

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 12 May, 1986.

Time — 2:00 p.m.

**OPENING PRAYER by Madam Speaker.**

**MADAM SPEAKER, Hon. M. Phillips:** Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable First Minister.

**HON. H. PAWLEY:** Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise and address the Legislature on the occasion of the 116th birthday of our province.

Events celebrating Manitoba have taken place during the weekend and continue today. After extensive public consultations in 1984 and 1985, Manitoba's new Heritage Resources Act was developed.

Later today, Culture, Heritage and Recreation Minister, the Honourable Judy Wasylycia-Leis will announce the Proclamation of the new act at a Manitoba Day reception.

This important legislation places Manitoba on a comparable level with other Canadian jurisdictions which have enacted Heritage legislation. The act was drafted in such a way as to encourage community involvement in preserving visible reminders of our past and to promote a greater appreciation and understanding of Manitoba's history and cultural identity.

I'd like to read for members in the House the following Proclamation:

WHEREAS on May 12, 1870, The Manitoba Act, which created the Province of Manitoba, was given Royal Assent, paving the way for a Proclamation on July 15 of the same year; and

WHEREAS on May 12, 1966, Manitoba's official flag was dedicated and unfurled for the first time; and

WHEREAS May 12 has been designated as Manitoba Day in perpetuity, in recognition of the importance of this date in the history of the province; and

WHEREAS Manitoba provides a special opportunity for recognizing and paying tribute to artistic and ethnocultural communities which enhance the quality of life in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS it is in the public interest that special attention be given on this day to Manitoba's history and development, to the achievements of her citizens in the visual, literary and performing arts, and to their outstanding contribution to our country.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT KNOWN that I, Howard Russell Pawley, Premier of the Province of Manitoba, do hereby enjoin the citizens of our province to observe May 12, 1986, as MANITOBA DAY by affirming their affection, loyalty and dedication to this province, and by celebrating our collective history and creative potential.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all members of the Legislature that you're invited to a Manitoba Day Reception at the Winnipeg Art Gallery which begins at 4:00 p.m. As I mentioned earlier, The Heritage Resources Act will be announced, new awards program designated to honour individuals and groups who have made significant contributions to the culture, the heritage and recreation fields will be launched.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. G. FILMON:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm delighted to rise and, on behalf of my colleagues in the Opposition, join with the Premier and his colleagues in celebrating Manitoba Day. Birthdays are always enjoyable occasions and this is no different. I'm delighted to see so many young people in the gallery to help us in the celebration of Manitoba Day.

We are pleased as well at the proclamation of The Heritage Resources Act, an act which members on this side joined with the government in support, an act that will help us to preserve our heritage, to promote an understanding of our history, and also a better understanding of Manitoba's past, to lead us to the vision that we must all have of Manitoba's future. I'm delighted on this occasion to join with my colleagues on this side of the House and all members of this Legislature in the celebration of Manitoba's 116th birthday.

Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Highways.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Madam Speaker, I wish to table the Department of Highways and Transportation Highway Construction Program for 1986-87.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Before we go to Oral Questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the gallery where there are 60 students of Grade 5 from the Dieppe School. These students are under the direction of Mr. E. Ridi and the school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Charleswood. On behalf of all the members, I welcome you this afternoon.

I'd also like to draw the members' attention to 30 students from Grade 9 from the General Byng School under the direction of Miss J. Gibson. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry. We'd like to welcome you this afternoon.

We also have 15 students of Grade 11 from the Shaftesbury High School under the direction of Mr. Greenway. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Tuxedo. On behalf of all the members, I'd like to welcome you here this afternoon.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### Silviculture Program - layoffs

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** In response to a question that was raised by the Member for Emerson on Friday I would like to provide the following information. There were 159 people hired to plant bareroot seedlings - that was a short-term project. The 22 people who were referenced by the Member for Emerson were included in this number. The project was completed on the 30th of April; 22 of the 159 were rehired in a Silviculture Program to thin trees in the area, and that group will continue in the employ until the 23rd of May. They will be rehired at a later date to plant the container seedlings which cannot be planted at this time, and if there are funds through redeployment - depending on the requirement for the Jackpine Budworm Program - it is the intention to hire these people for a further period later in the season.

### Flooding - status of

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

**MR. J. MALOWAY:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. Given the current problem with spring flooding, could the Minister please inform this House what the current status of the threat is, and what action is being taken by his department?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** The latest information we have is that the flood situation has very much stabilized. There were some heavy local rainfalls, particularly in the area of Winnipeg and the southeast part of the province, which may affect river levels in the Roseau River and the Rat River. The water levels in the Red River are receding, the floodgates are no longer operating.

I had the opportunity to travel through the Ste. Rose and McCreary area on the weekend; the floodwaters have receded there. In addition, I had the opportunity to view the flooding in the Portage la Prairie area, more specially, the Overhill Drain; they are facing a very serious situation there. We have had meetings and there are further meetings planned with the people from the area to look at the establishment of a conservation district and other measures which will address their particular problem.

### Chemical industry study - Keystone Agricultural Producers Association request

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

**MR. C. BAKER:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Can he inform the House how he intends to deal with the request by the Keystone Agricultural Producers Organization for a study into the chemical industry?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

**HON. B. URUSKI:** Madam Speaker, it appears the honourable members opposite today are not interested in the issue of dealing with agriculture, but, Sir, I want to indicate to the Member for Lac du Bonnet that the Keystone Agricultural Producers wish this Provincial Government to continue its efforts in lobbying the Federal Government to have a national inquiry into chemical pricing. They recognize that we were the only province to put forward a submission to the Annual Ministers' Conference over a year ago dealing with the excessive profits earned by the chemical industry, and they wish us to continue the pressure, along with them, to make sure that there's a national inquiry and, in fact, to reduce some of the patenting laws that there are in place so that farmers could enjoy some of the benefits of generic chemicals.

### Pharmaceuticals - licensing of

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Burrows.

**MR. C. SANTOS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

In view of the recent reports about the Federal Government move to put an end to the provision of The Patent Act, about immediate licensing of genetic pharmaceuticals, which saves Manitobans about \$200,000 a year, could the Minister indicate to this House what this means in terms of added costs to the province?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

**HON. A. MACKLING:** Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for asking me that question and for having given me notice of his intention to ask the question.

Madam Speaker, it is very important to Manitobans to know that they have a government that is prepared to indicate to a Federal Government that a system that has been working well for Canadians, and Manitobans, and saving hundreds of millions of dollars for government and for the users of drugs - it is estimated some \$500 million across Canada - that this program not be dismantled to create favour with Americans. Madam Speaker, it is clear that the initiatives of the Federal Government are designed to cave in to the pressures on the American Government of the large drug manufacturers. I will be reinforcing our concerns with the Federal Minister this afternoon when I meet with him in my office.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Burrows with a supplementary.

**MR. C. SANTOS:** A supplementary, Madam Speaker. Can the Minister indicate whether this government will continue to make representation on behalf of the province to the Federal Government?

**HON. A. MACKLING:** Indeed, Madam Speaker, I will be conveying, I hope the views of all Manitobans to the Federal Minister, that a system that is in place and has established since 1969 very significant savings for individuals in Canada, and for governments and our systems through the licensing of generic drugs, that that system not be destroyed. I'm sure I'll be reflecting the concerns of a great number of provincial governments elsewhere.

### Radioactivity - level of

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

**MR. J. WALDING:** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister for the Environment. Can the Minister inform the House what is the present level of radioactive radiation in the province today?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister for the Environment.

**HON. G. LECUYER:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Currently there are a number of stations across the country where monitoring is taking place. I have been informed that I should have some results of these two stations monitoring in Manitoba tomorrow.

**MR. J. WALDING:** I wonder if the Minister could inform the House what is the usual or average amount of radiation present in the province?

**HON. G. LECUYER:** I don't have that detailed information at my fingertips right now, Madam Speaker, but we'll provide that information with the results referred to in my first answer.

**MR. J. WALDING:** A further question to the same Minister, Madam Speaker. Could the Minister inform the House, when he brings that information to us, how the levels compare with the level experienced subsequent to the eruption of Mount St. Helens volcano?

**HON. G. LECUYER:** Yes, Madam Speaker.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

**MADAM SPEAKER:** On the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Ellice for an Address to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in answer to her speech at the opening of the Session, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. G. FILMON:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I am delighted to be able to rise and address the Throne Speech Debate, delighted because it has been

a considerable length of time since any of us have been able to sit in this House since the last Session. Indeed, I believe the time that has passed of 10 months is a record for this House not having been in Session and, indeed, all of us have been looking forward to this opportunity to once again engage in debate and discussion about the issues and priorities that are important to the people of Manitoba. I believe that this record length of time is one more indication of this Premier's and this Government's callous disregard for the necessity and the importance of this House being in Session, listening to the views of the people of Manitoba and debating the issues that are of concern to them.

I begin by congratulating the Mover and the Seconder of the Throne Speech for the contributions that they made on Friday in addressing the Address to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor; and, with those congratulations, I extend congratulations to all of the new members in this House. Indeed, we have 19 new members sitting in the House today, as opposed to the last Session. I believe that that is another record for a changeover without a changeover in government and, indeed, I welcome all of these new members, and particularly extend words of welcome to the 11 newcomers on our side of the House - 12 newcomers on our side of the House I should say - 11 newcomers in our caucus. I wish them all well, I extend congratulations to them for their election, and I look forward to the contributions that they will be making.

I note with pleasure as well, Madam Speaker, that we have eight women members in the Legislature - another record. And I say to the Member for River East - one of the additional women in the Legislature today, one of the new members of my caucus - I extend to her words of welcome and tell her that she joins a proud tradition of many Conservative women who have gone before her in sitting in this Legislature. Indeed, I think it's appropriate for me to recall in that proud tradition the names of quite a number of those who have sat in this hallowed Chamber - Caroline Morrison, Inez Trueman, Thelma Forbes who was the first woman Speaker of this Legislature, Norma Price, the first woman Cabinet Minister of this Legislature and, of course, her colleague from Kirkfield Park and her colleague from Gladstone - and in that respect she joins the party who has had the largest number of women sitting in this Legislature and we welcome her very proudly to this tradition.

