal panel. Although we are concerned about cases, there are processes in place, Mr. Speaker, to deal with that and ensure that claimants have a fair opportunity to present their case.

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

Nonpolitical Statements

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River): Mr. Speaker, do I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

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

Mrs. Dacquay: I rise today also to express my sincere congratulations to Connie Laliberte and her Manitoba curling team on their victory at the Scott Tournament of Hearts on Saturday, March 7.

As the MLA for Seine River, I would be remiss if I did not wish skip Connie Laliberte, a resident, and her team continued success and best of luck in Germany on behalf of the constituents of Seine River. I would request that all members of the House join with me in extending Connie and her team our best wishes for continued success as Canada's representative at the world championship.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for St. Norbert have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and congratulate the Fort Richmond Centurions on their win of the first ever Manitoba high school hockey championship. The Centurions shut out the St. Paul's Crusaders 1-0 last night at the Winnipeg Arena before an impressive crowd of 3,200 people.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to salute the head coach Mr. Gord Poulton and his staff for their efforts and dedication. In addition, I would like to single out the MVP of the game, Fort Richmond goaltender Pap Cloutier, for his impressive performance throughout the three-day tournament.

I salute this team of young people for their accomplishments in hockey and for their demonstrated ability to perform so well as a team. Congratulations to all of them.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I want to add our congratulations to all the people involved in the high school hockey tournament and the playoffs that took place right across Manitoba.

I have always believed that high school hockey—I think this is very important—is a great way for Canada to go and a great way for Manitoba to go. I think we all know of people whom we grew up with who had to quit school to go to play junior hockey if they ever had any talent or ability. Many of those people who quit school did very well in pro hockey later on, but others who did not do so well in pro hockey are left without the kind of education that they need. I have always believed that it is a great—

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Is it a confession, Gary?

Mr. Doer: The Premier (Mr. Filmon) says it is a confession. There is only one way to find out, when his ankle is better we can go out on the ice and find out.

Mr. Filmon: I meant about the lack of education.

Mr. Doer: Oh, okay. Confessions are big. Confessions are very big in the school I used to attend. I would like to congratulate both the winner the Fort Richmond Collegiate and the runners up who beat Fort Richmond last week but lost 1-0 in the final. The St. Paul's Crusaders, as I understand it, had a great team.

I think we should congratulate everyone who has really pushed high school hockey in Manitoba. I think it is a tremendous idea, and I can see the day where high school hockey tournaments will fill the arena in Winnipeg and fill up the arenas all across this province as kids play hockey in their high schools and in our school system across Manitoba. I congratulate everybody involved in it.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Rural Development have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend Foxwarren, Manitoba, home of Pat Falloon and Ron Lowe was the site of the MAHA Provincial B Atoms Hockey Tournament. Championship teams from throughout the province, as far north as Cross Lake, gathered in Foxwarren to determine who the provincial champion would be.

To begin with, I would like to congratulate and thank the Foxwarren community for being excellent hosts at this tournament. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Foxwarren home team, the Fort Ellice Atoms, for capturing the silver medal. I would like to ask members of the House to join me and my constituents in congratulating the Russell Atoms team for an excellent performance, an outstanding performance, in gaining the Provincial B Atoms championship for the year.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, I had the opportunity to attend a banquet commemorating the 20th anniversary of Inter-Universities North. I was pleased to be able to be joined by my colleague the member for

Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) and many staff, many representatives from the three universities that provide programming to Inter-Universities North—University of Manitoba, University of Winnipeg and Brandon University—and most importantly to many of the instructors and students who have participated in the last 20 years of Inter-Universities North.

There were a number of presentations that were made which I feel should be noted in the Legislature. Recognition was given to Emily Sawicki, a former resident of Thompson. She was the first all IUN graduate. She took all her courses through Inter-Universities North, in fact, graduated in 1979, the first of a number of students who have gone all the way through using Inter-Universities North.

There were also presentations of the newly established Dr. Willard J. Condo award. Dr. Condo was very involved in university affairs and before his death was the head of the Universities Grants Commission, a very strong supporter of Inter-Universities North. Recognition was given to Shirley Lyon, the previous director of IUN for her efforts and Dr. Blonar who also was very involved in the development of Inter-Universities North through his role as Dean of Arts and through his various associations with Brandon University.

I would like to, I am sure, express the best wishes of all members of the Legislature for the past 20 years and the hopes, Mr. Speaker, that Inter-Universities North, with its unique combination of three separate institutions all working together providing education in the North, could be used as a model for many other jurisdictions across the country. Thank you.

* (1450)

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable First Minister have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I want to join in the congratulations that are being given to a number of very worthy sporting organizations as a result of tremendous achievements by Manitoba teams during this past weekend.

I want to congratulate in particular the GPAC men's championship basketball team, the University of Winnipeg Wesmen, who on the weekend in Brandon won the GPAC basketball

men's championship in a tremendous contest with Brandon University, I might say.

If indeed there is I think honour and respect amongst those who choose the wild card berths, there may indeed be two teams because Brandon University has been rated No. 2 in the nation throughout most of the season and may be a candidate for one of the wild card berths to go along with the University of Winnipeg to the final eight in Halifax next weekend.

Congratulations not only to the Wesmen and their coaching staff, all the players and fans who supported them throughout the year, but also to those who were recognized for their achievements in GPAC this year. It was a great year for Manitoba players, and I might say that the entire first team all star from GPAC were Manitoba players beginning with Eric Bridgeland of University of Manitoba, Keith Vassel and Dave Nackoney of Brandon University, Jeff Foreman and Norm Froemel of University of Winnipeg, and the most valuable player for GPAC was, of course, Eric Bridgeland. The second team all-stars included as well players from the province of Manitoba, Harvey Marshman of Brandon university, Garth Thompson, a Brandon native, who played for the University of Manitoba and Greg Filmon.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you call the government resolution standing in the name of the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), to be followed by Bill 45 and the bills listed on the Order Paper in the order as shown, Debate on Second Readings.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson), the following motion,

WHEREAS the government of Manitoba, based on the recommendations of the Women's Initiative Report, endorsed the philosophy that abuse is a crime and must be stopped; and

WHEREAS a public awareness campaign was undertaken in February, 1990, to promote awareness that partner abuse is a crime; and

WHEREAS the Pedlar Commission recommended the community must take an active role in reducing and eliminating domestic violence.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the position adopted by the government of Manitoba in declaring Manitoba as a domestic violence-free zone, where partner abuse is viewed as a criminal offence, and in adopting a tough stance against partner abuse.

Motion presented.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, this is an auspicious day for me to have the honour to move this resolution in this House.

In beginning my comments it would be good, I believe, for all of us to remember the work done by the Women's Initiative and the report presented by that initiative, headed up by Gerrie Hammond, a former member of this House and former distinguished Minister responsible for the Status of Women, and to thank her and those who participated in the Women's Initiative for the work they did to help instill in all of us, government and community, an understanding of the importance of the issue of domestic violence in our society.

Flowing from the Women's Initiative, there was indeed a public awareness campaign in 1990 to promote awareness that partner abuse is a crime. That campaign also promoted the fact that for abused women in our society there is indeed help and there is nothing to be lost and everything to be gained by coming forward and seeking help in the times when violence renders the lives of women in our society as a terrible experience.

A number of other initiatives came forward, Mr. Speaker, not the least of which, of course, was the Pedlar review and the work done by Dorothy Pedlar and those with whom she consulted in preparing her report for government, so that we can go forward and try to help create that violence-free zone that we want Manitoba to be.

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

It is a very noble goal for us to work toward, and it is not a goal that can be achieved solely by government working in isolation from everybody else. I believe everyone is going to agree about that. There will be various degrees of disagreement about how we achieve the goal that we all agree we want to achieve.

The deaths of too many Manitoba women, Madam Deputy Speaker, prompted me to request Winnipeg lawyer, Dorothy Pedlar, to conduct a review into domestic violence in Manitoba. This report, the Domestic Violence Review, is the first of its kind in Manitoba and perhaps in Canada. There has not previously been such a comprehensive report that examines domestic violence from so many perspectives, and I think that is partially due to the mandate Ms. Pedlar had, but also partially due to the kind of person Ms. Pedlar is. The work that she did was extremely thorough and comprehensive, and therefore we believe that Dorothy Pedlar is an excellent person to remain on the project, if you like, and help us see it through.

Our government's release of the report last November sent a strong signal to the community and to the women of Manitoba that we as a government will continue to take action. The goals of the report are the goals of this government. The report presents our government with a concrete plan of action to tackle domestic violence head-on. To prioritize and implement the report, I have established a working group comprising key government officials from the Departments of Justice, Family Services, Status of Women, Education and Health. This group has begun work. I have asked my department to provide me with a report by the end of this month outlining everything our government has done so far in response to the Pedlar review and in the area of domestic violence.

Today, Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to highlight the actions this government has taken to date or is actively pursuing to tackle domestic violence. I want to do that partly because honourable members opposite sometimes in the heat of debate tend to try to minimize the work that this government has done, and I am always going to agree with honourable members opposite when they say, as the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) did earlier today, that we have an enormous distance to go.

I am not going to disagree with that because all you have to do is look at the daily cases in our courts and the daily police files to know that there are still far too many women facing terrible and terrifying experiences and sometimes paying the supreme price for the lack of better systems to protect them.

* (1500)

I want to do it for that reason, because honourable members opposite will make inaccurate allegations

about the progress of the government. I also want to do it to underline that there is reason to be hopeful about that enormous distance we have to go and how we are going to get there. There is reason to be hopeful because of the performance of the past nearly four years of the present government, and I should say the previous government and actions it took as well, Madam Deputy Speaker.

We have expanded and strengthened and standardized the charging directive. That was the charging directive brought in by Roland Penner in 1983. We have expanded, strengthened and standardized it, ensuring that the police lay charges in all cases of partner abuse where evidence exists. There is mandatory prosecution by our Crown attorneys of all partner abuse offences where evidence exists. We are pressing for no bail, or at the very least, conditions on bail for all domestic offenders. We are strengthening the mandatory education programs for domestic violence offenders at all corrections and probations facilities. We are prosecuting offenders who fail to attend, participate in or complete the mandatory education programs. We will develop standard policies and protocols throughout the justice system to ensure domestic violence is dealt with as a priority and in a consistent manner.

With respect to education and training of participants in the justice system on the social dynamics of domestic violence, in June, our Prosecutions Division will be hosting a joint conference with the judiciary and the private bar to examine domestic violence. Our Crown attorneys will also be participating in the upcoming western Crowns' conference on domestic violence.

In 1990, Madam Deputy Speaker, we established the family violence court, and that was something that Ms. Pedlar commented on in her report, and she commended the government for the initiative. That is a centerpiece, in a way, of our efforts in the area of domestic violence. The independent analysis of the performance of that court has been extremely positive in the sense that domestic violence cases are being handled much more expeditiously in our court system and much more sensitively as well.

Expediently is extremely important, the experts tell us and, of course, you do not need to be an expert to know that for every day that a victim is facing an abusive issue without resolution, every day can seem like an eternity. If you are frightened, if you are scared, if your children are frightened,

scared, it is a terrible, terrible experience, and the shorter we can make that experience, the better. It is too bad it has to happen in the first place, but when it does and we are realistic enough to know that things like this type of offence will continue against our will, even in a domestic violence-free zone, and when it does happen, we have to deal with it as sensitively and expeditiously as we possibly can.

That court has been held to be an example for other jurisdictions. It is the first of its kind in our country, perhaps beyond and judging by the results it is achieving, we feel that we might see that kind of concept developing elsewhere. It is actually a specialized, integrated unit devoted exclusively to abuse cases, and we are going to continue our commitment to ensuring that victims of abuse are treated compassionately and sensitively by enhancing the operations of this court, as that is so very much required.

In the past, Madam Deputy Speaker, when the traffic, if you like, before that court has increased to the point where it has put significant pressure on the system, this government has responded by ensuring that that court is properly resourced so that we can keep meeting our targets. The independent analysis shows that we have been doing that. We remain committed to the operation of that court, touching as it does so many people involved in abusive situations in this city.

I am not satisfied either that this kind of concept can be available only to women in the city of Winnipeg. I have been criticized in the past by some opposition members for being so much in favour of the principle of decentralization and providing services to Manitobans outside the city of Winnipeg. Well, that is a criticism I will accept, because I do think that Manitobans outside Winnipeg ought to be the recipient of services as reasonably equal as we can make them, to those services available to people in the city of Winnipeg.

Of course you cannot expect conditions to be exactly the same in all areas outside the central city of this province, but certainly we owe it to our citizens right across this province to bend every effort, to ensure that reasonable services are available to people. We want to extend the concept of the family violence court all across the province, but certainly we are making good headway in terms of setting up such a court system in Brandon to serve the southwestern area of our province.

We are committed to strengthening and enhancing the women's advocacy program which serves the family violence court. That was another matter recommended by Ms. Pedlar, and another recommendation we take very seriously indeed. We have begun discussions with our provincial and federal counterparts on ways to eliminate delays in the court system. I refer specifically here, Madam Deputy Speaker, to the preliminary hearing that that anachronism of the justice system, as I have called it in the past—I have raised this matter repeatedly with federal and provincial ministers. I believe the idea is beginning to be received more positively than it has in the past.

The fact is there are ways to see that the defence in criminal cases are given the kind of disclosure that they need in order adequately to represent their clients. We do not have to have a preliminary hearing everytime there is a case of assault, or many kinds of cases that are dealt with in that way and have been for generations need not be dealt with that way any more.

Even the British, who began this British system of justice, gave up the preliminary hearing sometime ago. We still have it, and I think that the reason we still have it is that I have not yet been successful in making sure my colleagues across this country, including the federal Minister of Justice, feel that it should be done away with. I think the preliminary should be done away with as quickly as possible and replaced with another system to provide the same kind of disclosure that defence counsel need. I do not question for a moment that defence counsel need disclosure in order to adequately represent their clients and to ensure that the principle of presumption of innocence is carried forward, because I do believe in that principle, and I believe that guarantees our liberty in this country, that principle among other things.

The liberties of those people who are not guilty of offences, those are the ones I am most concerned about because those who are guilty of offences I feel differently about. I feel we need to go eyeball to eyeball with those people who are offenders and abusers. We need to do that in a way that works, not just a way that is strict retribution, because we know already retribution and revenge does not really solve anything. We know that it does not protect women and children.

What we do know works best is some kind of way to make abusers understand what they are doing is

wrong, for them to take some kind of responsibility for their actions and to stop abusing their power which is sometimes balanced too much in their favour, and to stop abusing their spouses, partners and children.

* (1510)

We need to examine more effective ways of protecting women by both strengthening the existing system of restraining orders as well as looking at possible alternatives within provincial jurisdiction.

Honourable members have heard repeatedly, women especially, saying that restraining orders are not worth the paper they are written on. We take that criticism seriously, Madam Deputy Speaker, and we propose to strengthen the restraining order. In doing that we are going to develop proposals to make restraining orders easier to obtain, while ensuring stricter enforcement and punishment for breaches as well as consultations with police officials to greater enforce peace bonds and prosecution of breaches.

Maybe one of the reasons that some people have said that restraining orders are not worth the paper they are written on is because, in the past, police authorities have prioritized these restraining orders differently from what they are today, and what we expect will be the case as we go forward. We expect to see restraining orders being given a new respect in the justice system, and that women and children will be the beneficiaries of that protection.

We expect to have ongoing discussions with policing agencies and the judiciary to discuss those recommendations affecting them. I have to say that rather than being frustrated, like I sometimes am, I have to say I am pleased and I am encouraged by the response that I received so far from these groups.

We are examining ways of utilizing the resources of the Victims Assistance Fund to enhance counselling and services for the victims and child victims of domestic violence. This Victims Assistance Fund, which is often discussed in this House by the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), was recently used to provide a grant of over \$100,000 to victims of domestic violence in the Interlake area, and here I refer to Nova House in Selkirk.

I would like briefly to comment on some of the initiatives undertaken by my cabinet colleagues. I commend the Minister of Family Services (Mr.

Gilleshammer) for his foresight in appointing Ms. Marlene Bertrand as director of Family Dispute Services. As the former director of Osborne House, Ms. Bertrand will be a valuable asset to this government as we continue our efforts in this area.

I know Ms. Bertrand because of my job as Minister of Justice. I have had occasion to consult with Ms. Bertrand; in fact, I consulted with Ms. Bertrand in the setting up of the Pedlar review which has proved to be so helpful to us. I look forward to a very, very positive working relationship with Ms. Bertrand because her extensive experience and knowledge in areas relating to family disputes is not questioned, I do not think, by anyone. I do not think even the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) would want to get after Ms. Bertrand's qualifications, and so far I have not heard anything, but you never know with that honourable member, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Other initiatives undertaken by the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) include the development of a new funding model to shelters. This new model will allow shelters to plan over the long term their staff and service requirements without being hampered by short-term fluctuations in bed nights, cash flow problems and deficits.

This government has increased funding support for women's crisis shelters, crisis lines and women's resource centres by \$2.5 million or 193 percent since 1987.

I know the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) is going to have a word or two to say in this debate, and I look forward to her contribution, but, you know, we were talking earlier about comparing governments' performances and so on. I do know one thing, after six years in this Legislature, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the New Democrats talk a darn good line, but I have also found out, through the bitter experience of being in opposition and watching them up close, that talk is really all we got.

The performance of the last four years by the present government belies the kinds of comments honourable members opposite sometimes tend to make about Progressive Conservative administrations, as if they alone had some kind of monopoly on looking after problems like this.

When you look at the record, it almost makes me want to cry, when I see the record of the New Democratic Party in these areas. It makes me want to cry more when I see the hypocrisy that I see day in and day out in this House, and I say hypocrisy

without fear of contradiction by the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) because if she wants to contradict, then we can get into a debate about how the New Democrats have sat idly by and allowed a very powerful labour leader in this country to treat grandmothers working in the union movement with such disdain, and the use of violent expressions with such abandon.

I can only assume by the silence of honourable members opposite that they put their union bosses ahead of what is really right in this country. What Daryl Bean stands for is not right in this country, and I expect to hear from honourable members opposite that Daryl Bean must go; otherwise, if I do not hear that, I am going to assume that anything the New Democrats tell me about violence against women is coming from hypocrites. The silence is indeed deafening, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The development of a major media campaign in 1990 which I referred to earlier, Abuse is a Crime, aimed at the prevention and the reporting of partner abuse, that was a very important turning point in the way we Manitobans view domestic violence. I will tell you, the government learned a lesson or two from that campaign, too. We learned that governments taking leadership roles can create activity and can create demand on systems that have heretofore been funded to a large extent by government.

We did that with our eyes open, in the same way that we established the family division of the Court of Queen's Bench in the city of Brandon. We knew what we were doing. We knew we were creating pressure on the judicial facilities in Brandon. Of course, my friends opposite like to make light of the fact that we need better facilities in Brandon, and I am the first one to agree that this is so. I am also the one who is doing the work in terms of discussing these matters within government in order to plan ahead for facilities in the future. The fact is we are going to have a unified family court service in the Court of Queen's Bench out of Brandon and anywhere in this province that people want to access that kind of service.

I am proud of that, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I am proud that I helped create the pressure that is going to ultimately result in better court facilities in the Westman area. But I am also proud to have been part of government that put forward that Abuse is a Crime, television media campaign, because, yes, we did face an increase in pressure on our

shelter system. But we matched that increase of activity with funding increases for the shelter system, probably second to none anywhere in this country.

It certainly dwarfs the performance of the previous government in this province. So sometimes you know, I say, we move forward with our eyes open. Some would like to say that there has been no planning, but those people who say that do not look at the numbers, do not look at the budget figures year over year for the provision of support for the shelter system and other systems that are intended to help women and children in our province.

I have a note, Madam Deputy Speaker, but I cannot read the signature at the bottom, so I will not be able to quote that person.

As I was saying, we can be proud of the progress we have made so far, but that is never to say that there is not much work to be done. No one is going to say that as long as there is one woman, as long as there is one child in this province who is being abused and not being afforded proper protection, that problem will remain with us, and as long as I am in this job I will remain vigilant about this and keep moving forward in this area.

The government of Manitoba funded the first crisis shelter for aboriginal women in Winnipeg—and I think it is pronounced *lkwe-Widdjiitiwin*, if I have that right—and a new resource centre for Francophone women, *Pluri-Elles*. I am also pleased about the stand that our government has taken today in support of aboriginal women. While the abuse of any woman in Manitoba is totally unacceptable, there is no question that aboriginal women face even greater obstacles, and aboriginal women need even greater support and co-operation from all politicians in this province including aboriginal politicians.

It is estimated that one in six women in Manitoba is abused. For aboriginal women this figure is one in three. It is a tragic, tragic statistic that needs addressing. I look forward to working with the aboriginal women's community in the development of programs and policies to address their particular needs and concerns. You know, what is important about the announcement made today that the honourable Leader of the Liberals was so uncomplimentary about, is the recognition that aboriginal women are getting through such policies as the one announced today.

I take it the honourable member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) underestimates the importance of that recommendation by her response today to the ministerial statement made by the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson). I am disappointed, when we have a leader of a political party in Manitoba, that once proud Liberal Party that had 21 seats in this House, now reduced to six.

I am very disappointed that the leader of that party would trivialize the issue of aboriginal women's rights and aboriginal women's status in this province the way that she did today. Normally, that honourable member has more class than she had today. Some of the things I have spoken of are just some of the actions that our government has taken to try to break that cycle of violence.

* (1520)

While government will continue to do its part, it is critical that we recognize domestic violence as not just a government problem. Ms. Pedlar stated in her review, and I quote: While the response of the justice system to domestic violence is critical, the larger issue of the role of the community must be addressed to achieve long-term preventive measures.

This means that government and the community have to work together to stop the violence. The way to work together is to stop all the sniping that goes on and seriously to work together and understand that we have serious problems in this province. Community input is key in order to eradicate those societal attitudes and perceptions that allow violence against women to continue. It is those same societal attitudes and perceptions that led to the kind of situation that we have at the Indian Birch Reserve, Madam Deputy Speaker, and all of those things that we do not like to see seem to be played out in a newspaper story that was reported in the weekend's Free Press respecting an aboriginal child-care worker who allegedly was beaten after apprehending children on the Indian Birch Reserve. This person allegedly has been banned from the community by the chief and council.

As I said a little while ago, we need support and we need a new direction from aboriginal political leaders, some of whom, former aboriginal leaders, sit in this House. I look for leadership from them, too. I look for leadership from the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), I look for leadership from the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin)—both of them

former chiefs. I wonder what they think about stories like this and whether they view issues like this and the alleged abuse that had to be undergone by the woman named in this story. I wonder how they feel about it, and why are they not here to speak out against that kind of thing.

Now the fact is, these are allegations, and I am always careful about allegations that we see in the newspapers as I think we all ought to be. When I see the allegations that I see in Saturday's paper I get very, very concerned, and I have instructed my department to draft for me a letter so that I can get a hold of the chief of the Indian Birch Reserve to find out if there is any truth to this. The chief, apparently, was not—what does it say in the paper? It says that the chief refused to explain the actions yesterday when contacted at home. Well, when such serious, serious allegations are coming forward, I wonder why it is that no explanation is forthcoming immediately.

Chief Stevenson is very concerned about the reputation of the chiefs in this province when it comes to allegations of misconduct in relation to child welfare cases, very concerned about the reputation of the chiefs. It did not take him very long with a whole lot of other chiefs to find themselves here at the Legislature for a meeting with members of this government. Those same chiefs could not find it possible to meet with us about the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry about which their friends in the New Democratic Party and, notably today, the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), speaking in such glowing terms of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report, but those chiefs were not there to talk about the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. They were there to talk about comments made by me and others that might have some negative impact on their reputations.

Well, I am more concerned about the negative impact on aboriginal women and children in this province, who daily are subjected to abuse. I am more concerned about them than I am about the perceptions of the damage to the reputation of the chiefs. I do not want anybody's reputation to be damaged unnecessarily or wrongly. Of course, that is what I am supposed to be here to stand against, and I do.

It seemed an unholy haste to me, almost an indecent haste to me, to be out looking after one's own reputation. I just wonder where our honourable members opposite stand on those kinds of issues

when they rise in their place to criticize this government about the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. Where do they stand? You get the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) for example, who says, oh, well, let us go with every single recommendation in the AJI and enact it as those two judges suggested we should.

We got the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) today using a new word, "independent" justice systems, so she does not have to use the word "separate." Well, you know, she is a pretty clever politician, Madam Deputy Speaker, and she is watching her words closely. I know exactly what she is doing, trying to play both sides of the fence as she has been doing around here since she came here in 1986, elected the same day I was, and playing that game for six years.

An Honourable Member: Ah, you have been watching her.

Mr. McCrae: Yes, I have been watching close, and I will tell you Madam Deputy Speaker, the aboriginal women of this province are not impressed.

Point of Order

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, I think the minister, in an issue on domestic violence, would want to make sure that his voice did not have overtones of violence in it.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable Leader of the Second Opposition does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over facts.

* * *

Mr. McCrae: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not going to take any lessons on voice intonation from the Leader of the Liberal Party. She does not like it when she is criticized for the way she uses her voice, and I really do take some offence that the honourable member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) should talk like that about me when I get a little bit emotional about the issue of domestic violence. I say shame on that honourable member for playing petty politics with that, too. If I was her, I would say I demand an apology, but I am not going to say that, because coming from her, I do not know if it would be worth getting anyway.

So I think I have made myself clear. I hope I have. If anybody wants me to repeat the way I feel about violence against women, aboriginal women, and

other women and children in our society, I will tell you one thing, I disagree with Daryl Bean. I disagree to the point where I think that man should be removed from his office, and I ask all honourable members to join with me in calling for that. I disagree with the allegations I have been seeing and hearing about the treatment of aboriginal women and, unfortunately, allegedly at the hands of their own political leaders.

Madam Deputy Speaker, if these allegations in the newspaper are true, can you imagine how any aboriginal woman in this whole province can feel vis-a-vis their relationship with their political leaders at the reserve level? Does anybody care around here in the opposition? When have I heard anybody in the opposition say that the chiefs ought to do a better job in protecting the women on their reserves?