In that vein, I wish to extend, Madam Speaker, my words of congratulations to the Member for River Heights who has become the first woman party leader to sit in this Legislature. Indeed, she too joins a tradition of women who have sat in this Legislature in the Liberal Party, and many of us had the pleasure to sit with one of her predecessors - both on city council and, of course, in these Chambers - June Westbury, so we are looking forward to the contributions which she undoubtedly will make to this Legislature.

Madam Speaker, I want to say to all of the new members, but particularly to the new members in my caucus, that I am proud of each and every one of them. I'm look forward to the contributions which they all will be making in this Legislature for many, many years to come. I know that all of them are people of ability and talent and I'm looking forward to the things that they

have to offer to their constituents and to the people of this province.

I was particularly pleased that right from the first day of our sitting that two of our members, the Member for Virden and the Member for Ste. Rose, were on their feet and contributing in the question period and participating, as I know each and every one of their colleagues will, in the forthcoming days.

Madam Speaker, I'll be dealing at some length with the Throne Speech, despite the fact that it is perhaps the lightest Throne Speech in my recollection, certainly.

I said on the day that the Throne Speech was read that, mercifully, it was short. Upon reviewing it, Madam Speaker, it is not only short, but it is totally lacking in substance. I see no plan; I see confused priorities; and certainly I see no indication of where this government wants to lead our province in future, and I see no indication of how it expects to get our province of wherever it is it wants to lead our province in future; it's a government adrift.

Madam Speaker, I intend today not only to address the Throne Speech with all of its inadequacies, but as well to provide alternatives to the lack of substance, to the lack of vision that this government has shown and continues to show. As we did throughout the recent election campaign, I will give my views and the views of my colleagues. We will give a better plan; we will give better solutions to address Manitoba's needs in future. Our alternatives, we believe, are positive. We believe that they are workable, and we believe that they represent a framework for future development of our province, not a disjointed, misdirected series of promises. My colleagues and I intend to present a positive alternative to the proposals, the inadequate proposals of this administration. I will do so today, and we will do so throughout the term of this government, however short it may be.

As we examine the Speech from the Throne, it again shows, as we look to try and find some real substance, it shows that this NDP administration has no plan. We believe that this was clear during the election campaign but it is more than clear today as you view the Throne Speech and try and see some substance in it.

They give us promises, as they did during the election campaign, but no concrete policy, no strategy that could be translated into a plan of action for Manitoba. On all fronts, but especially in the area of education, health care and social policy, the NDP lack focus and direction. The Throne Speech is all the evidence I need give of that statement, Madam Speaker.

They presented this House with an assortment of platitudes, with generalizations that can hardly be viewed as the work of a government that knows what it is doing and where it is going. This is the essential and, in my view, the critical problem that is facing Manitoba today, a government adrift. Like their federal NDP counterparts, they have not had a new economic idea since the Regina Manifesto of 1933.

Their initiatives in the area of economic development are weak and piecemeal, and you don't need to take my word for it, take the word of one of their bright lights, James Laxer, who only a couple of years ago did an assessment of the New Democratic Party in Canada today, and he said that they had no new ideas, nothing of vision to offer on the economic front for this country.

But it is on the other side of the coin, on health care, on education, on social issues, when we talk about programs for people that we find how miserably this NDP administration has really failed. Failed to address the real problems that are facing Manitobans today in all of these areas that I have talked about - in services for the elderly, in equality of opportunity and in refocusing services to at-risk populations.

My colleagues and I addressed many of these issues, Madam Speaker, throughout the election campaign. We presented a plan of action that would deal with these issues. We also presented a mechanism for dealing with the plans that would be needed to be developed in order to implement so many of these initiatives that we believe are necessary in Manitoba today. It was a plan that would involve so many of the professions that have to do with the delivery of health care, of education - it was called the Human Services Advisory Network - a network that would be a permanent and ongoing process of consultation about the ways that we must enhance and improve services to the people of Manitoba.

There have been no such initiatives, no creative thinking on the part of this NDP administration. There has been no effort to consult the people and to reach consensus about what has to be done in all of these vital areas - health care, education, social services. There are no obvious priorities; the NDP does not have a clue as to where it's going. The Throne Speech reflects all of this.

There are feeble references here and there to health care and, indeed, Madam Speaker, not in terms of new initiatives because the Throne Speech refers in a pleading sort of way to wanting to maintain and protect and preserve education and health care and social services - not new initiatives - not to enhance or create new opportunities for the future in these areas but try and hang on and preserve; that's all the Throne Speech gives a commitment to do and it's not good enough.

**MR. D. ORCHARD:** Hanging on to a chaotic system.

**MR. G. FILMON:** There is nothing in the area of attention to the needs of the elderly, nothing for our disabled and our at-risk populations, token support for the concerns of youth - youth who want jobs today in Manitoba, youth who want opportunities for the future - very little for women and multicultural groups.

But, Madam Speaker, I think perhaps the most glaring inadequacy of the Throne Speech is the fact that there are only two words in that Throne Speech that refer to education, an almost total ignoring of education as an issue in Manitoba today. I have to wonder, as I see the new Minister of Education sitting there, whether or not his responsibility and his appointment is to indicate that he is merely going to be a caretaker over education in this province in future.

**MR. D. ORCHARD:** A lackey.

**MR. G. FILMON:** I want to know whether or not they are going to tell us - they and this new Minister of Education - are going to try and tell us that he was appointed merely to hang on and to preside over education as it exists today because it's been left in

such good shape by the former Minister of Education. Because, if he is going to tell us that, he will find, Madam Speaker, that there is nobody in this province who will agree with him.

**MR. D. ORCHARD:** Murray Smith will.

**MR. G. FILMON:** I would hope, Madam Speaker, that that is not his role and responsibility as Minister of Education to preside over a department that intends to do nothing in future in this province.

It's appalling, Madam Speaker, when you consider it. It's outrageous. Here is a government that has called the House in Session for only four months of the past 23, and it comes before this Assembly with nine pages of rhetoric that include a few of their many promises that they made during the election campaign with no plan, no strategy and no concrete action on so many fronts that are critical and vital to the people of Manitoba. This is a government in disarray, and they've just begun. It's the first Throne Speech and already they begin in disarray. They are a tired government right from Day One. Their mandate, of course, as has already been discussed, is a very precarious one; one of the slimmest margins that any government has enjoyed in this House in the past. I know that Manitobans are watching very, very carefully to see whether or not they are capable of producing anything of value to the people of Manitoba.

As a responsible opposition, Madam Speaker, I can assure you that we on this side of the House will do our utmost to protect and serve the best interests of the people of Manitoba. Even if they will do nothing of value for the people of Manitoba, we will try and make the best government that we possibly can out of them, as difficult as that challenge will be.

Madam Speaker, because the Throne Speech indicates very little conviction on the part of this government towards these areas, we will be the ones who will fight for improved health care. We will be the ones to push the government for improved health care facilities, to develop a medical technology strategy, to develop a human resources strategy for the health care system. We will be the people who will work to develop more effective preventive capabilities within health services in this province. We believe that it's critical to enhance mental health services, to develop a health research strategy.

Madam Speaker, these are many of the initiatives that we will be fighting for, and many many more, and it's incredible to me that this Throne Speech does not touch upon any of these areas in any of the information that is put forward. Madam Speaker, let there be no mistake, lack of federal funding is not to blame for this lack of initiative on the part of this government.

The Throne Speech, of course, again refers to that area, and I will deal with that in more detail later, but with respect to health care, Madam Speaker, I have been looking at figures with respect to the kinds of levels of funding that this government has enjoyed over the past few years from Ottawa. The year 1982-83 to '83-84, the Federal Government increased its funding with respect to health care by 10.7 percent. This provincial administration during that fiscal year increased its health care funding 8.8 percent. The following year, '83-84

to '84-85, the Federal Government's increase to Manitoba was 8.5 percent; this Provincial Government's increase was 7.1 percent. The following year, '84-85 to '85-86, the Federal Government's increase was 7.2 percent; this Provincial Government's increase was 3.7 percent, Madam Speaker. In every case the Federal Government's increase in the funding allocated for health care to this government was higher than that which was put in the form of an increase to health care expenditures by this administration.

Madam Speaker, federal funding is not the problem. The Federal Government has announced, in fact, for the next while that its increase in its funding to Manitoba for EPF transfers will be in the range of 4.5 to 5 percent. Last year, I repeat, this government's increase in health care expenditures was only 3.7 percent. So it appears that if they are on that path, Madam Speaker, that the Federal Government funding will continue to exceed the amount of additional funding that they are prepared to put into health care in this province and it's a tragedy because throughout the election campaign and the period leading up to it, they continued to flog the Federal Government in trying to put them up as the bad people in this whole issue of deteriorating health care in Manitoba and it won't wash. It won't wash now and it won't wash again in future.

On an equally important front, Madam Speaker, as I said, education is referred to in only two words in the Throne Speech; yet it is a foundation for our society in terms of preparing our young people for the future. For all of the challenges and opportunities which they must face, education is the most important cornerstone that we can put in place for them. We all know that our system faces serious problems. We all know that the quality of education in Manitoba has fallen below the standards that we, the people of Manitoba, have set for ourselves. We know that and it was confirmed just prior to the election by the former Minister of Education setting up a task force to review and investigate the quality of education in Manitoba. After four years of her telling us that the quality of education in Manitoba was second to none, that the quality of education in Manitoba had absolutely nothing to be ashamed of, Madam Speaker, she finally set up a task force to review the quality of education in Manitoba. Yet there's nothing in the Throne Speech that indicates a concern or any interest in the quality of education in Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues and I on this side of the House will press the government to listen to the community concerns about the quality of education in Manitoba, because in every community throughout this province you will hear the concerns raised. You will hear the criticisms expressed as you go from community to community, as I did throughout the election campaign and as my colleagues did throughout the election.