What does Phil Fontaine say about this article in Saturday's Free Press, Madam Deputy Speaker? I have not heard a peep. Why? Phil Fontaine has a very delicate job on his hands. He is selected by whom to speak for aboriginal people in this province? Selected by the chiefs. Something is wrong here. Everybody knows there is something wrong here, and everybody on that side of the House is afraid to talk about it. They want to rely on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report—talk about, no not separate anymore, but independent court systems so that the elected people of Canada and the elected people of Manitoba can play no role.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I am certainly not here to defend federal and provincial governments' performance for the last 125 years in their dealings with aboriginal people. Make no mistake about that. I am here to tell you that I know enough about what goes on on Manitoba reserves to know that there is a very, very big problem which will not be solved without their being addressed by aboriginal leadership, i.e., chiefs and councils working together with aboriginal women who are showing real leadership in this province, and not getting enough support from honourable members opposite in the Liberal and New Democratic Parties.

Now, you know, if I have raised my voice, Madam Deputy Speaker, and this offends the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), then it is only because she does not understand how important this issue is. She has demonstrated to me by her laughter today and her attitude today in response to the honourable Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson), she does

not understand aboriginal women's issues, and she has demonstrated that very clearly to me. I am very disappointed because I thought the Leader of the Liberal Party was better than that, I honestly did.

* (1530)

She is talking about picking cheap political personal shots at the Premier (Mr. Filmon), and taking cheap shots at me because of the tone of my voice. I just cannot figure that out. I am obviously not impressed, and the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) wants to get in the act and make light of this issue too. This is one of the most important issues facing all Canadians and certainly Manitobans. I am very glad to see that the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) is here to listen and hear what is going on with respect to the chiefs of this province, and the allegations being made about them with relation to women on reserves. They are very, very disturbing reports. You know, when I say it is disturbing that I read a report like this in the newspaper, what happens? Chief Stevenson suggests that I am convicting the man without the benefit of trial. [interjection]

The honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) wants to come to the aid of people like Chief Stevenson who has said publicly that provincial governments have no jurisdiction on First Nations lands. That is the person the honourable member for Inkster wants to support. [interjection] He sounds just like Chief Stevenson, the honourable member for Inkster, and I guess he is speaking for the Liberal Party, too—[interjection] If the honourable member for Inkster wants to sit there in his seat and stick up for the attitude that Chief Stevenson has displayed in this province, let him go ahead. I am not going to.

It causes me concern that the likes of Chief Stevenson should occupy a position of power, a position like justice chairman for the Assembly of Chiefs, when he suggests that the provincial government has no jurisdiction on First Nations lands. That caused me no end of concern, but of course it does not bother the member for Inkster because maybe anarchy suits him better. Well, it does not me.

I hope that the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) will read my comments in Hansard. I think they need to be read by people like the honourable member for The Pas, because he is an influential person. He has a chance to make a difference. That is why I presume he—

An Honourable Member: Your whining has backfired, right. You made mention of that earlier.

Mr. McCrae: If the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) wants to get in on the act and defend the silence in the light of allegations like this, then let him do that.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Yes, Madam Deputy Speaker, the minister brought in a resolution. Debate on the resolution should obviously relate to that. The minister ought not to be bringing in the kind of personal accusations he has made against members of this House or attempting to put words in the mouths of others and attempting to take political advantage of very serious allegations.

That member should withdraw some of the comments he has made today about the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) and other members of this House. It is uncalled for and has no basis to do with this resolution. I would like to ask you to have him withdraw those inappropriate comments and to restrict his comments to this resolution.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader): The Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) is debating a very important serious issue. The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has talked about politics, has talked about political innuendo. He is certainly an individual who has been on that opposite side of that question and on many occasions done the exact same things as he is now accusing the Minister of Justice of doing.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this is a debate on a resolution before this House. The Minister of Justice certainly had the opportunity to put the questions to this House that he has about the actions of the opposition parties on this issue.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Thompson does not have a point of order, but I would request all honourable members to choose their words carefully. I would suggest that the honourable minister should keep his debate relevant to the proposed resolution before us.

Mr. McCrae: I will indeed, and have, I hope, been choosing my words carefully because of the position

I hold in this province, but I will use this position that I hold in this province to bend every effort to bring people on side and to understand the seriousness of the issue that I am talking about.

The honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) clearly either does not understand the gravity of this problem or else wants to overlook it. For what reason, I will not guess, because that is not the right thing to do. If the honourable member wants to talk about sleazy personal attacks, he can direct his comments to people like Chief Stevenson and talk to him about those kinds of attacks that have been made.

Let us talk about the real issue, Madam Deputy Speaker, instead of the cheap politics which the honourable member for Thompson wants to talk. Let us talk about the real issue. Whether you use the words "separate justice system", "independent justice system," as the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) now wants to use that kind of language, tell me how a separate justice system or an independent justice system would have saved the J.J. Harper tragedy. Tell me how Helen Betty Osborne would be walking with us today if we had a separate or independent justice system. Tell us how that would have saved either of those individuals whose lives were tragically snuffed out.

Tell us how a separate justice system or an independent justice system would help a single mother looking after children in the city of Winnipeg. How would that system help them to live a better life or their children to achieve the kinds of potential that they should be entitled to achieve just like your children or my children? Tell me how that would happen. [interjection]

The honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) now wants to get into it. I assume she is going to, and when she does, I want her to join with me in calling for the removal of Daryl Bean from office as the leader of 170,000 Public Service Alliance of Canada employees, many of whom are women whom that gentleman's views do not represent in the least.

You can tell me that he just found this quote somewhere and accidentally it found its way into his letter to those three grandmothers who were writing to him, but she will never have me believe that he did not adopt that kind of description of scabs, as he called them, and what ought to be done with them, that they ought to be hanged or drowned.

Now honourable members opposite have been very silent about this. [interjection] Yes, the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) does not agree. The honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) belongs to an organization that does not agree. Well, what are you doing about it?—is my question. What are you doing about it? You sit in your place and talk about sleazy politics and yet you let your union politics hold sway over what is right for the people of this country. That is wrong. [interjection] I would like some order so I can finish my comments.

* (1540)

Madam Deputy Speaker, I rarely see the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) get so worked up unless it has to do with protecting some union boss somewhere, getting in the way of what is right for the people of this country—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Praznik: Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, I appreciate that we all react in the course of debate, but the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has pushed that beyond the limit when his heckling from his seat—which I admit we all engage in from time to time—has silenced the member who has the floor. Madam Deputy Speaker, I would ask if you would call that member to order.

Mr. Ashton: Madam Deputy Speaker, I apologize if I took offence to the remarks of the minister. My concern was that the minister was using the Chamber inappropriately, particularly libelling individuals previously, chiefs, former chiefs as a group, making specific reference to individual members. That was why I took offence.

I put my apologies forward for having disrupted this House by it, but I also hope that the minister would refrain from those types of comments and stick to the very serious issue.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Thompson for those comments.

* * *

Mr. McCrae: Madam Deputy Speaker, a careful review of my comments will demonstrate that I have slandered or libelled no one. The honourable member for Thompson is simply very extremely sensitive when it comes to union bosses and the

language they use when it comes to calling people scabs and suggesting that the only good thing to do with a scab is drown them or hang them. It is in the name of protecting union bosses who want to use that kind of language that the honourable member for Thompson takes his part in the House today.

Now, it will be interesting to hear where he stands on where Daryl Bean stands with relation to people generally and how he writes letters to grandmothers working in federal public service in particular. I am very concerned about that, and I would like that concern to be shared by people in the opposition.

This is International Women's Day. This is a day for us to support things that move in the right direction and to condemn things that have the tendency to move us in the wrong direction. I have been talking about attitudes today. I have been talking about silence today. I have not attempted to malign anyone, personally or inappropriately. If we do not talk about these things when are we ever going to do something about abuse against aboriginal women? Are we ever going to, or are we going to continue to protect those who sit silently by while it happens? [interjection]

Yes, Madam Deputy Speaker, I will shout about issues like that because what is going on in this country is wrong, and honourable members opposite want to stand in their places and defend what is wrong. I want no part of it.

The honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) I am sure will make a positive contribution to this debate, because—

An Honourable Member: She has not yet.

Mr. McCrae: She has, Ed. She has made positive contributions.

She is also in a very uncomfortable position having to sit with that lot over there who defend the likes of Daryl Bean and defend the comments of Louis Stevenson who makes such outrageous comments from time to time. I did talk about domestic violence being a community matter, and to ensure critical community input, Madam Deputy Speaker, I have established a community advisory committee to work in tandem with the government working group on domestic violence. This committee is comprised of key representatives, including the aboriginal, northern and immigrant women's communities. They will have a direct input in the prioritization and implementation of recommendations.

Our government has taken the lead, Madam Deputy Speaker, by adopting the Domestic Violence Review's fundamental principle, namely, that Manitobans must work for and practice living in an environment free of domestic violence, an environment where family violence and partner abuse are not acceptable and will be treated as criminal offences.

It is absolutely vital and imperative that this principle be adopted by all individuals and groups in the community, to heighten public awareness that partner abuse is a crime. Domestic violence cannot be tolerated in our society. We talk about how civilized we are. Look at the facts. They will bear out just how civilized we are. The abuse and murder of women in Manitoba must stop, Madam Deputy Speaker. Our government will continue to take a tough stand against domestic violence. The Pedlar review, of course, is greatly going to assist us in working toward our goal of a society free from partner abuse. We therefore request that all Manitobans join us in declaring Manitoba a domestic violence-free zone and adopting a zero-tolerance attitude about partner abuse. By building a partnership among all Manitobans, we can stop the war against women.

In a sense, it is too bad that this is the focus for discussion today on a day when we are celebrating. We are celebrating International Women's Day. But, as all spokespersons will tell you, we have got a lot to do. This an area where this is much to be done. It is not an area where we should be hampered by important people in the communities, not an area where powerful leaders should be intimidating other people, or allegedly intimidating other people, and those issues should be straightened out and everybody should get on the same side. That includes all honourable members in this House. I ask honourable members to support this resolution which I suggest is not hard to support.

I ask all honourable members to join with me and to join with everyone else who is involved in celebrating the achievements that have been made over the years but also to join me in committing themselves to working—and I mean really working, not just pretending some of these things do not exist. I mean, in a sincere and united way, to pull together to help solve these problems.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Deputy Speaker, I had hoped that we were going to keep this resolution

today very clearly on topic, but because the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) has chosen to go into a number of areas, I think it is appropriate that we respond to those things.

First and foremost, I would like to address the issue that he raised with respect to the Indian Birch Reserve and his concerns as to what may or may not—or what has alleged to have happened on that reserve. He is right when he says that we must be concerned. We must ensure that aboriginal women and children are protected. Therefore, I wonder why the Minister of Justice did not respond to the request of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs to hold an independent inquiry. That is what they asked. They too were concerned about the number of allegations being made. They too were concerned about the lack of protection for their women and their children, and so they called for such an inquiry. The Attorney General turned down their request. Then he comes into this House today and criticizes one chief in particular, but many chiefs in his other remarks, about their failure to do anything when he is the one that refused their request.

Madam Deputy Speaker, one of the concerns that we must all have with regard to the constitutional negotiations going on at the present time is the protection of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, because the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is there primarily to protect the vulnerable. Those who are not vulnerable have always had protection. They protect themselves. It is the vulnerable in society who do not have protection. That is what the charter, that was made a part of our constitution in 1982, was supposed to protect and guarantee.

I attended a breakfast this morning for the Legal Education and Action Fund, LEAF, an organization primarily of women but of certainly some men who have chosen to fund an organization to take legal challenges to the Supreme Court of Canada. Almost all of the cases which they have taken, and I say almost all because some of them indeed have been cases affecting men, but the vast majority of those cases have been cases affecting women, women of colour, women of aboriginal ancestry, to try and make the charter into a living document to ensure the adequate protection of vulnerable women and children.

That is why I am very clearly on the record, as is my party, of saying that the inherent right to self-government of our aboriginal people must be subject to the charter. I also agree that any distinct

society granted to the province of Quebec should also be subject to that charter because above all other documents in our Canadian Constitution must be a guarantee of the protection of our fundamental rights and freedoms. Therein constitutionally lies the right of protection and so having put those remarks in response to what was a diatribe by the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae), I would like to focus specifically on the issue of domestic violence.

* (1550)

Madam Deputy Speaker, there is much that needs to be done in the whole field of domestic violence. Yes, it is true the government has addressed some parts, but their response to the Pedlar report was like their response today, on International Women's Day, to the aboriginal women's issues. They talk piously. They tell us what needs to be done, and then they do not provide one cent of money to make sure that what they have said needs to be done actually is done. There is no point in talking about what needs to be done if you are in fact going to not ensure that it happens.

In fact, Madam Deputy Speaker, it can be a negative thing. It can give rise to expectations which are not met, and when expectations are not met, a frustration level sets in. So by the use of pious phrases without the implementation, you are in grave danger of giving rise to those expectations and then watching those expectations go splat on the ground.

I would like to talk about a number of things in the Pedlar inquiry today which the government has not indicated that it is prepared to adjust and to address.

In income response, the Pedlar inquiry says the following: It is recommended that Manitoba Family Services, Income Security, increase the initial allowable stay for a woman at a shelter to 30 days from the current 10 days. While that is in the Pedlar report, it is not a new recommendation. It has been around for a very long time. The reasons are really quite simple. When a woman has been badly assaulted, physically and perhaps sexually, and in some cases both, she goes through an adjustment period. Most experts will tell you that 10 days is woefully inadequate in that adjustment period. Within that 10 days not only does she have to find new accommodation for herself and her children, she has to set up a support system. She has to hopefully obtain counselling, and it cannot be achieved in 10 days. Anyone involved in the shelter business in the province of Manitoba knows that

they frequently have to put those women and children back on to the streets knowing they have not received adequate support systems in any area.

If the Attorney General wants to know of something he should be addressing that he is not addressing, then have him look at the income response section of his Pedlar report.

The Pedlar report goes on to say that it is recommended that Manitoba Family Services, Income Security, implement a policy of including the cost of telephone services as a basic need for victims of domestic violence. It is not considered a basic need in our social allowance system. Yet we have public relations campaigns, good advertising campaigns, very good advertising campaigns, but what do they flash on the bottom? The bottom of the ad flashes a telephone number. If you are on social assistance, Madam Deputy Speaker, and you do not have a telephone, that telephone number is not of a great deal of value to you. The moment that you need the telephone the most is the moment when the door is being banged down. It is the moment when perhaps the abuser has walked out temporarily and you need to get to a telephone quickly. If you are on social assistance in the province of Manitoba, it is not a guaranteed necessity. It is not considered part of the necessities, and so we ask women on welfare to take from their food budget or from their clothing budget or from their rent budget, the money to have a phone. Well, it is not an appropriate response, and Dorothy Pedlar has pointed that out very clearly.

They recommended in the Pedlar report also under Income Support that transportation costs for women and their children to attend shelters or emergency housing be covered by income security. That, too, is not covered. Can you imagine the dilemma faced by a woman on welfare who is abused who has no money? She has no money. There is no cash in the house. I doubt if any of us have experienced that. She needs to get a cab to get to a shelter and she has no money. That has not been addressed by this government, at least not to date.

The Pedlar report called for an educational response in a number of areas. The minister has indicated that they are prepared to move into an educational response system for those working within the justice system, and for that I congratulate him. He has also indicated that there will be treatment for those who have been convicted of

abuse when they are incarcerated in provincial institutions, and for that I also congratulate him. If we are genuinely serious about turning the tide, then we have to change attitudes, and we have to change attitudes among our children.

I was quite shocked just last week in reading an article about the amount of physically violent action and word used by young teenage boys against teenage girls. One response was a young woman was standing apparently outside of a cafeteria and the young man came up to her and said, I told you to stand in front of your locker, as if she was to be ordered around by this young teenage boy. Those are the attitudes which are very prevalent out there.

I recommended to the Minister of Education not once, not twice, but many times, and I will now recommend to this Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey), that she take a very careful look at the Thumbs Down program that has been written by the Canadian Teachers' Federation. It is not a curriculum that needs to be rewritten. It is a curriculum that has already been written. It is one that we could impose within our school system without spending any money on writing a curriculum. It is there. It is all ready to go. It is already in use in the province of Ontario.

It deals with this very issue of how we can create a climate in our school system to talk about attitudes towards violence, to dialogue with young people about violence issues and to change their attitudes before they become the perpetrators of domestic violence, because we know sadly that children who have been abused, abuse. That is the tragedy. Unless we get to them when they are being abused or shortly thereafter, the chances are excellent that when they grow up they, too, will become child and wife abusers. Pedlar recommends this. She says that educational institutions in Manitoba integrate a mandatory domestic violence educational component into the school curriculum for elementary, junior high and high schools. She, in turn, also recommends the Thumbs Down curriculum.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) today got quite carried away with the word "independent" justice system which I used, but to my understanding of the aboriginal justice system that is what it would be, an independent justice system. Why he thinks that is a brand new word on the horizon, I am not sure.

* (1600)

I do indeed believe that we need an aboriginal justice system in Canada. I believe we need it because we only have to read the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry to realize that aboriginal peoples have not received justice in Canada. There are too many of them in our jails. There are too many of them without support services. If we have taught them violence, and I believe indeed we have, then it does not surprise me that some of them will react in violent ways.

The government introduced this resolution today because it said that it believed that we needed to take action. Yes, we do need to take action, but that is not what the government is doing. The government is releasing press releases, the government is coming up with policies, but the government is not specifically addressing the needs out there as recommended by Pedlar herself. That, Madam Deputy Speaker, concerns me very much.

There is a great deal of violence in our society, much of it perpetrated against women. Some of those statistics are indeed shocking, and I think they need to be repeated today. One out of four female children under the age of 12 will be sexually assaulted, 25 percent of our young female population. One out of 10 women in our society will be assaulted by her spouse or her significant other. One out of 10. We know the stresses and strains that create it, but we also know that it crosses all socioeconomic lines. We do not know, by looking at the outside of an individual, who may have been assaulted, and yet, if we ask enough questions, we are shocked, because so many women never tell the truth about it.

I remember my own sister telling me that the bruises on her arm were caused by the fact that she had fallen, only to discover some six months later that she had been pushed into the stove by her husband. I think everyone of us have had experiences like that close to us. I know some of the members on the other side have had experiences close to them about a loved one who has been assaulted.

It is a common occurrence in families in Canada, and we must make sure that young women know that they do not have to put up with that; that they will be believed when they tell someone that they have, in fact, been assaulted; that they will have places to go for protection when they have been assaulted. It is indeed much more difficult, often, in small closed societies.

Yes, it is frequently more difficult in a reserve situation, because everybody knows everybody else. It is more difficult in a rural community, because everybody knows everybody else. Sometimes it is easier in a big city because there is an anonymity attached, and therefore it is even more important that we reach out to rural communities, and we reach out to aboriginal communities and make sure that the services are there on site, to make sure that when someone needs that help and support that that help and support will be there for them.

The Justice minister today accused members on this side of the House of trivializing—trivializing—and he said that the New Democratic Party did not have the key to justice and equity. I do not think they believe that. Nobody has a key to anything. We just have to hope at a given moment in time that movement is taken, policies change, initiatives begin, so that the system through successive governments, no matter what their political stripe, gets better and better, and there is more equity, and there is more equality, and there is more opportunity for those who have been hurt in our society.

Madam Deputy Speaker, domestic violence occurs. We have to admit it; we have to face it; we have to deal with it, but pious phrases will not do it. We need fundamental changes in the way we deliver service, and let me take just one instance. Women say over and over again, and in fact Dorothy Pedlar said it herself, that restraining orders are not worth the paper they are written on. Well, maybe they are, but as long as there is a perception that they are not, as long as various agencies refuse to act on those restraining orders, then they are not worth the paper they are written on.

The Attorney General knows of several cases that I have raised with him of people who have tried to abuse the restraining order in any way, shape, or form that they can. There has to be a clearly defined policy about restraining orders that is uniform across the province. The Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) says that he is going to work on that, but again some dollars must be provided so that work happens.

If we are going to have a master computer system which makes a restraining order against some individual instantly available, then some dollars have to be found to put into that system, so that they are there instantly. So, when an RCMP officer wants to know about a situation, when a City of Winnipeg or a City of Brandon police person wants

to know something about it, it happens instantly. This is the day of instant technology, but instant technology does not come cheaply. Instant technology has to be funded.

While I agree in spirit with the motion and the resolution proposed by the government, I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that the following words be added after the word "abuse" in the last line: "but this House regrets that this government has chosen not to provide the appropriate resources to ensure Manitoba is truly a domestic violence-free zone."

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

* (1610)

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Leader of the second opposition party has moved an amendment to the proposed resolution of the honourable Minister of Justice. Her amendment is indeed a complex matter and I will take this matter under advisement to save the time of the House, and I will recognize whoever wants to speak on the original resolution.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, we have in this House on a number of occasions since the last provincial election spoken on the issue of domestic violence, on the issue of services to women and children, on the issue of the requirements of society to provide for all of its members.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to speak to the resolution put forward by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), supporting the position adopted by the government of Manitoba in declaring Manitoba as a domestic violence free zone where partner abuse is viewed as a criminal offence and in adopting a tough stance against partner abuse. I would like nothing better than to be able to stand here and say that yes, the official opposition can wholeheartedly endorse this resolution. I would like nothing better than to be able to say that. However, I am not, in all good conscience, able to make that statement. Nor is anyone else in the official opposition caucus.

It is because, like so much that this government has put forward, particularly in dealing with issues that relate to women and children, that relate to the economic violence that is perpetrated upon women and children and northerners and rural Manitobans and people in the inner city in Winnipeg by this government and its federal counterparts; particularly in light of the complete lack of concrete forward-looking programs, proposals and actions

on the part of this government in dealing with these issues, I and my colleagues are unable, regretfully, to respond in a positive manner to this resolution.

The government has brought forward a very general resolution speaking to the need to have a province that is violence free, a violence-free zone. Mr. Speaker, the government has done, as I have stated earlier, virtually nothing specifically to implement those high-sounding phrases. The government does not even have as a rationale for its lack of action, that there is no information, that there is no research, that there are no suggested forms of action that could be taken. That is perhaps the most distressing part of this whole process that we have been undertaking in this House and in this province for the last four years.

When you are dealing, Mr. Speaker, with a physical illness or a mental incapacity where we as a society do not understand the causes and do not have a cure or even any palliative care that can be offered to people, that is tragic. It is very distressing for the people involved and for us as a society as a whole. In many of those cases, we are working day and night on attempting to come up with solutions to these medical problems. We hope that with additional research and additional funds and support, we will be able to find cures or at least assistance for some of these major medical problems. While it is a tragedy that individuals are struck down by these problems, it is something that we cannot, with our limited understanding, always find an answer to.

What is so really frustrating and horrifying, Mr. Speaker, about this whole issue of domestic violence, about support for women and children and families in this province is that we are not in that situation. We are not at the beginning of looking for results. We are not at the beginning of looking for answers. There are answers to be had. There have been answers to be had for some time now. The women and the children and the families of this province are being held hostage by this government's inaction in any meaningful way on the issues that we are discussing here today and that we have been discussing for years in this House, Mr. Speaker.

We have an enormous range and depth of understanding of these issues. We know many of the causes of domestic violence. We know many of the causes of poverty, the economic violence it has perpetrated on many Manitobans. We know not

only the causes but we have a large list of potential programs, initiatives and ideas for ameliorating if not curing these major problems that are facing Manitobans today. We know on this side of the House, the government knows on the government side of the House, and they choose not to listen. They choose not to act.

* (1620)

Mr. Speaker, there are several very detailed reports that have come out just in the last year dealing with these issues. We have been discussing quite extensively the Pedlar report, which was given to the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) in August of last year. We also have the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, which was also given to the government last year. We have available to us the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg proposal for a safer Winnipeg for women and children given to the mayor and members of City Council and also to members of the Legislature in November of last year. We also have a large number of well-informed, dedicated, competent caregivers in our community. We do have programs that work to alleviate and hopefully prevent domestic violence, economic violence, social violence.

There is a vast reservoir of expertise in this province that the government only has to call on. The government is choosing not to call on that level of expertise. The government is choosing not to listen to, not to take seriously the recommendations in its own reports.

Mr. Speaker, when the Pedlar Commission was announced by the Minister of Justice, he stated, and I would like to quote here from his press conference: Government action in the provision of vital support services, protection of victims and the apprehension and rehabilitation of offenders is crucial.

We on this side of the House concur completely with that statement. Those are the major areas that the Pedlar Commission report addresses: vital support services; protection of victims; apprehension of offenders; and rehabilitation of offenders. Now, the Pedlar report addresses very carefully and extensively each of those four areas.

Also in his press release, the minister stated that over half of the recommendations of the Pedlar report were either completely implemented or on their way to being implemented. The concern of the community and the concern of the people and women and children in Manitoba is that many of the most important recommendations of the Pedlar

report, recommendations that will have the longest term impact, that will have the best chance of breaking the cycle of violence, are not being addressed, to our knowledge, anywhere by this government.

Those are the areas of vital support services and the rehabilitation of offenders. The government is making a beginning on protection of victims, not nearly enough, but there is something happening there, and in the apprehension of offenders through the provisions in the judicial system.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I say to you and to members of the government opposite, that if we do not begin to address all of the areas of the Pedlar report, we will end up no further ahead than we are currently, and most likely will actually be further behind. As the Pedlar report states and as the government members have also said, this is a problem and an issue that crosses boundaries that must have complete and total community commitment to change.

Well, the community commitment to change must begin with the people who have the ultimate responsibility and authority and power to institute programs and policies and provide resources so that the community commitment can actually be played out.

The idea that the government can just make a presentation of a report after months and months of deliberation, can issue a glowing press release and then do nothing, seems to be the modus operandi of this government in many areas, but particularly in areas that deal with social policy.