We, as well, will push for the discussion of more effective means of affiliation and co-operation between our independent schools in Manitoba and the public school system. We believe that there should be more effective affiliation and co-operation. This government has ignored the needs and the concerns of independent schools in Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, we will talk about computer and scientific education in the province and the need to rebuild links between the education system and employers throughout Manitoba.

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We will support initiatives in the area of retraining Manitoba workers in co-operation with employers throughout our province. We have many other concerns about the field of education; about developing centres of excellence in our three universities; about restoring equity and order to educational funding; about rebuilding levels of provincial support for education so that our municipal taxes do not have to rise beyond the means of so many of our elderly and those on fixed incomes.

Madam Speaker, fundamental to all of this, of course, has to be the recognition by members on that side of the House that education is important, and that education is going to need their commitment in terms of priorities for support in the future. And again, Madam Speaker, it has nothing to do with the Federal Government and their funding of education in Manitoba.

When you look at last year as a "for instance" and how the Federal Government supported post-secondary education in the province, I believe that the facts are very very revealing. In the fiscal year, 1985-86, the Federal Government earmarked transfer payments to Manitoba for post-secondary education and universities as follows: in cash and in tax points and in increased equalization on the tax points, \$190.3 million. That's what the Federal Government earmarked for Manitoba for post-secondary education.

On the other hand, this administration, what did they do in terms of their commitment to post-secondary education? Well, as we look at the expenditures in the Estimates of last year for post-secondary and university education, we find that they are spending a total of \$223.4 million in capital grants, in the Universities' Grants Commission and in post-secondary education and training. So they received from Ottawa 190.3 million. They received another 29 million in federal training grants, for a total of 219.3, and they put in 223.4. Almost all of the money for post-secondary education came from Ottawa. Madam Speaker, that's the reality of what they're doing. That is the reality of what Manitoba's commitment under this NDP administration is to post-secondary education in this province.

In terms of the elderly, Madam Speaker, this government is out of touch. We feel strongly on this side of the House that better services to the elderly are the key to improving the quality of life for our senior citizens. We have to identify the needs, of course, and surely the objective has to be to provide services to enable the elderly to remain independent in their own homes or elsewhere in the community, as long as they're able to live under those conditions. We are not just talking about Home Care Services, but many many more. We should be listening to the views of the elderly on their transportation needs, Madam Speaker, on dental care, on chiropody, on other health care services. Adding a few dollars to their incomes is not the answer. That alone will not improve the overall standard of living of our elderly.

We know that, over the next two decades, the elderly are going to be the fastest growing group in our population. Now is the time that we have to act. The NDP Government hasn't taken the time to think this one out. It appears almost not at all in the Throne Speech, Madam Speaker, no plan, no indication that there is an acknowledgment on their part that we need

to have a comprehensive range of services to the elderly, not just an increase in their supplement for pensioners to try and buy some votes. We need to have comprehensive services, things that address the real needs that are out there.

Madam Speaker, there are so many other areas that are not covered within the Throne Speech that should have been. I see no mention of services to at-risk populations, of special concerns for single-parent families in Manitoba, of prenatal and neonatal services for Native children and their mothers. Madam Speaker, even the initiative on elderly abuse comes from a Private Members' Resolution that I brought forward in the last Session of the Legislature. Where is the commitment? Where are the new ideas and initiatives from this new administration, Madam Speaker?

I am delighted to hear the government speak about the development of the individual. It has long been the cornerstone of Progressive Conservative political thinking - faith and confidence in individual initiative and building upon this to develop a strong and healthy society. I'm glad to see that the New Democrats finally share our views that the individuals are important in society, that not all of the collective groups that they have been attempting to get together to form their support network - that is not where it lies, but it lies with the individual and their initiative and their desires for a better future, Madam Speaker.

They have not been able to translate any ideas into concrete action that would really serve the key policy areas such as job creation, economic development, social development that would allow members of a society to build their own good quality of life. It can't just rely on government initiative. Government can't provide everything, Madam Speaker, to these people. It has to be provided by the initiative of individual Manitobans working together.

This government is a sham. They call themselves a social democratic group and, Madam Speaker, they aren't, in any way, democratic by many of the things that I will show you later, and they have failed on all of the social fronts. The Throne Speech, I'm sure, in its form as presented to this House will be an embarrassment even to their own party workers, even to the people who worked so hard to try and have them elected, Madam Speaker.

I believe that all Manitobans want to be involved in building a better future, in rebuilding our health care system, in providing a cornerstone for our youth in the education process of Manitoba, in re-establishing our priorities. It's time for a systematic review of all of our services to people. This is something that we called for during the election campaign, and we're going to call for it again and again and again until this government realizes that it is failing miserably to address the real needs of the people of this province.

Madam Speaker, we need to address the individual initiatives of people. We need to address them in a sense that allows them to change their futures for them, not give them government handouts, government programs that are expected to change the future of this province. The Throne Speech completely fails in this objective. It pays lip service to these ideals and the values that so many Manitobans hold dear, and it is indifferent to providing services to people. Ultimately, the arrogance that is shown in this Throne Speech will

become the thing that brings this government down, Madam Speaker. But these are just some of the issues that the Throne Speech raises to mind.

I will continue to address many other areas of concern to the people of Manitoba. I will address, for instance, in great detail many of the concerns on the economic front that my colleagues and I have when we examine the Throne Speech in approximately two weeks. As we evaluate this government, Madam Speaker, there is much more of importance to the people of Manitoba.

In particular, I want to address four words: secrecy, credibility, trust and priorities. The first three words do not even appear in the Throne Speech, but I believe that they underlie every analysis which should be made of this NDP administration and the programs and plans it puts forward. The fourth word, "priorities," appears in the Throne Speech, but the use of the term is more a part of the NDP rhetoric than it is a commitment to address the critical issues that face the people of Manitoba.

I hear government representatives talking about a short Session of the Legislature. In fact, in some news articles it said that we might have a Session that was as short as two months, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I might say that I'm amazed at that suggestion because I remember members opposite when they were in opposition and even in the early years of their administration, talking about making the jobs of MLAs full time. The Member for Inkster spoke about that. The former Member for Springfield spoke about that. They said that we should be sitting longer, that we should be sitting spring and fall Sessions, that we should have this Legislature in Session to serve the needs of the people of Manitoba greater lengths of time throughout the year; and now, Madam Speaker, after being in Session for only four of the past 23 months, they are saying that we might have a Session that lasts only two months?

They have been avoiding the House for as long as they possibly could over the past two years. Twice we have seen them pass, behind the closed doors of Cabinet, special warrants in excess of \$1 billion. To deny the members of this House one more opportunity to debate the finances, the priorities and the programs and commitments of this administration, they passed those special warrants for huge amounts of money in total secrecy.

Both the comments from members opposite and this Throne Speech, which is totally lacking in substance, would indicate that this administration believes that in the past two years it has found the magic formula to electoral success: batten down the hatches, keep your head down, attempt as little as possible and above all don't spend too much time in the Legislature because there people might ask embarrassing questions. You might be called upon to answer for some of the initiatives and actions that you are undertaking for some of your incompetence. You might have to reveal vital information to questions that are of interest to the people of Manitoba. You might have to show what the government's real priorities are, not what the fancy brochures in the election advertising said they were.

This government, during its election campaign, said it was going to stand up for the people of Manitoba. Well it has been hiding from the people of Manitoba for at least two years and, judging by this Throne

Speech, it is going to be hiding from the people of Manitoba for a long time to come, Madam Speaker.

It hid the budget deficit, the real facts and figures on the budget deficit, from the people of this province and we know why. It declined to finalize the Flyer deal until after the election was over. It didn't give any details - any substantive details - on the hydro plans that it announced during the election campaign and it still hasn't proclaimed the Freedom of Information Act. Well, that's a tragedy. In fact, it is an insult to the people of Manitoba, people who want to have their views listened to and represented in this Legislature because only when we are in Session are the views of all Manitobans represented right here in this forum. This is the only public forum that we have whereby all the people of Manitoba are represented and given an opportunity to have their views heard because members on the government side of this House, Madam Speaker, today represent 41 percent of the people of Manitoba; that's whose views they represent sitting in this Chamber. We collectively, my colleagues and the Member for River Heights, on this side of the House represent 55 percent of the people of Manitoba in their views and their concerns.

Madam Speaker, that is why it is important for this House to sit, for this House to hear the views of all the people of Manitoba because only in this public forum are all of those views represented. I want to assure the Premier and the members on his side of the House that they will not be able to hide forever; that they will not be able to keep ducking away from the real issues and concerns of Manitobans; that there will indeed continue to be an opportunity for the views and concerns of all Manitobans to be heard, not just for two months, but for as long as it takes to review the finances, the actions, the priorities and the misdeeds and incompetence of this administration.

Madam Speaker, this NDP Administration has governed by News Release and Order in Council for too long. Its mandate, as I said earlier, is about as slim as one could have sitting as government in this province. As a matter of fact, we, both my colleagues in the Progressive Conservative side of the House and the New Democrats, represent about the same proportion of the popular vote in Manitoba and we intend to ensure that this administration does its job and is both responsible and responsive to the people of Manitoba and all of the critical issues that they face. That, Madam Speaker, is why we have indicated that we will not pair as a rule, and that should we be asked to pair our decision will be based on the public interest.

We have seen the disinterest and the contempt that this NDP Administration has shown for this House. We have seen Question Periods during the last two sessions in which over one-third of the Ministers were absent from Question Period, unavailable to answer questions on behalf of their departments in this House. We've seen, Madam Speaker, members opposite, Ministers going out for ribbon cuttings, for public meetings to promote their partisan projects, for out-of-province junkets, for a wide variety of unacceptable reasons, we have said no, no. Not this Session, and not as long as we are sitting on this side of the House over the next while, are we going to allow that sort of thing to go on again.

Madam Speaker, if we are to be given only a short period of time - and I think it is traditional that the

House sits for about four-and-a-half months of the year - and if we are going to have four-and-a-half months of the year of Session then, Madam Speaker, we are going to have this government and its Ministers make this House a priority. They have plenty of support staff. They have the largest Cabinet in the history of this province. Madam Speaker, it is obscene. They have filled so many of the benches of this administration with Cabinet Ministers - 21 Cabinet Ministers - and when you add to that the Speaker of the House, Madam Speaker, we have only eight people who do not have any executive responsibility on that side of the House. So they have plenty of people to be able to spread the work load.