Effective social policy today requires an activist government, and members of the government opposite, benches opposite, have even stated that they believe that the best government is less government. Well, in the area of social policy, Mr. Speaker, it has been proven time and time again that the less government is the worst government. There must be a commitment on the part of the government to provide adequate, effective, accessible resources for all people in the province of Manitoba. This government is not living up to those commitments.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

The Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), in his discussion about his motion, read from the Pedlar Commission report and stated that, I quote: The consultations made it clear that while the response

of the justice system to domestic violence is critical, the larger issue of the role of the community must be addressed to achieve long-term preventive measures.

I would like to continue to quote that paragraph which the Minister of Justice did not conclude. That paragraph goes on to say: Without greater awareness at the community level, along with concrete actions and initiatives, the justice system and other crisis services will only continue to react after the occurrence of the abuse in virtual isolation.

I stand here today, Mr. Acting Speaker, stating very strongly that this government has not followed through on that portion of the Pedlar report. There is virtually no concrete action, no initiatives, no long-range planning, no additional resources into this enormously important area.

The Pedlar report talks about the need for long-term services for victims, their children and abusers. It talks about community-based programs for abusers that will allow for a longer-term focus to assist them in changing their behaviours and their attitudes and their values.

Again, the educational system has a major role to play in the effective implementation of the recommendations of the Pedlar Commission report.

This government has not apparently, by anything that we can see so far, understood the fact that you cannot have an effective service delivery system to assist victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and other forms of social and economic inequities without the inclusion of long-term programs and working with all parts of the community.

There does not appear to be a commitment to deal effectively with domestic violence, which also is one of the major components of the Pedlar Commission. Quote: The need for a genuine commitment to hold abusers accountable for their actions and to ensure that appropriate services are available to abused women, children and abusers was a predominant theme throughout the consultations. This need must be met through the community.

The community, as defined by Ms. Pedlar in her report, is a very inclusive term. It does not only reflect the voluntary sector, it does not only reflect the extragovernmental components of our system, it also very clearly states that community includes the justice system, the social services system and the education system. Without all of those

elements involved in the solution to the problems, the problems will only continue to get worse.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the government has chosen to date not to effectively involve the parts of the community that they have ultimate responsibility for: the education system, the social services system. They are beginning on the justice system, but they have not begun to address the middle- and long-range goals that the Pedlar report speaks to.

* (1630)

Finally, in my beginning remarks, Mr. Acting Speaker, the resolution states that Manitoba should be declared as a domestic violence-free zone. Now in light of the governments inaction and lack of resources in this area in the past and to date, this rings hollow. It certainly rings hollow in light of what Ms. Pedlar says in her report. I quote: A face value designation of a domestic violence-free province may appear to be nothing more than rhetoric.

I would state, Mr. Acting Speaker, unequivocally, that to this point in time it not only appears to be nothing more than rhetoric, but it is nothing more than rhetoric. This government has not shown its commitment to dealing effectively and in a long-term way with the issues of domestic violence.

There are several major areas of medium- and long-term recommendations by the Pedlar Commission that the government has not begun to address. Now the government did put together a working group. It did institute a very capable list of a number of women in the province to work with the government in implementing the Pedlar Commission recommendations. Again, with a great deal of fanfare the government announced the names of this volunteer component that would work with the government working group on December 6, the second anniversary of the Montreal massacre.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is only in the last week or two that the government working group has begun meeting. The community group has not yet had a chance to meet and talk with the government working group or the ministers involved in the implementation of the Pedlar Commission recommendations since early December. Now to me when the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) talks about hypocrisy, in this particular context he knows very well of what he speaks, because this appears on the surface to be an example of the most blatant kind of hypocrisy, the most blatant kind of politicking, the most blatant kind of a government

announcement with absolutely no content to back it up.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we will await with great anticipation the actual meeting together of this working group and the community volunteers to begin the process of medium- and long-term application of the Pedlar Commission report.

Some of those medium- and long-term recommendations have been discussed by the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), particularly the income security recommendations. I think this area is a really good example of a situation where we know what will help alleviate the problem. We know how to deliver the service that will help alleviate the problem. We have a pretty good idea about the impact of some of those services on helping alleviate the problem. The only thing that is missing is a political commitment to do something about it.

I would particularly like to discuss the shelter allowance proposal. The recommendation in the Pedlar Commission is that there be an increase in the maximum allowable stay in shelters from 10 days to 30 days. It is a very simple recommendation, one that anyone who has had the least bit of contact with the shelter movement, with the whole abuse process and cycle, knows is the minimum that should be done in alleviating the immediate concerns for women and children who are leaving abusive situations. This government has chosen not to act on that recommendation which would be very simple to implement.

Again, the telephone as a basic need under income security—I will not speak long to that issue, because it has been brought up on many occasions. Again, it is an example where the government is saying we talk about the need to help abused women and children, we talk about the need to provide services and yet a very simple additional inclusion in the basic income security manual is not occurring. This government certainly knows how to change regulations as we have seen in the change to The Child and Family Services Act, as we have seen in several other instances by the government. They certainly do know how to change laws and regulations, but they are choosing not to do so.

The covering of transportation costs to shelters for women and children and covering of transportation costs to shelters for women and children on reserves, those are two really essential components. The Minister of Family Services (Mr.

Gilleshammer), in our first Estimates process in the late fall of 1990, said to me, and I am paraphrasing here, we were discussing the need for 24-hour fully staffed shelters throughout the province. The minister suggested that if there were less than a full complement in a shelter that perhaps some staff could be sent home, because they would not be needed at that time. When I asked the minister, what does a woman do if she goes to one of those shelters and there are not staff available to deal with her situation at that time. The minister said, well, the family could go to another shelter which is like only 30 or 40 miles away.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that whole concept or the whole lack of understanding of what an adequate shelter system is all about permeates this government's response to domestic violence. Shelters are not fast-food outlets. Shelters must be staffed adequately 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, because no one knows when a family is going to need the shelter services.

Another element to the fact, particularly outside the city but even within the city, the transportation costs for a family to go to a shelter—a major component in why many families actually do not access the shelter system. They are trapped in their homes. They have no financial means of getting to a shelter. That could mean less than \$2 for a family to go within the city of Winnipeg to get to Osborne House.

There are many women who are completely without financial resources. That is a very classic way of an abusive partner to control a woman and her children is to not give her any access to financial independence whatsoever. Particularly outside the city, Mr. Acting Speaker, transportation becomes an almost unsurmountable difficulty for women attempting to leave abusive relationships.

For the government not to have, immediately upon the recommendation of the Pedlar Commission, instituted these income response recommendations very clearly says to me, to my caucus colleagues and I would venture to say to many of the women and children in Manitoba and service providers in this province, that this government's commitment to ending domestic abuse, to ending this cycle of violence, is less than 100 percent.

* (1640)

Mr. Acting Speaker, one other area that is of great concern to us on this side of the House in the Pedlar

report is the response to abusers. It is well known that there are very few services in this province for abusers. Most abusers go in and out of the justice system without having any contact with any kind of education or rehabilitative support services at all. That is largely due to the fact that we have one program in Winnipeg, Evolve, which deals with services to abusers. We have a small program at the Family Services of Winnipeg agency that deals with services to abusers, and we have a small program at the Family Services of Winnipeg agency that deals with services to abusers, and we have a Francophone service in St. Boniface, le conseil de services, which also provides programming, albeit on a very small pilot project scale for services to abusers.

That is virtually all that is available in the province of Manitoba today for abusers. So legitimately a judge might say he or she would like to be able to send an abuser to a program. In many cases they do say it, but it is a hollow statement, because the waiting lists for all of those services are six months to a year. There is virtually no way for an individual or a family to get the kind of assistance that they need and that should be available to them without waiting an inordinately long period of time.

Again, Mr. Acting Speaker, it goes back to my earlier comment. It is not that we do not know what to do. It is not that we do not have the skill and the understanding to make changes. It is just that we do not seem to have the political will to do it.

An Honourable Member: Becky, speak for yourselves.

Ms. Barrett: I am speaking that the "we" in this context is the government. I want to make that very clear.

In the Pedlar report there is a recommendation that an educational program for women who abuse their partners be developed and this program be a component of services offered by probation services. This recommendation I have always found to be very interesting, because it recognizes the fact that the long-term services for abusers in particular are very understaffed and underresourced. The Pedlar report states that very clearly.

What the Pedlar report says is, because those are understaffed what Pedlar was recommending is an educational program involving no more than 10 sessions, which would enable intervention in many more cases than at present. This recommendation

I have a great deal of trouble with, and I believe people who provide services to abusers have probably found a great deal of problems with as well. That is, that in 10 sessions there is no way you can even begin to understand or to scratch the surface of assisting a person who has been an abuser, who most likely was abused as a child, to come to grips with what the problem is, an understanding of the responsibility that that person has and for making changes that have any long-term effect.

In effect, Mr. Acting Speaker, this recommendation is more harmful than not doing anything, in my opinion, because if this program were implemented it would give women a false sense of security that because their abusive partner had gone to a 10-session program they would be rehabilitated. This is false. It will not happen. It is an understanding on the part of the Pedlar report of an enormous problem and an attempt to provide an intermediate solution, but it also says, in effect, that the Pedlar report knows that the government is not going to do what the government needs to do in implementing really long-term change.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I know my time is limited. I would like to make a few final comments. I would also like to put on the record my congratulations to the new head of Family Dispute Services in the Department of Family Services, Ms. Marlene Bertrand, who has provided years of extensive knowledge and understanding of the shelter movement. She began the shelter in Brandon. She was instrumental in the success of Osborne House over the years. She has a wealth, probably more than anyone else in this province and perhaps more than almost anyone else in the country, of the issues surrounding abuse and the needs for services for women and children in the shelter movement. I congratulate the government on that appointment and wish Marlene all of the best in a very difficult job that we all are working toward alleviating.

I would also like to respond to only two of the comments that were put on the record by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae). The minister stated that he hoped, but he was not sure, the members on this side of the House were concerned about the negative impact of abuse and violence on aboriginal women and children, and questioning when are we going to do something about abuse against aboriginal women.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the comments that were put on the record by the Minister of Justice, I would like to respond to. We on this side of the House are very concerned about the negative impact of abuse, physical, psychological, emotional, sexual, economic and social, that has been perpetrated on aboriginal women and children and many non-aboriginal women and children in our province today. I would like to turn the question around to the Minister of Justice and ask the Minister of Justice when he is going to do something about abuse against women and children. What he has put on the record so far is certainly going to be cold comfort to the women and children of Manitoba.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

The public policy statement made today has eight guiding principles. We have absolutely no problem with supporting wholeheartedly those guiding principles, but we put this government policy in line with the government policy statements that have been made with the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, with the Pedlar Commission report and in a larger context about issues dealing with women, the Hay committee report and what do we see, Mr. Speaker? We see lots of rhetoric, lots of good guiding principles, and virtually no action at all on these issues of vital importance to all Manitobans.

* (1650)

So excuse us, Mr. Speaker, if we do not quite stand up and unanimously, immediately fall all over ourselves in tugging at our forelock and saying, yes, you have done a wonderful job, Mr. Justice minister, because you have not, Mr. Justice minister; you have not, Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson); you have not, Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer); you have not, Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey); you have not, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

You have done an abysmal job of supporting the women and children of this province. We are prepared on this side of the House to support wholeheartedly government initiatives that actually do something for the women and children of Manitoba, that actually do something other than spend paper. We support and have initiated for months now a demand, or a request, on the part of the government to initiate an independent inquiry into the issues surrounding abuse on and off reserves as it deals with aboriginal children.

We have also asked for independent inquiries into a whole other set of problem situations that have

arisen in this government, in this community. We have asked for years that recommendations be made public or, at the very least, be given to the agencies when there have been inquiries arising out of problems in service delivery, particularly as it deals with children, and are disturbed now to find out that while those recommendations are now available in written form, they are not always or even in a majority of cases given to in writing the agencies where the problems occur.

In the last four years there have been many instances where those recommendations and reports were given verbally to agencies. I would suggest that that means that is another example of this government saying one thing and doing another, or this government's example of saying one thing and not doing another. This government has a very poor record when it comes to actual concrete proposals, programs, actions and resources for services for women and children in this province, for services for people on low incomes, for employment programs, for assisting families to break the cycle of violence.

There is no excuse for it. We know what to do. We have people who can deliver those programs. We have structures in place to deliver those programs tomorrow. We on this side of the House will be looking with a great deal of interest to the budget that is being brought down later this week. We will not be the only people in this province who will be looking with a great deal of interest to the budget that is brought down by the government this week.

There are tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of Manitobans, who are desperate for some positive action on the part of this government. They have had four years of inaction. They have had four years of rhetoric, and they are tired of it. They want action. We demand action, and we will be holding this government accountable on behalf of those tens and hundreds of thousands of Manitobans that this government refuses to listen to.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to recognizing the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), I had taken under advisement an amendment moved by the honourable Leader of the second opposition party (Mrs. Carstairs), seconded by the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), to be added after the word "abuse" in the last line, "but this House regrets that this government has chosen not to

provide the appropriate resources to ensure Manitoba is truly a domestic violence-free zone."