They have plenty of support staff and we know that from the previous investigations and public information that was given. They have so many others even when we are in Session. They have Monday morning; they have Friday afternoon; they have Tuesday morning, Thursday mornings; they have Wednesday night; they have every weekend to go out and see their constituents, to go out and do the things that they believe are important to them in terms of contact with the people of Manitoba; and then, of course, they have the rest of the year, all of those other many months that we are not in Session.

So let's not hear the bleating about the fact that the government Ministers have to be out there with the people even when we are in Session. Madam Speaker, we will make that judgment and we will make it on what's in the best interests to the people of Manitoba. Their primary responsibility is to be here, to be accessible and to be answerable to everyone in this Chamber and indeed the people of Manitoba and we are going to see to it.

Madam Speaker, when we speak about secrecy there is not just the issue of the length of time between sessions or the passing of billion-dollar special warrants behind closed Cabinet doors, there is a matter of withholding vital public information on the financial affairs of this province.

Early this year I held a news conference to call attention to the fact that when this administration finally released the second quarter financial statements for the province - it was quietly done on New Year's eve you will recall by the Minister of Finance, a very quiet news day - and of course with no newspapers being published the next day he thought that it was a good time to release that information and for the first time in the seven-year history of the quarterly financial statements, it did not project the deficit.

Now there was good reason at that time, Madam Speaker, to believe that the deficit would be higher, the effects of the reduced income of farmers - and we all know about the plight of farmers and the agriculture community of Manitoba - we all knew at that time about SRTCs robbing money from the Provincial Treasury and the fact that the province had issued a number of special warrants since the House had last sat. All of those things should have indicated that the revenues were down, the expenses quite probably were up, but the Minister of Finance and his department refused to project the deficit for the fiscal year for the province. Why? Well, very simply, Madam Speaker, it was because the NDP were planning an election campaign.

Increased deficits are bad news and they highlight the financial incompetence of NDP administrations,

particularly this one. Projecting the deficit at that time, Madam Speaker, about four months ago now, would have probably reminded many people of all the financial problems that this administration has had.

The fact that it had had its credit rating reduced twice; that it had run up over \$1.8 billion in deficits in only four budgets, and that our economy which they say is so buoyant and strong is founded on a very fragile, precarious underpinning of debt.

Madam Speaker, I've said before, we've been borrowing from the future to pay for today and our revenues are down, not because of Ottawa, as I indicated earlier, but because businesses are not expanding and growing, and the real incomes of our people are not growing as fast as the rest of the country; and their policies, major disincentives that have been brought in over the past four years are the major root cause.

So, they withheld the projection of the deficit. Worse still, they withheld the Third-Quarter Financial Statement until after the election campaign was over, Madam Speaker, in the period from 1978, until this past year.

From 1978 until this past year, '78, '79, '80, all the way through to '83, the latest that Third-Quarter Financial Statement was released was February 24th. In '84, it came on March 2, which stretched it a little. In 1985, it came on March 22 and in 1986, on April 4.

Madam Speaker, why did they withhold this Third-Quarter Financial Statement until after the election? Well, the reason is obvious now. Now, reluctantly, the government had to reveal it. Even the manner in which it was revealed is a sad commentary on the secrecy in the approach of this administration, a careful, strategic manipulation of the media, a sad excuse for how a government should really operate.

The former Finance Minister, now the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, 92 days after the end of the fiscal third quarter chose to release it at the end of a working day and then leave town quickly before anyone could question him on it. What a shame! No wonder he's sitting there next to the Minister of Energy and Mines with his tail between his legs, having been demoted into Industry, Trade and Technology.

He was so gutless that he had to release that Third-Quarter Financial Statement later than it ever has been released in the history of this Legislature and then hide before there was anybody available to ask him questions on the matter.

**A MEMBER:** Are you listening, Howard?

**MR. G. FILMON:** Why was he ashamed, Madam Speaker?

**A MEMBER:** We know why.

**MR. G. FILMON:** What did he have to hide? Just this, that the projected deficit was up \$55 million, more than a 10 percent increase in the projected deficit for this fiscal year, Madam Speaker.

The report gave all the evidence that anyone needs that his Premier's attempts to blame Ottawa for any of their financial difficulties and problems was absolutely false.

Federal Transfers were up more than \$40 million over the previous year, according to that Third-Quarter



Financial Statement and the major problem was that this NDP administration could not control its own expenditures. Expenditures were up more than \$45 million over the Estimates of just nine months earlier, Madam Speaker.

A large proportion of this was in the finance costs on the rising provincial debt and, indeed, in interest and payments that went to support provincial debt, Madam Speaker, things such as the Manitoba Properties Inc. scheme. All of these additional payments are why our expenditures were up and, of course, subsidies to Manitoba Hydro. Subsidies for the exchange on foreign borrowings to Manitoba Hydro were again a big portion of why the expenditures of this administration were up.

I don't think that it's stretching it too far to say, Madam Speaker, that had this information been made available to the public, there is no doubt that it would have been very detrimental to the NDP's chances for re-election. And, indeed, what this former Minister of Finance did, what this administration did was shameful and bordering on dishonest, Madam Speaker.

**A MEMBER:** It was dishonest. It was deceitful.

**MR. G. FILMON:** The withholding of the Third-Quarter Financial Statement and other vital information on the performance of the NDP in government would undoubtedly have torpedoed their re-election efforts.

I think we can safely say, Madam Speaker, that after this information coming out in the aftermath of the election campaign, this administration was re-elected under false pretences.

Madam Speaker, it doesn't stop there, because since the election campaign we now know why the former Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, the new Minister of Finance, did not finalize the sale of Flyer Industries prior to the election. Many of you will recall that during the last Session he promised that Flyer Industries would be sold by September. He later, in the fall, extended that and said that Flyer Industries would be sold by March. Madam Speaker, it wasn't. Now, given the evidence we have of that sale there's no question as to why that Minister waited until after the election to finalize the sale, because the fire sale divestiture of the assets of Flyer Industries has been the greatest example of NDP mismanagement in the history of this province.

It will serve as a history lesson for those who believe that social democrats can really run any business efficiently in competition with the private sector. It'll be a symbol of the financial genius of the new Minister of Finance who was rewarded with a promotion for losing \$100 million of taxpayers' money in just four years of operating Flyer Industries.

He took over an enterprise - or at least this administration took over an enterprise - with an accumulated net loss of \$17 million in 1981, a business that had been operated in the previous four years under a Conservative administration on a virtual break-even basis; a total difference, I believe, of less than \$1 million dollars over that four-year period, in terms of its operating losses.

Madam Speaker, it had a reputation of being a quality bus manufacturer throughout North America. It had

many, many satisfied customers and I would venture to say that at that point in time, it could have been sold for a substantial sum of money; but under the management and direction of this NDP administration it lost \$50 million in four years and it developed so many problems that its reputation was destroyed. It accumulated another \$50 million in warranty claims, outstanding liabilities and other commitments that had to be undertaken by the government and the people of Manitoba in order to transfer it to a Dutch company.

After the government agreed to pay \$3 million in training and other costs to the Dutch company, we finally divested ourselves of that enterprise known as Flyer Industries. Madam Speaker, the crowning insult is that we have lost half of the jobs that it used to have and we have no ironclad guarantee that even the remaining 250 jobs will stay.

As well, we're guaranteeing operating lines of credit at the bank, training costs, performance bonds, everything imaginable for the next five years. We bear all the risks.

The only thing that makes this sale acceptable, I believe, is that there is a chance that the Dutch company can turn Flyer Industries around, whereas under this incompetent administration and its Minister, there is no chance that we would ever have turned that business around and we would have continued to lose at least \$15 million a year. I believe that's the only reason that we're better off having divested, despite all of those losses.

Let them not say, as I see the Minister of Finance smiling to the Premier, that in some way this was as a result of anything that went before them because, Madam Speaker, they appointed the board. They made all of the decisions with respect to the operation of this company over the last four years, and despite all of their rhetoric, they're responsible for every penny of the \$100 million it cost the taxpayer over the past four years. If this had come out during the election campaign no way would the public have re-elected them. Secrecy prevails over honesty in the NDP and they were elected again, as I say, under false pretences.

Madam Speaker, while we're discussing secrecy and hiding the truth from the public, let's take a look at Manitoba Hydro. During the election campaign we had an announcement by the Premier of some major hydro-electric agreements with various utilities in the midwestern United States. I believe the Premier alluded to \$4 billion of agreements in the future. The Throne Speech refers to three export agreements with six utilities, but the lack of information and the whole process of presentation to the public was an unbelievable exercise in political deception because there was no deal given on pricing, on the financial arrangements and commitments of the parties. And indeed, during the election campaign no one could find out whether we had Letters of Intent, Memoranda of Understanding, Agreements in Principle, or anything on those power deals that were eventually referred to in the Premier's news release as "arrangements." That's what the news release said - they were "arrangements."

Well, it's now almost three full months since the Premier's news release was made and we still have no detail on the deals or arrangements or agreements - whatever they are - if indeed any exist. What I find absolutely astounding, Madam Speaker, is what little

we know about these arrangements has come from the media pursuing the American utilities. Indeed, both Manitoba Hydro, its chairperson, the Premier, the Minister of Energy and Mines and all of their colleagues and bureaucrats have stonewalled and frustrated any attempts to get any details on the deal.

I am aware of at least one enterprising reporter, Madam Speaker, who has spoken to senior officials at Northern States Power in an effort to gain information and answers on what deals have been made. The Northern States Power officials have said that they were prepared to give some relevant information, but upon checking with Manitoba Hydro - the second party to the deal - he's been told no. He's been told no, it can't be made public. Isn't this incredible, Madam Speaker? We have a private company in the United States owned by shareholders, who normally would be accused of secrecy by New Democrats, who normally would have people saying - New Democrats would say that these private corporations are not in the public interest because you can never find out any information about their financial affairs or anything else. They're saying that they are willing to make more information available to reporters, to media people, to the public of Manitoba. But here we have a utility - Manitoba Hydro, a publicly-held Crown corporation - that will not make the information available to its own shareholders, to the people of Manitoba who are responsible for the entire risk, because this administration says no.

Madam Speaker, I find that this is the most secretive, anti-democratic administration in the history of the province. Is it possible - is it just possible that these deals that were being talked about during the election campaign were not really there; that there really weren't any deals; that they have been working feverishly for the last three months to try and come up with a deal to save their credibility? What is there to hide? I can't think of anything else, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, further to all of this, of course, is the issue of the proclamation of the Freedom of Information Act. We've been waiting now for 10 months and we can't have access to government documents, papers, studies, reports; media are unable to pursue matters; the people of Manitoba are unable to obtain information. Why the secrecy? Are there many reports in those files that disagree with the decision of this government to put forward the two-year advancement of the construction of Limestone, or to build hydro plants solely for export sale? Is there embarrassing advice in those reports from the Commission that looked into the retail price of gasoline in this province?

What about the legal opinion on the Supreme Court decision, Madam Speaker, from last June? Did it say that the Supreme Court might take the narrow view that it did about the provision of services in Manitoba? Did it say that the requirement to translate statutes was all that was there and that the expansive versions of what might happen that the Premier was putting forth; that the Attorney-General was putting forth, that Mr. Anstett was putting forth; that they were arguing that it would still cost us \$20 million or \$50 million? Did that legal opinion tell them that that was poppycock, that it wasn't true? We don't know, Madam Speaker, because we can't find out because this administration won't proclaim the act. What are they doing? Are they going through all the files with a fine-tooth comb to

exorcise any of the embarrassing information that might be in those files before they all become public? Madam Speaker, what is going on? Secrecy is the byword of this government.

Now we come to credibility, Madam Speaker. During the election campaign the Premier made a number of promises; in fact, a considerable number of promises. First and foremost, of course, was the promise to reduce gasoline prices by 9.5 cents per litre by April 2, and to regulate prices at the retail level.

Now I must admit, Madam Speaker, that given the knowledge that it was highly doubtful that the province had the legislative authority to do it, I would say that the proposed amendments that we have here in the Throne Speech, under The Trade Prices Inquiry Act, probably will give them the authority that the Premier said he was going on when he made that promise during the election campaign and, retroactively, were going to try and save the Premier some further embarrassment.

Well, Madam Speaker, the Premier didn't only promise that during the election campaign, but he called a second news conference to appoint a commissioner to review retail gasoline prices in this province. In order to ensure that he could act legally, he said that he was going to have to do this. Well, not only was the professor, whom he first appointed, unable to do this study before the Premier's April 2 deadline, but he claims he told the government so before they appointed him. So when that became a major embarrassment to the Premier, Madam Speaker, after the election - where everybody knew that the promise was pure poppycock - they appointed another commissioner who had studied the problem over the weekend and concluded that the prices had already fallen, thanks to the oil companies, and nothing further was necessary. But, according to the Attorney-General, he did recommend regulating gasoline prices at the retail level which the Cabinet rejected. This comprehensive interim report which took 48 hours to produce, Madam Speaker, is not available to be released to the public. Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive.

This government will go to any ridiculous length to try and save face for the Premier. In fact they all tried to get into the act. A week later, you will recall that the news conference was called by the Minister of Agriculture and then the Minister of Finance. They said that they would sell gasoline to the public from Highways Department pumps in about 10 locations throughout the province, so that they would then ensure that retail gas prices dropped throughout the Province of Manitoba and they'd make the Premier's promise come true.

They then found out, Madam Speaker, as any fool could have told them, that they would have to buy their gasoline from the same wholesale distribution network as any other retail distributor. The only way that they could lower the price of gasoline was to eliminate the dealer markup and put all of the retailers out of business in this province. Is it any wonder that they have no credibility at all, Madam Speaker?

Of course, the next issue to do with credibility has to do with the Minister of Energy and Mines. Over the past two years this NDP administration has stated in this House, in public forums and at national meetings, that it favoured tax reform. It specifically condemned

the Scientific Research Tax Credit, a provision which the Premier, the Minister of Finance, and his colleagues have publicly identified as the worst example of unfair tax avoidance schemes.

Madam Speaker, I think it bears repeating, some of the things that this Premier said about the SRTC. He said: "SRTC and quick-flip arrangements have permitted tens of thousands of Canadians to avoid their entire federal and provincial income taxes. Scientific research is important but so too are the basic services that fair and equitable income taxes are intended to finance. While well-to-do Canadians and profitable corporations are avoiding taxes, leaving ordinary working men and women to pay the bills, the resulting deficits are being used as justification for a tax on public programs and services." That's what he said. That's what he said in Regina in February of 1985, Madam Speaker.

Then of course, Madam Speaker, in Halifax last year he said, and I quote, "The Manitoba Government has consistently argued that national tax reform is urgently required to restore fairness to taxation and provide the resource base necessary to sustain public programs. A return to fair taxation is a basic requirement to maintain vital services and programs needed by Canadians. The relentless shifting of the income tax burden from the wealthy to working Canadians has created a pervasive cynicism among ordinary taxpayers. The Manitoba Government is concerned that the growing inability of the income tax system to generate adequate revenues has led many governments to incur increased deficits, to cut resources for vital programs and services, to rely on other forms of taxation unrelated to ability to pay." That's what the Premier said, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, the former Minister of Finance even raised this as an issue during the election campaign. In fact it was the day, I recall, that the Premier was in Ottawa for the funeral of Tommy Douglas. So, because it had the prospect of being a quiet news day for the New Democratic campaign, that former Minister of Finance raised this issue at a news conference.

He tried to take some further credit for the New Democrats in that campaign for their issue on tax reform. He tried to place, in that news conference, the blame on the federal Conservative administration for this tax scam. Madam Speaker, it was a totally dishonest approach, because it was a program that had been implemented by the former Liberal Government federally. It had been stopped by the federal Conservatives within five weeks of taking government.

Madam Speaker, that didn't matter to that Minister of Finance. He milked it for all it was worth. He called it "legalized theft." He said that taxpayers were bilking the system, and even led to the naming of some prominent Manitobans who had participated in the particular schemes that he identified.

Madam Speaker, after all of this preaching, how could any member of Cabinet be involved and participate in the investment in such a scheme? How, in all conscience, could any members of Cabinet have invested in these scams and kept silent, given the position of their government on this issue.

Well, we now know that at least two did. But what is worse than that, Madam Speaker, is that the Premier, the Ministers of Finance, both the past one and the

present one, and their Cabinet colleagues closed ranks and said, it was all right. They said that investment by one of their colleagues or two of their colleagues or more of their colleagues in an SRTC was legal, and they were perfectly entitled to do it.

Well, Madam Speaker, it's a question of credibility. They say, "Do as I say but not as I do." Madam Speaker, how can anyone in future believe that when these Ministers or any others in this Cabinet make decisions or enter agreements or pass legislation, that they are not doing it out of self-interest, whether it be political self-interest or whether it be financial self-interest? It is a question of credibility.

I want to respond to the Member for Kildonan who took exception to my questions and comments on Friday, because he said I was trying to be a white knight, and he said that they would get me for it, Madam Speaker. Well, Madam Speaker, I have made mistakes before, and I tell you that I will make mistakes again. As long as I am a member in this House, as long as I am a human being, I will make mistakes. I'll make honest mistakes, and I'll try and ensure that I avoid them as much as I can, Madam Speaker. I will never say that I am totally free of the ability to make an error, Madam Speaker. But, I tell you, I am not the one who said that he was perfect. I am not the one who raised this issue, Madam Speaker.

My colleagues and I have criticized tax scams in the past. We criticized the SRTC. We criticized the preferred share scam that this government took advantage of to sell the buildings of this province into the Manitoba Properties, Inc. to try and bilk the Federal Government out of revenues, Madam Speaker.

We believed and we continue to believe, Madam Speaker, that these schemes that add nothing to the economy, whose sole purpose is to avoid paying taxes with no visible benefit to those in society, are wrong. We said so. We urged our federal colleagues to close the loopholes, and they did within a matter of weeks of taking government.

But for the Member for Kildonan, Madam Speaker, I want to remind him that it was his party that raised this issue. It was his colleague that called it "legalized theft," and it was his former Minister of Finance who has labelled the Minister of Energy and Mines, not me.

If you don't believe that the Minister's integrity and that of his colleagues has been called into question, and I say this for the benefit of the Member of Kildonan, I'll quote from Nelson Riis, one of his federal NDP colleagues. Nelson Riis, Chairman of the NDP Task Force on Tax Reform, said: "Politicians who criticize tax loopholes and then take advantage of them leave ordinary Canadians with a cynical attitude." That's what Nelson Riis said. He is the one who has raised the issue, and he is the one who has labelled the Minister of Energy and Mines. He said: "I guess it may lead to some cynicism on behalf of the general public."

Riis said: "The Scientific Research Tax Credit" - which Parasiuk and his family used to great advantage - ". . . was the biggest federal tax abuse examined by the committee. It was the one item that was identified by most tax experts as the most flagrant abuse that people have made of the tax system," Riis said.

So, Madam Speaker, he need not point fingers at me and say that I am trying to take advantage of his colleague, the Minister of Energy and Mines. He need

not point fingers at me, and tell them that I am the one who is riding on a white horse. He need point fingers at his own colleagues, the former Minister of Finance and as well, Madam Speaker, Nelson Riis, his federal colleague.

I might say, Madam Speaker, that if he, like his Premier, does not understand what public morality and integrity means; if he, like his Premier, does not believe that it is essential for a Minister of the Crown to tell the truth, then we are in some difficulty here in this province.

I want to tell you that, aside from all of the various things that have been said of people retroactively criticizing the Minister of Energy and Mines, the most damaging thing that I think was printed about this whole issue was printed and gave the information of a direct question that was asked of the Minister of Energy and Mines during the election campaign. That was at a time when, Madam Speaker, I think we can all agree it would have had an astounding impact on the people of this province had his investment been revealed.