After perusing our Rule Book and Beauchesne's, I find that the honourable member's amendment is in order.

I would just like to remind the honourable minister that she will be speaking to the amendment.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to stand in the House today on a day where government has recognized the women of Manitoba and, indeed, the women throughout our country and our world on the achievements that they have obtained and will continue to look forward to better years to come as women take their rightful place as equal members of society.

I speak with some sense of disappointment, I suppose you might say, with members of both opposition parties when they have chosen not to recognize and not to agree that Manitoba should be a domestic violence-free zone, where partner abuse is viewed as a criminal offence, and they do not agree to adopting a tougher stance against partner abuse.

I find that somewhat disappointing because on a day when we should be recognizing and celebrating women's achievements and looking towards the future and trying to make positive things happen for the women throughout our province, we have two opposition parties who have stood here in this House and indicate clearly that they do not support declaring Manitoba as a domestic violence-free zone where partner abuse is viewed as a criminal offence.

They have stood up here in this House and we have listened for several hours now to debate and both opposition parties have come forward and indicated no support. I have real problems, and I think the women in Manitoba, when they understand where these parties are coming from, are going to have some severe problems—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for St. James, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): I just wanted to reflect on the minister's comments and in particular mention that the amendment you have indicated is in order does say that the appropriate resources should be allocated to ensure Manitoba is truly a

domestic violence-free zone. I am not sure she heard that, because what she said is patently wrong—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for St. James does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, I take some offence at the member for St. James commenting on my interpretation of the amendment and my interpretation of where the Liberal Party is coming from, not being able to support the resolution and having to amend that resolution.

I think that we have not only today in our celebration of International Women's Day but also in our introduction of a policy for aboriginal women—and I have to say it is the first policy as such by a province throughout our country. I know that my time is very short right now, and I know that I have several minutes this evening to get into a full and detailed explanation of our consultation with the aboriginal women community on the aboriginal women's policy.

I listened with great interest to the Leader of the Liberal opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) in her response to the aboriginal women's policy and her complete lack of understanding. I am sure she did not consult with one aboriginal woman before she made her comments here in the Legislature today. She stood up and spoke from her tongue without even understanding where the aboriginal women in this province are coming from. She did a great disservice, Mr. Speaker, to those women.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am interrupting the honourable minister. The hour being 5 p.m., when this matter is again before the House, the honourable minister will have 35 minutes remaining.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that there would be will of the House to allow leave to continue the debate for this particular resolution given that what is coming up in private members' hour, if the House was canvassed for leave to waive private members' hour.

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Leave is denied.

The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 4—Reproductive Health

Mr. Speaker: Resolution 4, Reproductive Health, standing in the name of the Speaker will remain standing.

Res. 7—Domestic Violence

Mr. Speaker: And in its position Resolution 7, Domestic Violence, standing in the name of the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey).

Prior to calling Resolution 8, our Rules 22(4) where the resolution of a member other than a resolution for an Order for Return or an Address for Papers is reached for the first time on the Order Paper during private members' hour, if the member is not present or does not proceed with the resolution at that time, the resolution shall be placed on the Order Paper at the bottom of the list of the resolutions of that type. That is exactly what is happening with this one.

* (1700)

Res. 8—Safety on PTH 101

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine),

WHEREAS the Minister of Highways and Transportation officially opened the Perimeter interchange north and south-bound over PTH 101; and

WHEREAS the new interchange will make travelling much safer for the transportation industry and for Manitobans who commute to and from Winnipeg from the Interlake Region; and

WHEREAS the stretch of road where the interchange is presently situated has had 142 accidents over the last 10 years; and

WHEREAS the interchange allows for the free flow of traffic along the Perimeter Highway and eliminates the need for traffic lights at the intersection.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba encourage the

continuation of partnerships between municipal and provincial governments in their continual efforts to upgrade Manitoba highways.

Motion presented.

Mr. Helwer: Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure for me to rise this afternoon and speak to this resolution. The No. 7 interchange at Highway 101 that I spoke about in the resolution, construction was started back in September of 1988. We were elected to government in April of 1988, and in September our Minister of Highways started construction on the overpass which included north-bound and south-bound lanes to add to the four-lane section of Highway 7 which goes out to Stonewall.

It actually took three years, but finally in October of 1991, I had the pleasure with the honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation, Mr. Driedger, and also with the honourable Minister of Natural Resources, the Honourable Harry Enns, and myself, we were glad to take part in the opening of this interchange at Highways 7 and 101. This serves the people north of Winnipeg, including the towns of Stonewall, Stony Mountain, Teulon, rural municipalities of Rosser and Rockwood, including the area served by my honourable friend the Honourable Harry Enns. This serves two real purposes. Number one, I believe, was the safety of the people north of Winnipeg. Since the new overpass has been opened we have not had an accident there, not even any accident at that interchange, never mind a serious one. [interjection] That is right, and the people going out to their—[interjection] That is a good plan, sure. That is right, but it is the safety of the tourists and the people who live there.

The traffic on this route has increased dramatically over the last six years and the average daily car count now is 9,700 cars a day, which is one of the busiest highways in Manitoba actually.

An Honourable Member: No, Pembina Highway would be.

Mr. Helwer: I am not sure about that, but you have had an interchange on Pembina Highway for some years.

In the 10 years preceding the overpass there, we have had 142 accidents and there have been six people killed at that intersection, so this is just how important to Manitoba and to the Interlake area the interchange is, and the priority that our Minister of

Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) puts on the safety of our roads in the construction.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

As a matter of fact, I have a quote from the Minister of Highways and Transportation that was in a magazine that he wrote on Manitoba heavy construction and he says: The safety, quality, and cost effectiveness are the goals of the Manitoba government's highway program; fiscal responsibility and a well-maintained infrastructure are both a priority and a challenge for our government.

That is a quote from our minister and he knows what is going on when it comes to highways. He does an excellent job and we are really pleased to see Highway 7 and that interchange.

Also, just a little more about highways and some of the things north of Winnipeg. Highway 8 was completed inside the Perimeter Highway about in the summer of '90, I guess it was. It is four lanes now, McPhillips out to the Perimeter. That certainly has served as a great boon to the people north of Winnipeg also. It is much safer for the people who commute daily back and forth to Selkirk. [interjection]

Yes, I am going to mention that, the toll bridge too, the toll booth.

Just to emphasize how important is the safety of our roads, back in 1989 about a year after we were elected to government, I had the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) go out to an event in Gimli for me while I was away on holidays. On the way back from Gimli, the member for Lac du Bonnet, the Honourable Darren Praznik, had an accident at the two-lane section of McPhillips and just inside the Perimeter. They wrote off his car and luckily he was not injured or anything—

An Honourable Member: He did not tell us?

Mr. Helwer: He did not tell us. That is right. He had a real serious accident. He is lucky he was not hurt actually. His new car was written off.

An Honourable Member: It cost him two merits.
* (1710)

Mr. Helwer: No, it was not his fault. Someone pulled over on his side of the road and he hit the people. That is how important the four-lane road is for safety and at the present time on Highway 7, on Route 90 between Inkster and the Perimeter Highway, there are about three miles that belong to the city of Winnipeg that is still a two-lane road. The

City of Winnipeg is kind of dragging its feet on getting this section built. I just want to mention that it is very important to the people of the Interlake area and the people north of Winnipeg to get this section of road built. I hope the councillors and the City of Winnipeg Public Works Department take this seriously and get this section of road complete, so that we can have a four-lane all the way out to the Perimeter.

I just wanted to mention, one of the councillors from the City of Winnipeg mentioned a while ago that they would like to see toll roads. Well, just to tell you how ridiculous that is, I have been in business for 29 years in the Interlake area, where do you think most of our goods come from? They come from Winnipeg. They have to move from Winnipeg. All the wholesales are in Winnipeg. They have to move from Winnipeg into the rural areas. A lot of the services that are provided all come from Winnipeg. If it was not for the rural people coming in to attend the Jets and Blue Bombers games and one thing and another—

An Honourable Member: Spending money.

Mr. Helwer: Spending money, we want to spend our money in Winnipeg, certainly.

An Honourable Member: Winnipeg would be a ghost town if it was not for rural Manitobans.

Mr. Helwer: That is right. Toll roads I think would be a very backward, very negative approach to take to things. Certainly, I hope—[interjection] The funny part about all the city councillors, and the 29 of them, not one spoke out against it, so obviously they must all agree. That is unfortunate. I do not know where their thinking is coming from.

Here we are in Manitoba. This government is trying to make Manitoba an attractive place to live and to invest in and make our roads into a safe and standard way, and here the City of Winnipeg councillors want to put toll roads to stop development. It would be a real hindrance to the whole province.

How can we expect companies to come and locate in Manitoba with that kind of attitude? I certainly hope that they would change and improve and try to improve the highways and the streets, so that we can attract businesses and attract jobs to Manitoba.

We want to work together, this government and the City of Winnipeg. We want to work together to make Manitoba a better place to live and to improve

the streets and street system. I know our minister tries to work hard with the City of Winnipeg, but we have not had as good co-operation as we would like, but I hope that in the future—some of the other things that we have done to create a safe road or highway system in Manitoba.

We have many programs. One of the things is the driver training program that we teach in our schools that the Department of Education and Training has for our high school students. This is an excellent program. I know, my children have gone through this program, and certainly this is a great program. I think it not only teaches the students how to drive but also defensive driving. I think that is important—[interjection]

Certainly it is important, especially in rural areas. When the kids want to come to Winnipeg they have to learn all these rules of the road, safety factors and defensive driving. I think that is an important program and serves the students of Manitoba schools really well.

The other thing is the factor of safety belts. I was not always a proponent of safety belts, but I really feel now that since I have seen some accidents whereby seat belts have really saved lives—as a matter of fact, I can relate an accident a couple of years ago that my own children were involved in where they were not seriously injured at all, even though the car was written off, it was because they had safety belts on.

I think the information we have, the seat belt program has been excellent, and I hope we can continue to use them and keep them in Manitoba.

An Honourable Member: Are we going to abolish seat belts?

Mr. Helwer: No, we are not. Also, another item that we consider a safety item—just recently the Highway Traffic Board in their wisdom have decided to make the section of road on Highway 7 at the number 67 junction to have a mile there of 80 kilometres. I think this is a step in the right direction. At that corner, there have been a lot of accidents. I know, I travel that road every day, and it is a dangerous section of Highway 7.

Just a year ago actually, during the election of '90, there was a very serious accident where three of my constituents, three people from the Teulon area, were killed unfortunately. There have been many accidents there, and I think slowing it down to 80 kilometres on that section would certainly be an improvement, even though we know that on a

four-lane road everyone wants to travel 100 kilometres. I think to slow down for 80 kilometres for a mile section there is certainly not going to create any hazard or any problem for people. It might make them a minute or so later, but they would make that up with the new overpass anyway, because that certainly saves a lot of time for me when I come into Winnipeg. It is an excellent addition to our road system.

Another place where we opened an overpass last year is on the Trans-Canada Highway at Portage la Prairie, Highway 240. This serves the people of Western Canada.

An Honourable Member: Safety.

Mr. Helwer: Safety. There is another safety factor, right—on 240. That is another big improvement to our highway system. I know our minister is working very diligently on Highway 75 to the border to hook up to Interstate 29.

An Honourable Member: To bring in those American tourists and American dollars.

Mr. Helwer: That is important: to bring in American tourists, to bring in tourists. A lot of Manitobans use that road also. That is important, and I hope the minister puts a priority on that construction and gets that done as soon as possible, because that is certainly an addition to Manitoba that we have been looking forward to for a long time.

An Honourable Member: The city has to do their portion.

Mr. Helwer: That is right. There again, on the south end of the city, there is a portion through St. Norbert there that belongs to the city of Winnipeg. Mr. Acting Speaker, it is probably in your constituency, but that is an important part there too where it narrows down there. That should be widened out there and have that four-lane all the way through right to the border.

I know another safety factor at the border that the minister is working on, and that is the relocation of the scale there and the redirection of the four-lane highway where it comes into Interstate 29. That is certainly going to be a big improvement safety-wise, and a big improvement for the people of Manitoba.

Another program, I think, that serves the people of Manitoba well, and that is our grant-in-aid program that we have with the municipalities and the towns and villages of rural Manitoba.

I know when I was the mayor of Teulon, we used this program very extensively, and the towns and

the communities still do. It is a good program, excellent, whereby we pay 50 percent of the market roads. This is of the main highways coming into or out of a town or village. This is also another safety factor in that it improves the safety for drivers and motorists in Manitoba. So I think it is a big improvement.

So I just want to commend our minister and our government in closing, Mr. Acting Speaker, that I think we have made a lot of big improvements to the roads in Manitoba, and I hope our minister will continue to work and to improve the road system in Manitoba.

Thank you.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Acting Speaker, it is interesting to see the member for Gimli bringing forward this resolution this afternoon, which deals with a very narrow portion of the Highways department's responsibilities in this province. It does not consider many other actions that the government has taken. It has armed municipalities in particular, and the province in general, with regard to the Department of Highways and Transportation over the last number of years that this minister has been in office in this province.