He was asked directly during the campaign by a member of the media if he had bought into the type of quick-profit tax shelters being denounced by his colleague, the Minister of Finance. His response, Madam Speaker, is incredible, and I'll quote: "I haven't made out my income tax form this year. I'll have to talk to my accountant about it."

Madam Speaker, at that point in time, not only had he invested in the 1984 SRTC but, according to evidence now available, he had already invested in the 1985 SRTC.

**MR. D. ORCHARD:** Now do you understand why we want him out of there, Howie?

**MR. G. FILMON:** Madam Speaker, and the Premier says that it's all right. The Premier says he supports it because it was legal and the Premier on Friday had the audacity to say that he wasn't concerned about whether or not his Minister told the truth.

**A MEMBER:** Yeah, that's right; that's what Howard said. Now you talk about a disgusting government.

**MR. G. FILMON:** Madam Speaker, of course, Friday brought out the further revelation, a letter that was later circulated by the Minister of Environment, and Workplace Safety.

At that time, during the Session on Friday, during the question period, the Premier refused to identify who the second member of his Cabinet was who had invested in it. Madam Speaker, we found out of course after the question period that it had been indeed the Member for Radisson. I think that bears a little bit of investigation, not a great deal, because I know there's no point in belabouring the issue much further; but I think it's important to look at what is said in that letter.

That letter says, "Further to the recent discussion in Cabinet about taxation reform, I've just completed a review of my past tax records." Madam Speaker, I remind you that on Friday in question period the Premier said that this was not a topic for discussion in this House. Yet this letter acknowledges that it was discussed in Cabinet.

I say to you, Madam Speaker, that anything that's discussed in Cabinet is a topic for discussion in this House and he's not going to get out from under it.

**A MEMBER:** Right on.

**MR. G. FILMON:** Madam Speaker, further, in his letter the Member for Radisson tells the Premier that he made an investment of \$20,000 in one of these SRTCs but he had forgotten about it, despite the fact that he had borrowed most of the money to make the investment.

**MR. D. ORCHARD:** Selective memory loss.

**MR. G. FILMON:** Madam Speaker, during the course of the debate on Friday, the Member for Kildonan referred to the fact that a Federal Cabinet Minister, Sinclair Stevens - and he said laughingly - Sinclair Stevens didn't even know that his wife had borrowed the money. We now have a Minister here who doesn't even know that he's borrowed the money.

I just say this as gratuitous advice to the Premier, please don't have this Minister sign any documents on behalf of the people of Manitoba. Please don't let him enter into any agreements because he won't remember and we could be in big trouble.

**MR. D. ORCHARD:** Resign, resign.

**MR. G. FILMON:** The other interesting thing, Madam Speaker, about the letter from the Member for Radisson is that he, like the information that came out about the second SRTC investment by the Minister of Energy and Mines, this appears to have come out because of a letter which I wrote to the Premier asking whether anybody else had participated.

It bothers me a great deal, Madam Speaker, that this Premier had no restrictions, no guidelines and no requirements on the part of his Ministers to inform him when they were making investments that were clearly in contradiction to the policies of this government, clearly in contradiction to the policies of this government; and he had no guidelines and he had no relationship between himself and his Ministers that required them to tell him when they were making these embarrassing investments.

Furthermore, this Member for Radisson apparently took more than a week to eventually come clean with his first Minister, to eventually tell him that indeed he had embarrassed his colleagues and that he had acted in contravention to his own government's policy. Madam Speaker, I find that to be incredible.

The response that's being given by members opposite is that we need tighter conflict of interest guidelines; and day by day we see what their knowledge and understanding of conflict of interest is, as every one of them comes forward and tells us a little bit about their own views on conflict of interest.

We had the revelation that two members of the staff of the Department of Education had obtained contracts through a company that they owned, had obtained major federal training contracts.

Madam Speaker, those federal training contracts had to do with work that they had some knowledge of through their position in the Department of Education.

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Indeed it's fair to say that the Department of Education and their colleagues in the Department of Education had helped to set the guidelines for these programs, had entered into discussions about design of the programs.

Madam Speaker, they work with the Federal Government very closely to the extent that the Federal Government has now given them the authority to give the ultimate decision on who will get those contracts.

**A MEMBER:** Isn't that nice?

**MR. G. FILMON:** Yes, they are given some responsibility, to the provincial Department of Education to choose who gets those contracts, Madam Speaker.

They're involved, through his department, in every way, shape and form; and I want to tell you, Madam Speaker, this is the response that the new Minister of Education gave when being told about the fact that these people were in conflict of interest, these members of his department, these employees of his department.

I quote: "Education Minister Jerry Storie says there's nothing wrong with two department employees setting up a consulting business to get Federal contracts in the same field."

Madam Speaker, Civil Service guidelines say that these people were in conflict of interest. His Assistant Deputy Minister, Mr. Levin, admitted that these people were in conflict of interest but he said they were good people and he didn't believe that they acted in any way dishonestly; but the Minister responsible says that there's no conflict of interest.

If we have no knowledge of what conflict of interest is on the part of these members opposite, we're in big trouble, and no amount of legislation is going to change things if members opposite, particularly those members of the Executive Council, don't even understand what a conflict of interest is.

Madam Speaker, another area which bears examination is this government's priorities. If we examine the Throne Speech, it would have us believe that the priorities of this administration are (1) job creation and economic development, (2) agriculture and rural development. Well let's examine this government's real priorities.

In job creation, the only initiatives which are highlighted are a repeat of Limestone which has been in at least the last two Throne Speeches and the Small Business Development Bond. The fact of the matter is that every analysis of the Manitoba economy, whether it be the Royal Bank, whether it be the Conference Board, whether it be the Investment Dealers' Association of Canada or anyone else looking at our economic future says that it's almost totally dependent on Limestone, and that Limestone is where this administration is counting on for the creation for most of the jobs in the future.

Let's face it. If you were going to spend \$2 billion of taxpayers' money in this economy and not create jobs, I would be astounded. The problem is of course that even despite this massive public expenditure we are still dropping in job creation as against the rest of the country.

In fact, just two years ago when Limestone was first announced, we were No. 1 in the country in

unemployment rate and today we're No. 3. Despite Limestone, we're No. 3.

I can see it all now, the Member for Brandon-East, the Minister responsible for Statistics, walking around this building with a placard saying, "We're No. 3, we're No. 3," because he sure was proud when we were No. 1 and then we went to No. 2 and now we're No. 3 and it's getting worse despite Limestone and despite all the commitment of public funds in this economy.

**MR. D. ORCHARD:** Howie will be his cheerleader.

**MR. G. FILMON:** Even in the past few months, Madam Speaker, it's been getting worse and we have more information about job losses and layoffs. Employment at Flyer Industries, of course, as of about Christmas dropped by more than a hundred. Employment at Canada Packers, it's now being said, is going to drop by two hundred.

Small business bankruptcies and closures continue to be at the highest rate in the country right here in Manitoba. Rather than address the real needs of small business, like reducing their costs of operation through the payroll tax or something like that, reducing their paper work burden - all of the things that they have been asking this government for - what does the Throne Speech offer? More loans, Madam Speaker. Small business doesn't need more debt. Small business needs a lower tax bite and less interference from this government.

Now, Madam Speaker, we learn where the real priorities of this lie for jobs. At the same time as this NDP administration is cutting 200 Civil Service jobs in Manitoba, at the same time that it's increasing the Pharmacare deductible for seniors by 50 percent and other increases to seniors who are living in personal care homes, it is creating a make-work job that didn't exist before at a salary of \$55,000-a-year for its defeated Cabinet Minister, Andy Anstett. This, Madam Speaker, is the real example of NDP priorities. It's the example of their hypocrisy and their lack of credibility.

How many people can recall, during the past couple of years, the bleating and the whining that came from members opposite every time the Federal Conservative Government cut Civil Service positions? Do you recall that? I remember the Member for Brandon East would get up and say that the problem is that the Federal Government is cutting Civil Service positions. That's why our economy is going to have some difficulty.

They are doing the same thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The noose has finally tightened around the neck of the new Minister of Finance, and he has now decided that the only answer is to cut 200 Civil Service jobs. But where are their priorities, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Where are their priorities? Are they cutting the bloated senior bureaucracy, that group of civil servants that they increased by over 60 percent in the past four years? No. Are they cutting the support staff to the Premier and his Cabinet Ministers, the special assistants, the executive assistants, the speech writers, the advertising people, the secretaries, the babysitters, those extra 132 positions that were identified by the former President of the Manitoba Government Employees' Association, those extra 132 positions that they added in just three years of government? Is that where they're

cutting? No, no, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In fact, they're adding to them.

Each new Minister that they add to the Cabinet - and we've already identified that this is the largest Cabinet in the history of the province. Each new Minister is going to get additional support staff. Madam Speaker, I understand that the Speaker's Office is going to get additional support staff. That's what I'm told. I hope it isn't true. The support staff will continue to increase, and the deputies and the assistant deputies for the new Ministers will add to the bloated senior bureaucracy of this province.

So where are the cuts going to be made? Right at the service level. The Home Economics Directorate is going to be eliminated, services to the poor, to single-parent families. Everywhere where people have a real need, this government is going to cut programs and services, because those are the real priorities of the NDP administration.

The cynicism about this NDP administration grows every day as each decision is taken. Every time there is an appointment at the federal level, they and their federal NDP colleagues bleat and complain about patronage. Yet, given the opportunity, they bring in their people every step of the way.

Madam Speaker, the Premier said that his new Clerk of the Executive Council was a non-political appointee. The list of contributions by this individual and his wife to the New Democratic Party is available in the public record. He contributes financially to the party, but he's a non-partisan appointment.

What about the appointment of the defeated Cabinet Minister, Mr. Anstett? At the same time as we're cutting staff, we're cutting programs, we're increasing the cost to the elderly, he is hired. And for what purpose? To design a program which the Premier announced during the election campaign. Now do you mean to say that he announced this program and he didn't know what the program was going to do, any details about it and what it might accomplish? Well, I guess that has to be true, because that's the job that has been given to Andy Anstett.

We all know that the Premier announced that he would control and regulate gasoline prices and he would reduce gasoline prices, and he didn't even have the power to do it. So let's hope that Mr. Anstett has more luck in designing a program to save the Premier from embarrassment than they did in designing a program to save him from embarrassment on the gasoline price issue.

The cynicism over this government's lack of priorities will stick with them throughout their term, as short as it may be. The credibility of this Premier when he talks about patronage will be just as damaged as when he argues for tax reform.

As for Mr. Anstett, you know, I think it's sad, because so many of us remember when he came into this Chamber four years ago arguing for open government, for longer Sessions of the Legislature. He would fight for the rights of everybody in this province. He would fight for the disadvantaged, he said. He came here to fight his own private war against poverty, and left satisfied that he had solved his own war on private poverty — (interjection) — that's right.

Madam Speaker, where we have to look now is at the Throne Speech for the second major priority that

has been identified by this administration. They say that it's agriculture and world development. The Minister of Agriculture was saying in the question period today that, of course, he was concerned that we weren't interested in agriculture. I've got news for the Minister of Agriculture. We have a great deal to say about this government's response to the real problems that are out there in agriculture. Madam Speaker, by examining what they say in a Throne Speech, we can see the real difference between what they say their priorities are and what their true priorities are indeed.

The Throne Speech refers to the recent federal initiatives on agriculture as "... a small helping hand to farmers," and proceeds to acknowledge that agriculture is in crisis. Well there is no question that the economic outlook for farmers in Manitoba and throughout the West is as bleak as it's been for a long period of time. My colleagues and I have been meeting with farm groups everywhere in this province, and will continue to meet with farm groups. We're meeting with another group this afternoon, as a matter of fact, in a couple of hours. We've met with our federal counterparts, and we have met with people throughout the province.

When the Premier and his Minister of Agriculture were fed-bashing a month ago, we were proposing concrete suggestions to our federal colleagues in a letter which we made public that said that we thought that they should reduce the federal gas tax on farm-used fuel; that they should increase the domestic price of wheat; that they should look at a reduction in freight costs and other measures to help the farmer.

Well, the Federal Government took action. It put on a freight-rate freeze so that there would not be the \$40 million increase in costs to Western Canada this year. They took action on a gas tax reduction. They took action on a domestic wheat price increase, all within the last while, Madam Speaker. Of course, they took action on a payout under The Western Grain Stabilization Act. All of these measures have added over 800 million to the western agriculture sector in this country. That's what this government says is a small help.

What is this NDP administration doing, this administration that says it's so committed to agriculture - firstly, Farm Start, a program to lend money at favourable rates to encourage young people to get into farming. At a time when any farmer who has a great proportion of debt is in big difficulty, they're offering to add more debt to young farmers to get them involved. Madam Speaker, we'll have to take a look at that program to see just exactly whether or not there is any value whatsoever in it.

They're secondly proposing Farm Aid, a program to place, as far as we understand because there are no details, to place a moratorium on foreclosures and debt.

Madam Speaker, which of these programs will reduce the input cost to our existing farmers? Which of these programs will help to keep our existing farmers from getting into greater difficulty? None of these programs will do any of that. None of them will remove the cost price squeeze. If the Federal program is a small helping hand, this Throne Speech is an infinitesimal helping hand to the farmers of Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

Other provincial governments are offering tangible help to their farmers in lowering input costs. Alberta

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announced a \$200 million package just within the last six months - farm fuel subsidies, livestock assistance of \$95 per breeding cow, freight feed assistance, all sorts of things.

Saskatchewan has done a great deal itself. It announced a farm fuel subsidy, 6 percent loans to all farmers and a package that will cost over \$100 million to add to the farmers of their province.

Manitoba's assistance to farmers, as announced within the last six months, isn't even one-tenth of that which is being done by the Province of Saskatchewan, not even one-twentieth of that which is being done by the Province of Alberta.

The Minister of Agriculture said that he was going to reduce the MACC loan rate for one year. Well, Madam Speaker, MACC loans only go to 10 percent of the farmers in Manitoba. What about the other 90 percent? And what about those 10 percent? Are they the 10 percent who are in greatest difficulty? No, Madam Speaker, they are just a cross section of all of the farmers of Manitoba who happen to have MACC loans. There is no selectivity in the help to help those who need it most; there is no point to any of the programs that they are doing to try and help existing farmers, Madam Speaker.

There are things that they can do within their control. During the election campaign, we suggested that they reduce the education portion of the property tax on farm land. They can do that almost immediately. The education tax on farm land costs \$22 million for the farmers of Manitoba, one of the greatest direct burdens that they have to deal with, and this Minister of Agriculture and this administration won't do anything about it.

Madam Speaker, what about providing some temporary relief and assistance to those farmers who are in greatest difficulty to prevent them from going into receivership? Give them some help before they go into receivership; don't deal with the problem after it is too late, Madam Speaker. They refuse to do anything about it, Madam Speaker, yet they have the audacity to refer to the Federal Government assistance as only a small helping hand. The Throne Speech statement that agriculture is a priority of this administration is a sham. It is rhetoric without action and they should be ashamed of themselves, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, it goes beyond that. It goes to the area of what this Minister of Agriculture is willing to do on behalf of the farmers of Manitoba. I believe that he is totally abdicating his responsibilities in agriculture in so many different ways. Members on this side will recall in the last Session when he spoke out loud and long on the need for a national sugar policy. Do you recall that? I recall it. When the Federal Government undertook to develop a national sugar policy to establish one for the benefit of all the producing provinces, for the producers and for, of course, the sugar refineries, the industry, when the Federal Government undertook that, this government under this Minister refused to participate in the discussions and negotiations leading up to the national sugar policy. We're one of only three producing provinces and soon there will be one of only two.

We have a sugar refinery here in Winnipeg. Between producers, truckers, farm workers, industry workers,

we have hundreds of jobs at stake, but this Minister of Agriculture in this government refused to participate in the negotiations for a national sugar policy. Well thank heavens, Madam Speaker, that our producers have more common sense and commitment.

There was a meeting in Ottawa last year. Everyone was there to discuss the national sugar policy who should have been there but the Manitoba Government was not represented. There was a meeting in Calgary last month, Madam Speaker, to discuss the national sugar policy and the Minister refused to attend. Now he was able to go to Alberta to campaign for the NDP in the provincial election but he didn't go to Alberta to participate in the national sugar policy development. Because they wanted Manitoba involved — (Interjection) — I know that the Minister of Agriculture is laughing at this because he doesn't care about participation in the national sugar policy. But, Madam Speaker, they later held a meeting in Winnipeg so that they would try and get the Minister of Agriculture or this government to participate and they didn't even show at the meeting in Winnipeg to discuss the national sugar policy. They say stand up for Manitoba, Madam Speaker, and they won't even stand up for the people, the sugar producers, and the sugar industry of Manitoba. Yet they have the audacity to say that agriculture is a priority.

Now, Madam Speaker, Manitoba is taking a more strident position on free trade talks - and I want to emphasize that I'm using the word strident with respect to Manitoba Government's position on it and I believe it is still a male-dominated Manitoba Government - but for those who have suggested that is a sexist remark, I reject that and I'll continue to use that remark. There's that comment. They are taking a more strident position on free trade talks. How will the agriculture community's interests be supported in these talks?

We know that the NDP federally are opposed to free trade. Ed Broadbent has said so. We know that the the Liberals in Ontario are opposed to free trade. We know that the CLC, who are very very close with this provincial administration, are opposed to free trade. We also know that the National Farmers Union who are friends and supporters of this party are also opposed to free trade. So I say to you, Madam Speaker, who is going to speak for the farmers of Manitoba on the issue of free trade? Who is going to put forward the legitimate views of the farm producers of Manitoba? Because we have met with the farm business group, we have met with Keystone Agriculture Producers, we have met with the cattle producers and we know that there are many elements of the farm community of Manitoba who are interested in pursuing discussions legitimately towards freer trade with the United States; because they believe that it has the prospect of producing hundreds of millions of dollars of benefits annually to the Manitoba farm economy.

But this administration is now saying that they are going to go and fight Ottawa and put forward a strong position on free trade. They are going to join with the Liberal administration of Ontario and go out there and argue free trade.

Well, Madam Speaker, I put this Premier on notice on Friday that we need to have an all-party committee. We need to have an all-party committee of this Legislature go out and listen to the legitimate interests of the farm community and every other aspect of

Manitoba's economy on free trade to ensure that we aren't in locked step with the position that has been taken by his federal colleagues and too many of the support groups that they are beholding to in this New Democratic Administration.

Another example of the warped priorities of this government is contained in the Throne Speech's restatement of a commitment during the election campaign, a commitment by this government to spend \$100 million cleaning up the riverbanks of the Red and the Assiniboine River - \$100 million over 10 years.

I have to tell you, Madam Speaker, that I was astounded on Friday, during the moving of the Throne Speech, that the Member for Ellice said his proudest, most exciting moment during the election campaign was not when it was announced that there was going to be a CAT scan for Brandon and additional CAT scans at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg, not when it was announced that they were going to have additional day care spaces, not when it was announced that they were going to have a library for Red River Community College — (Interjection) — no? When it was announced that they would spend \$100 million cleaning up the river banks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, he said that that was his most exciting time and his proudest moment during the election campaign.

But I have to tell you, Madam Speaker, that as someone who lives on the Assiniboine River, who every winter spends countless hours walking along the frozen river, no one needs to tell me what an asset our rivers are to our city. Every time I have been involved in planning and working towards a national convention or a conference here in Winnipeg, I know that we have always had river boat cruises to show the people who came here what a beautiful city we have, what a wonderful environment and quality of life we have, and our rivers are a tremendous resource.

As a member of the majority group on city council, I know that we took a great deal of criticism and flak, and many of my colleagues who are sitting here are people who participated in the decisions that we made for river bank acquisition and restoration. Council throughout my time there, and beyond, did many many things to improve the river banks and the aesthetics of the rivers of Manitoba, and much of that time we took flak from people who said you shouldn't spend so much money at it, but we believed that it was a priority to work towards that end.