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, I think that the member for Gimli should have used a little broader interpretation of what is a successful program by this minister before he brought forward this resolution. So we will be looking at some amendments to it. I want to highlight a few major points that I believe this minister should be chastised on, and should be brought to his attention because they are very important.

While the one aspect dealing with the interchange is a positive development, the minister, at the same time, to find the money for that, has off-loaded some 2,000 kilometers of provincial roads onto municipalities. He has done this in a unilateral way. He did not say to the municipalities, we would like your input into making this kind of decision. He simply made a decision and said, you are going to have these roads. You are going to have 2,000 kilometres of roads.

* (1720)

Now, I have to say, Mr. Acting Speaker, that there was some flexibility in the political envoy that was sent out to do the job of consulting with the municipalities, the former member for Swan River for the Conservative caucus, Mr. Doug Gourlay, did, in fact, discuss some of the things and did renege

on some of the old conceived decisions that were made by this minister initially. He did back off a bit on those, and the minister may want to take some credit for that. Of course, with regard to the Trembowla Road, which was originally designated for offloading onto the municipality, the minister has backed off and certainly it is appreciated in the area. However, they should not have to appreciate the minister backing off from bad decisions. They should expect good decisions in the first place. It certainly was not a good decision to offload 2,000 kilometres of roads onto rural municipalities.

As I said earlier, the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) did not even mention that. I thought that he, in defending his municipalities in this area, should have at least mentioned that in his speech. He should have also considered that the bridge program which this minister put in place, the Municipal Bridge Assistance Program, which was much needed, put in place for only two years and then slashed it from his program again. That was not mentioned by the member for Gimli either. Why did they not mention that this Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) first identified a need, said it was important and backed off and said that program is going to be cut.

Meanwhile, a municipality in my constituency, the R.M. of Gilbert Plains, for example, had undertaken plans with the consent of this minister for a major bridge over a major waterway in that area of the province, and they no longer could continue with it because they cannot afford to build it on their own. The minister says we are backing off. Now he is telling us that in the budget next week it is going to be back in again. At least we got one budget leak from this minister, and I hope that he will have a few more budget leaks when he stands up to speak on this perhaps in the next few minutes.

In addition to that, the minister has slashed the grant-in-aid program. One part of the capital program for Highways and Transportation is grant-in-aid to municipalities. The grant-in-aid program has been slashed by some 34 percent in this last fiscal year. Who knows how much more by this minister, in the same callous fashion in the next budget that is coming up in a couple of days, how much more will it be slashed? Grant-in-aid has been cut to a point where if it was not so serious, it would be a joke by most towns and villages. They cannot access it any more. There is nothing there. There is not enough to go around to even do one

meaningful project in most communities. There is nothing left there and the minister knows that. I know he is embarrassed about it.

He is going to have to cut it right out, so they will not even see it in a line in the budget, or else he is going to have to substantially increase that budget beyond where it was even when he cut 34 percent out this past year. Again, the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) did not even mention that in his resolution. I do not know why he is ignoring these serious points, major cuts, hurt to his own constituency. He ignores those and he talks about a multimillion dollar interchange.

I thought he would have also talked about where the rest of the money is going, to assist trans-border shopping down to the United States on Highway 75. Tens and tens of millions of dollars are going into the southern part of Highway 75 to facilitate people getting down to the States as fast as possible to buy their goods. That is what this minister is doing. [interjection]

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) is going down there to see about postal services. I am sure the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism spends a lot of time driving down and recruiting people and businesses for the postal service. He obviously wants to see what the possibilities are down there, so he likes to see this four-lane highway down to the United States. This is where the minister is putting his money. He likes to brag about his increase in his budget, but he does not say that the vast majority of that increase is going straight to Highway 75, yet they have not even done the piece right by the city. The Acting Speaker knows that the area of Highway 75 right south of the Perimeter through St. Norbert has not been done, and this minister still has failed to do anything. In addition to that, he has failed to get any funding from the federal government in our national highways program, which was already advocated in our side of it, and we actually had an agreement in place with the Yellowhead Highway which this minister has continued. We did access some federal funds, but we have not got this agreement from the federal government on our national highways program.

Why will this minister not announce such an agreement? Why can he not work with his federal counterparts on a national highways program? Those are some of the major failures of this minister after four years in office. We would think that if the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) wanted to at least put

a balanced position before this House, he would have brought those points out clearly when he moved his resolution. It is unfortunate that he has missed those major points.

Of course, he did not mention Highways 8 and 9. What about to Selkirk, one of the most dangerous highways, Highway No. 9? The Selkirk corridor study was completed when we were in government. This government has failed to implement any of it. Highway No. 9, an undivided four-lane highway, one of the most dangerous highways that can exist, and this minister has not done anything on that particular highway in the last number of years.

I point out, Mr. Acting Speaker, in my most diplomatic way possible, that this minister has failed in regard to his job as Minister of Highways and Transportation, and he should not forget that when we were in government that his responsibility in Highways and Transportation goes well beyond just building highways. Transportation, rail and road and air are all of his responsibility and, of course, the Port of Churchill comes under the transportation area.

We had an agreement for \$93 million over five years with the federal government, \$58 million of which was provincial money; over \$10 million a year, in addition to the Highways budget, went into the Churchill agreement, which was necessary for rolling stock to be insured for the port, to upgrade facilities there. We were working together with the federal government to ensure that there was a future for Churchill. That is something that this government has failed to do, and we see it in the results insofar as the throughput, insofar as grain throughput at that port over the last four years that this Conservative government has been office.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I wish to move an amendment to this resolution. I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton),

THAT the resolution be amended by substituting all words after the first WHEREAS with the following:

the Department of Highways has by government policy offloaded some 2,000 kilometres of provincial roads onto various Manitoba municipalities; and

WHEREAS the union of Manitoba Municipalities has called on the provincial government to rescind its unilateral policy of offloading provincial roads onto the municipalities; and

WHEREAS the budgets of the various Manitoba municipalities and LGDs are strained to the limit by this offloading of provincial responsibility; and

WHEREAS the provincial Department of Highways and Transportation has slashed its Municipal Bridge Assistance program by some \$200,000 or 40 percent during the current budget year; and

WHEREAS the provincial Department of Highways and Transportation has cut its financial aid to villages by some 34 percent or \$500,000; and

WHEREAS all modes of transportation including road, rail and air are important to the economy of this province.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly encourage the provincial Department of Highways and Transportation to restore these programs and to play a financial role in all modes of transportation in Manitoba.

Motion presented.

* (1730)

Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Acting Speaker, it is a pleasure to say a few words on this resolution brought forward by the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer). I want to say at the outset that I think we have in the Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) an excellent, excellent Minister of Highways.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I sat in this House when the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) was the Minister of Highways, and I can tell you if you want to see a contrast between ministers that is pretty graphic. When you go from one of the worst Ministers of Highways to one of the best ones we have had, it is pretty graphic to members of this House what an improvement it has been since this government took office.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the former minister, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), when he was Minister of Highways, his department was putting toxic and hazardous waste in local dumps. I remember the article in the paper and they had roused this out and so they questioned him on it. He said, I did not know. Well, I guess he could be called the "Minister of I-did-not-know Highways," as he did not know what was happening in his department.

One can remember the road to the Waterhen. Sure, the people in the Waterhen are very happy

that they got a paved road there, but how many people does it serve in the sense of all of the people who require upgrading of highways throughout this province? I guess it is no surprise that we would find out that the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) had a cottage at the Waterhen. Now I am sure that was not the reason he would have paved the road to the Waterhen, but just by coincidence the member had a cottage at the Waterhen.

It is also interesting to note that he was the minister when they built "the bridge to nowhere." That was very interesting to have been a backbencher in opposition—

An Honourable Member: There was the bridge over the River Kwai and there was the bridge to nowhere.

Mr. Connery: The bridge over the River Kwai and the bridge to nowhere. Yes, that makes sense, as the member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) says.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I remember sitting as an opposition member and listening to the Minister of Highways being questioned over this bridge to nowhere. It started off at somewhere around \$10 million, and it ended up at \$20 million. Somebody said to him, why did it cost \$20 million?

He said, they built it too low. They built it too low. Well, what did they mean by building it too low? There is the Minister of Highways, they plan a bridge, and they did not even know they were building a bridge over a navigable waterway. They built it; they planned it too low.

Then when they raised it up in the air, now, of course, it was a way, way up in the air, and they had to put all kinds of extensions to it so they get on and off. I remember the previous member for Minnedosa asking the then minister if they were going to catapult the cars off the bridge to get them to the other side. It caused for a lot of humorous debate in this Legislature.

I think maybe he had some one-legged ducks and one-winged ducks that could not swim, so they had to get a bridge for them over from Libau.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the safety of highways is important, and as the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) spoke about the overpass at Highway 7, yes, very important to have the safety of people going down the overpass.

Highway 101 has a little bit of special significance to me, because we started growing vegetables in Portage in 1960, and the Perimeter Highway at that

point was not built. I used to have to drive through Winnipeg to get to Portage and it took quite a while.

I can remember that, when they first opened that bypass, that was really something to whip around there to get out to Portage. It sure cut off a lot of time for me when I was driving early in the morning trying to get to Portage before seven, so that 101 highway really has some added significance to myself.

The member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) criticizes this government for their thrust on trying to complete the twinning of Highway 75 to Emerson. Let it be said that we need tourism in this province, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The previous government did nothing for tourism, and I also say that we have to do more to develop tourism. One of the ways to develop tourism is having a decent highway for people to come up into Manitoba and through Winnipeg to other parts, to Churchill, or wherever it is, even up to Thompson where we have some beautiful country up there.

The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) is not concerned about the twinning of Highway 75. He should be, because it brings Americans up into this province and they spend their dollars. They come up into the North. They go fishing on our beautiful lakes. They spend money in Winnipeg at Folklorama. We need those American visitors in here. We need those tourist dollars, but I hear very little comment about tourism in this Legislature.

It is also curious, Mr. Acting Speaker, that we have Gloria Mendelson, an NDP member, suggesting that they have tolls for rural people coming into Winnipeg. Now, that shows you the mentality of NDP people. That shows you the mentality. I would be happy if they put tolls up for people coming into Winnipeg, because then rural people would not come into Winnipeg to shop. They would not buy those things.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

So we would do it all in rural Manitoba. Would that not be stupid? Then we would be isolating and have different parts of Manitoba. Manitoba is one province, and I think we all want to interface and have our people be able to shop both ways. [interjection]

Mr. Speaker, it is quite enjoyable sometimes making speeches to these resolutions when you get a lot of assistance from members on our side and assistance from members on the other side.

We do have at Portage la Prairie, as mentioned by the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), a new overpass that I had the pleasure of opening last October 9, about a \$10-million federal-provincial program, part of the Yellowhead \$50 million, I think it was, that was a joint funding with the federal, provincial governments that was signed when the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) was the minister, I acknowledge that. We now have that overpass completed.

Mr. Speaker, I have to compliment the Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) for having that project go forward. If you remember when the air base at Portage was announced to be closed, some bureaucrat decided that we should put the bridge on hold. At the next cabinet meeting, I explained to cabinet and the Premier and the minister the importance of that overpass, because we were going to see other things happen at that air base. They understood that and they went ahead and we completed the overpass.

The member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) talks about safety and I have a couple of incidents that took place at that particular intersection before the overpass was in.

One morning on my way to work at the farm, which is on the other side of the overpass, south of the Assiniboine River, waiting at the red light, a car on the other side of the highway waiting at the same red light, the light turned green and a semitrailer was coming down the highway. It was quite obvious that that semitrailer was not going to stop. I prayed that the person on the other side of the highway did not drive and notice that that semi was not going to stop, and it did not. It went through the red light. After the semi went through I crossed, and the car coming across from the other side was my daughter-in-law and two grandchildren. So it shows you how close that can be. It could have been a very tragic moment in our life. Fortunately, she recognized the semi was not going to stop.

* (1740)

Mr. Speaker, I must compliment the Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) for continuing on with Highway 227, which is a branch off of the northern Perimeter route for people who are heading west. To go around Lake Winnipeg, Highway 227 can be an extreme shortcut for people from Gimli. It goes around Lake Manitoba, just to the south, not through one of the best, but the best constituency in

Manitoba. It happens to be the constituency of Portage la Prairie, that is, after it has exited the constituency of Lakeside, represented by the honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), a very good minister and a good friend who has represented that constituency, I think, now for some 26 years, the dean of this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about safety, and we talk about overpasses and highways, I am sure there are some of the PSAC members that cross over those intersections. Members of the opposition are very familiar with Daryl Bean and his treatment of people in the Civil Service, people involved in the provincial Civil Service.

An Honourable Member: Nobody out here has ever met them.

Mr. Connery: The member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) says he has never met them, but then why do they do call people they have not met, brother? This is the way they call each other. So, for the NDP, it is brother Daryl Bean. Now in the sense of safety, what did Daryl Bean write to three grandmothers? He said, after God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad and the vampire, he had some awful stuff left with which he made a scab. A scab is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a waterlogged brain and a backbone of jelly and glue. Where others have hearts, he carries a tumour of rotten principles. No man has a right to scab as long as there is a pool of water to drown his carcass in or a rope long enough to hang his body with.

While we are looking for safety on our highways, members opposite, members of the NDP party, support people like Daryl Bean who threatened people from their own union, grandmothers, men and women, and that to me is despicable on their part.

Mr. Speaker, the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) wanted to put a few words on the record. I want to say that this Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger), who we have continuing on with a hundred-million-plus dollars for highway construction where the previous government, the NDP, had lowered it down into around 80-million a year. It was dropping like a stone. If they had stayed in power, we would be lucky if we were building any highways at all. I want to say, I want to compliment this minister and this government in their highways program. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): I am very pleased to rise and speak on this resolution brought forward by the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), which raises an important issue, I think, for many Manitobans and I am sure in particular members of his constituency, but indeed all of ours. I intend to be short, because I know others want to add their comments, in particular I note the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) may want to put some comments on the record.

I have listened closely to the sponsor's comments in this regard and those of my colleagues, even though they have digressed, I am sure they would even admit, slightly from the subject matter which we are here to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am pleased to see that this interchange has been upgraded. I acknowledge the human cost, the human tragedy, not to mention the property damage that is caused by ill-conceived, and therefore very dangerous interchanges as this was. I simply note for the record and for the minister that I am sure each of us in our constituencies has interchanges, or highways, roads, that we know to be tragic areas, areas that could be improved.

I want to bring to the Legislature's attention again, and I have done it through a petition previously—I know members from the St. James-Assiniboia area will also be familiar with the terrible rate of tragedy that is experienced on Sturgeon Road in St. James-Assiniboia. It is a situation long overdue for rectification, and the provincial government does have a role to play. I have put a petition on the record, signed by many hundreds of people. It was sponsored initially by the former member for Sturgeon Creek, Ms. Iva Yeo. She brought it forward; I have continued that work.

I hope that the members from that area have not lost sight of the importance of dealing with that issue in that area, because it, too, warrants some immediate action in terms of rectifying what we all know to be—those of us who know the area—a consistently tragic, a consistently sad scene of many, many accidents on a regular basis. They happen literally with very predictable regularity. Anybody who lives in the area knows that week in, week out these accidents occur. Sometimes people get hurt and sometimes they do not, and sometimes people get killed. I suspect that, when the member who sponsors this resolution came

forward with a 142 accidents over the last 10 years, people lost their lives.

We cannot make every road a superhighway, and we would not want to. We do not suggest that there is no limit to the amount that we can spend; we cannot do that. We understand that we have to prioritize, but we hope that the prioritization is done first and foremost on the grounds of safety. I know that the minister would agree with me on that, that we look at the safety of those who use the roads first and foremost. Of course, a lot of that has to do with the extent to which certain roads are used.

The roads in the case of provincial trunk Highway 101 on the perimeter, there is a relatively high level of use. While these interchanges are welcome, I know from living in the city and taking that Perimeter Highway that there are lots of other interchanges that I think need addressing as well.

I think the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) is correct, and I join comments when he indicates that we need to have adequate road services that attract tourists. People say, if you fix up Highway 75—you know what the pessimistic view is, that is just going to help Manitobans go south. I do not agree with that. I believe the way to look at it is: it is to assist people in coming to us. We are a tourist destination. It is time that we in this Legislature and through our works in government came to grips with that foursquare and treat this province as a tourist destination, not a place to send tourists from, but as a place to come.

You will look long and hard, Mr. Speaker, before you find a province, a region in this world that has more to offer in terms of natural beauty and also in terms of developed sites, resorts. The service industry here has more to offer, I believe, than most locations on the face of this globe, so we are starting from an enormous advantage in this province. It has been a consistent frustration to me and, I think, to many of us here, that we are not doing more. We seem to not be able to do more to not only hold our own people to vacation here, but attract others. A part of that we cannot do much about. For instance, I was speaking to an American just over the weekend who was telling me he used to come here—he was from the state of Minnesota—to fish regularly. He does not come anymore. I asked him why. He said there are two reasons. One is he finds it too expensive. He can go other places, and it is less expensive. Secondly, he was critical of our service industry.

I do not intend to lump all of the service industry and the hotel owners and everything else into the same framework. I know we have some work to do in terms of better preparing our service industry to deal with tourists who come here willing, I think, to spend the money that it takes to take advantage of what we offer, but they do want a high level of service. It is a competitive environment out there. I do not think I have to tell the minister that when you are competing for tourist dollars the standards are very high.

* (1750)

As I say, we start from a great advantage in this province with our natural resources and our lakes and the events that we hold, the multicultural events that we offer, the diversity of things that are offered in this city and around this province. We have an enormous amount to offer. Why are we not maximizing it? It is a constant source of frustration, I know, to myself and members of my party that we are not doing that.

Mr. Speaker, just on that note, I think that the service industry to my knowledge is making efforts to improve the situation. They recognize they are functioning at a detriment in terms of cost. There are certain things like the GST we just cannot do anything about. Costs are higher here, taxes are higher. You have to then charge the tourists more money. There is only so much you can do about that.

They are, I think, recognizing that we need training programs, perhaps accreditation programs, with respect to those in the service industry that ensure as much as possible that we offer the highest level of service to potential tourists.

It has been my experience as a tourist, and I think it is the same with others, that people will try a place once, and if you do not impress them then, you will never see them again. First impressions are extremely important in tourism. You want people to come and want to come back to Manitoba. You also want them to talk fondly about Manitoba, talk positively about what we offer as a tourist experience.

I saw an ad on TV about North Dakota. It is not until the last five seconds that you realize they are talking about North Dakota. You would have no idea they were talking about North Dakota, you would think it was Jamaica or Bermuda they were talking about. They have an ad that has people on beaches and in casinos and having fun and doing

all this stuff. No one could predict that that is North Dakota they are talking about.

We have so much more to offer than the state of North Dakota in terms of natural beauty. That is not to run down the state of North Dakota; that is simply to recognize fact. We have enormous and bounteous natural resources in the north of our province, and yet I am not sure we are doing the job that some of these other jurisdictions with much less to offer are doing and seem to be doing. You know, it is unfortunate and I know the former member for Seven Oaks was very adamant about this issue, spoke eloquently for years before the current minister was in the House, and I reiterate those comments.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the member for bringing this resolution forward. I want to add our support for that upgrading. I do however want to express to the minister that we look for a consistent policy of highway development. I know that he has on occasion suggested toll roads, and I must acknowledge he retracted from that awfully quickly. I recall the day he said it, and I think it was a matter of hours before he retracted that. Maybe it did not even last an hour. So to his credit, he had an idea. Unfortunately, he said it before he perhaps reflected enough, but he was quick to retract and back up and that was the credible thing to do. Perhaps he had no choice, but I like to believe that he did have a choice and he just made the right choice. In any event, I am sure there was a flurry of phone calls when he suggested toll roads, but I think he came to his senses and pulled back from that. We certainly join with that, I do not think we do want to put toll roads into place as was suggested and has recently been suggested by the NDP councillor in City Hall, Ms. Mendelson.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I do note that others want to speak, and again I look forward to the Department of Highways and Transportation Estimates in which we will go over in more detail the many projects which the department is undertaking. We will look for a consistent approach which puts the safety of the travelling public first in this province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, I do have to stand and just put a couple of words on the record after this amendment that was brought forward by the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman).

I was really happy to see how the member for Dauphin supported the initiatives of the government with the extension of Pembina Highway to the United States, and I understand that this member for Dauphin, as the past Minister of Transportation, would know how important this highway is for the tourism of this province, Mr. Speaker. I am sure he is aware of the accidents and the misfortunes that have happened on Pembina Highway prior to its commencement in its widening.

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

This government has committed, Mr. Acting Speaker, to the widening of the Pembina Highway at St. Norbert. That will be going forward, because I will see that it goes forward as we go forward through that. I make a commitment and I carry through on my commitments, not like the members for some other jurisdictions did in the past. It is a very important issue to St. Norbert because St. Norbert now has a cow path entering it, as the NDP had left us. All we have is a little cow path coming in, without even a shoulder to protect those people transporting down those highways. The transport trucks at this time are entering our community on a road where there is no shoulder and are entering onto the centre lane and were having some head-on collisions.

This government made the commitment back in 1990, Mr. Acting Speaker, to see that went forward. Only, the City of Winnipeg Council, in its wisdom, chose to pull it from its budget. I am sure they will have wisdom and have it brought back in their next budget for '93 and '94.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the jobs that are created by the Highways and Transportation department in this province, by our minister, are very important to the community of Manitoba. The honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) sometimes says that the Pembina Highway widening was not a necessity. I would like to see where he gets his facts from, because the NDP built bridges to nowhere up near Selkirk somewhere.

I mean, they built the bridge and for years I went out there just to see this bridge somewhere around Selkirk, somewhere, and it went over the river but it had nowhere to go. It seems something that the NDP party was headed in the right direction, because they are always going over the river but never knew what direction to take after that, always lost their direction.

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): The rules of Beauchesne clearly directs each speaker to each resolution and each motion before this House to be relevant. The member for St. Norbert (Laurendeau) in implying somehow that a bridge to nowhere had been built in Selkirk, when the mayor, who was a Tory candidate, clearly chastised every Tory for making that bridge—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): The honourable member does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Laurendeau: As I was stating, I do believe the Honourable Mr. Plohman was the Minister of Transportation at the time that highway to nowhere was built and the highway to nowhere with a bridge to nowhere. I do not know where this member gets his information from to write motions like this, but I really do think that this member should go to his researchers and try and get some straight facts. He is coming up with items here that do not make any sense whatsoever.

They do fall within the prevalence of where the—[interjection] Boy, did he. I do have to say, that even though it was very close to the wire, I think that this should have almost been considered a little further away, but we do have to rule it in order because of where it was coming from. [interjection] I am questioning my own ruling on this one, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there is another project that I would like to see brought forward in the near future. In St. Norbert we have what is called the Brady landfill which will, in the near future, be the only landfill for the city of Winnipeg. There is an intersection going into that landfill that at this time, I feel, would be very dangerous. I think it would be a great step, not only for this government, but for all of this Legislature, to move forward and see that we had an overpass put in at that intersection, so that all the garbage that is going into that landfill is being securely entered into that landfill. I think that it is a very dangerous intersection, and I think we really have to push forward to see that 101 in Waverley is protected in the future. I think that should be brought forward and I will be bringing it forward in the future, Mr. Acting Speaker, to see that the people of my constituency are protected and that the people

travelling down the Perimeter Highway are protected.

Some Honourable Members: Spend, spend, spend.

Mr. Laurendeau: It is not spend, spend, spend, as the NDP state it is, Mr. Acting Speaker. It is job creation when job creation is necessary. These are true jobs, it is not just painting signs, as the NDP

government did. This is job creation in the true fact, the true fact of job creation. You are going out and you are getting something for those dollars, not just a bunch of painted green signs.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): The hour being 6 p.m., in accordance with the rules, I am leaving the Chair and will return at 8 p.m.

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Monday, March 9, 1992

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Message

Commonwealth Day Message
Rocan 1041

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Fight Back Against Child Abuse Campaign
Barrett 1041
Chomiak 1042

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Law Amendments
Dacquay 1042

Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports

International Women's Day; Speaking to the
Future: Status of Aboriginal Women
Mitchelson 1044
Barrett 1046
Carstairs 1046

Canadian Women's Curling Championship
Stefanson 1047
L. Evans 1047
Alcock 1048

Introduction of Bills

Bill 36, Health Care Records Act
Wasylycia-Leis 1048

Bill 56, Public Health Amendment Act (2)
Wasylycia-Leis 1048

Oral Questions

Cross-Border Shopping
Doer; Filmon 1048

Manitoba-U.S. Trade Deficit
Doer; Filmon 1049

Community Colleges
Friesen; Vodrey 1050

Post-Secondary Education
Friesen; Vodrey 1050

Child Care Centres
Carstairs; Gilleshammer 1050

Aboriginal Women
Barrett; Downey 1051

Employment Resources Regional Offices
L. Evans; Gilleshammer 1052

Decentralization
L. Evans; Gilleshammer 1053

Hay Commission Report
Lamoureux; Praznik 1053

Women's Directorate
Lamoureux; Mitchelson 1053

Minister of Culture
Lamoureux; Filmon 1054

Economic Growth
Ashton; Stefanson 1054

Borden Company Ltd.
Ashton; Stefanson 1055

Indian Birch Reserve
Render; McCrae 1055

Workers Compensation Board
Reid; Praznik 1056

Nonpolitical Statements

Canadian Women's Curling Championship
Dacquay 1056

Manitoba High School Hockey Championship
Laurendeau 1057
Doer 1057

Provincial B Atoms Hockey Championship
Derkach 1057

Inter-Universities North Banquet
Ashton 1057

GPAC Basketball Championship
Filmon 1058

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Proposed Resolutions

Manitoba as a Domestic Violence-Free Zone	
McCrae	1058
Amendment	
Carstairs	1068
Barrett	1071
Mitchelson	1077

Private Members' Business

Proposed Resolutions

Res. 8, Safety on PTH 101	
Helwer	1078
Amendment	
Plohman	1081
Connery	1083
Edwards	1086
Laurendeau	1087