We invested money in park development - Bonnycastle Park on the river, Grant's Mill out on the Sturgeon Creek, in south Fort Garry, in the Member for St. Norbert's riding there are some beautiful parks along there, across from the Basilica in St. Boniface - all of those things were undertaken by us. We, as a Conservative administration, many of us here on this side entered into and helped design the ARC agreement for the Province of Manitoba aimed at river bank restoration and improvement - all of it we felt was very very important. So nobody needs to tell us that it would be a good thing to clean up the river banks of Manitoba.

But every decision has to be weighed against the priorities of the day; everybody has to weigh their decisions against those priorities. For many years there has been a continuing evidence of the need to invest in drainage works for this province, the need to invest in improvement of our drainage and our topography

to improve the opportunities for the farmers and the people in rural Manitoba. I don't have to list the areas because they have been in the front page headlines, not only this year but in previous years, up at Peguis, up at Ste. Rose where we have a tremendous problem right here today, Gimli, Portage la Prairie - south of Portage la Prairie, the south Interlake, Madam Speaker, southeast Manitoba, in the Emerson constituency, they have tremendous problems in flooding. We need a long-term plan and we need investment to upgrade our drainage so that our rural communities and our agriculture can survive.

The Throne Speech talks about rural development but tens of thousands of acres of productive farm land are rendered useless because of the fact that we don't have adequate drainage works. Rural communities are dealt serious economic blows year after year after year. Is this government prepared to address it? No. Its priorities are \$100 million to clean up the Red and Assiniboine Rivers in Winnipeg. Nothing for drainage; never mind health care; never mind education; never mind social services that I've talked about. This government's priorities are all wet.

We have another indication of this government's misplaced priorities in the mention of transportation in the Throne Speech. The Throne Speech says, and I'll quote, "It is my government's intention to continue building upon our economic strengths such as transportation." Now I'm sure that that statement probably made many many people throughout this province jump up and take note, especially in rural and northern areas, because everywhere I went through this province during the election campaign people talked about the deterioration and the sad condition of our highways. Highways are the life line of our rural communities. They provide access to markets for our primary producers, a supply of consumer goods, the opportunity to live in a lifestyle that's equivalent to that of those in our cities. They provide an opportunity for the expansion of agriculture, for mining, for tourism, and virtually every economic opportunity is dependent upon better roads and highways. But, alas, that statement in the Throne Speech doesn't refer to highways and roads at all. It refers to a resolution on Churchill.

But we've always supported Churchill; you can ask the Member for Arthur who, when he was Agriculture Minister, convened a meeting on the Port of Churchill in the Town of Dauphin. You can ask people here who worked with and negotiated with Mr. Mazankowski when he was the Minister of Transportation in 1979 to bring icebreakers into the Port of Churchill to extend the season. You can ask people on this side all about the commitments that we made to the Port of Churchill in the past. The present Federal Government has just committed another \$14 million to improve and enhance the use of the Port of Churchill.

What the Throne Speech refers to in terms of improved transportation in Manitoba is that they are going to bring in a resolution. Well I know what that resolution is going to say, Madam Speaker; it's going to be a thinly guised opportunity to fed-bash, what they've always done, a commitment to transportation with somebody else's money; that's what we are going to get, just like the Premier's gasoline price promise. This government will go to any length to make promises



to spend somebody else's money. Madam Speaker, they will do nothing because they have made no commitment in this Throne Speech and year upon year upon year over the past four years of this administration they have not spent as much money in real dollars as was spent before they took government, Madam Speaker. Their commitment is zero to highways - no maintenance, no upkeep, certainly no expansion of the highway system, Madam Speaker, and yet they have the unbelievable audacity to say they are committed to improving the transportation of this province. Their priorities are obvious and their priorities are out of whack again.

There is much much more that I could say, Madam Speaker, but I don't want to go much further with this because I think that with all of the information in this Throne Speech, with all the inadequacies, I have probably covered as much as needs to be said and I want much more to be said by my colleagues, and I know that they have many other things that they want to say about this administration.

But I just want to touch on, very briefly, one final item. The announcement of an act to establish the Manitoba Energy Foundation given the many challenges that we face, the many problems that we face in this province probably speaks more clearly as to how far out of touch with reality they really are. Firstly, in its own presentation in front of the National Energy Board, they showed that there cannot be a positive cash flow from the Northern States Power sale for almost 20 years at the earliest. In view of the falling price of world nonrenewable energy, this agreement that they entered into with Northern States Power that calls for Manitoba to be paid based on 80 percent of the cost of coal-fired thermal energy will ensure that there are no profits to Manitoba. Fifty percent of nothing is nothing, Madam Speaker. Yet we are going to make it a priority in this Session to pass an act that will decide how to distribute 50 percent of nothing 20 years from now.

This is not the Throne Speech of a new energetic and competent government. This is not a government; this is a collection of has-beens, of ideologues and of malcontents whose only common purpose is to cling to power at any costs. It was re-elected under false pretences and it has no plan for the future. Its symbol, as I said last week, should be that poster of a kitten hanging by its forepaws on a bar that has a heading over it, "Hang in there, baby," because that's all that this government represents for the future of Manitobans. Its responses to the major problems facing Manitoba have ranged from grossly inadequate to absurd.

So, Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Pembina, that this motion be amended by adding to it the following:

THAT this House regrets:

- (1) that this government has pursued a policy of secrecy on matters of vital interest to the public such as the withholding of the Third Quarter Financial Statement, the details of the hydro sales agreements with American utilities it announced during the election campaign, and its failure to proclaim the Freedom of Information Act;
- (2) that this government has lost its credibility by the investments of its Cabinet Ministers in SRTC tax scams;

- (3) that this government has failed to take any real action to deal with the serious problems which exist in the agricultural sector of our province;
- (4) that this government places as a priority the expansion of its Cabinet and the hiring of a defeated Cabinet Minister in a make-work position over health care for our elderly and services to the people;
- (5) that this government has failed to address the question of deterioration in our health care system, in the quality of education of our youth, in services to meet the needs of the elderly and disadvantaged, the employment opportunities for our youth; and
- (6) that this government has thereby lost the trust and the confidence of the people of Manitoba.

**MOTION presented.**

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Thompson.

**MR. S. ASHTON:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In my remarks today I want to stress a number of themes, starting with courtesy. As more than common courtesy, I would really like to congratulate you on your election to Speaker in this House. I'd like to highlight that I, personally, as a member of this House, having known you for the past five years in the same capacity, have every confidence that you will be a tremendous Speaker; that you will live up to the trust that we have given you in that high office. I say that I am very disappointed that other members of this House have not chosen to give you that confidence. I think that they will be proven wrong, Madam Speaker, as we go into this Session and future Sessions.

I'd also like to extend congratulations to all the new members of the House. Once again I would like to express my disappointment that the normal courtesy that is extended to new members was somewhat lacking when the Member for Kildonan and the Member for Ellice were making their initial speeches in this House. I hope that all members of this House will extend that courtesy to all the new members - all 19 - because I think that we should listen to what they have to say. I think it's very good that we have that infusion of new blood, that new perspective that those new members will bring.

Before beginning the body of my speech, I'd like to thank perhaps the people I think are most important in my own situation, and that is the voters of Thompson. I'm proud to be able to stand here today, having had the largest swing to the NDP in this province and one of the largest swings of any party in this province, and I think there are a number of good reasons for that which I will address later. But what I'd like to do is stress today as I stand to give my first speech of this, my second term as the MLA for Thompson, that I'd going to continue to do what I've been doing these past five years and that is to work with the community of Thompson; to build a better community; to put the concerns of residents of my constituency first, and to keep in touch with those constituents and continue to

build on the base of progress we've seen for the last four years.

One of the great things about the people of Thompson, Madam Speaker, is their great common sense. I think if there's one term I would use to describe the people of Thompson, one of the attributes they have, it is their great common sense. It's unfortunate that members opposite don't come to Thompson more frequently; perhaps they would pick up some of that common sense. I'm thinking here of one specific item and that is the question of who won the election. Now, Madam Speaker, in my constituency, there's no confusion about who won the election. They certainly know who won the election in Thompson; there wasn't much doubt about that. They know, Madam Speaker, who won the election across the province - and I suspect it's not just the people of Thompson. There are people with common sense in every one of the 57 constituencies who know what the election results were. They know that the New Democratic Party won the most number of seats, a majority of seats in this House, and that the New Democratic Party won the most votes.

But there are some people who are trying to suggest that it is otherwise. The classic example is the Leader of the Opposition. Since the election, the Leader of the Opposition has taken every opportunity to deny the fact that he and his colleagues lost the election. He's done it in the press; he just did it in his comments on the Throne Speech and it's becoming a regular pattern in this province. For four out of the last five elections, the New Democratic Party has been elected to government, since 1969. It has been elected for 12 out of 16 years. There's a consistent pattern. The Conservatives just haven't recognized that fact. They haven't recognized the fact that the New Democratic Party speaks for the majority of Manitobans.

I took the liberty of reading back some of the previous speeches of Leaders of the Opposition in response to the first Throne Speech, introduced by each of those New Democratic Party governments. Now to get some idea of just how little they've learned, I would start with the comments of one Mr. Weir. I think probably the best comment - I think what summed up the attitude of Conservatives in those days about what happened in the election was - and Mr. Weir stated, "I haven't found out what a Social Democrat is yet." That was part of their problem initially. They lost the election; they barely knew they'd lost it; and they didn't know why.

**MR. H. ENNS:** We know that some are Communists.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please.

**MR. S. ASHTON:** Madam Speaker, in 1974, February 4, Mr. Sid Spivak took much the same approach. He basically tried to indicate that somehow the New Democratic Party had lost the election; that basically it was the Conservative Party at that time that had direction - not the New Democratic Party. It was a theme throughout his speech; basically the same sort of attitude once again, Madam Speaker, that the Conservatives somehow hadn't really lost the election. There had just been some sort of accident that they were on that side of the House.

In 1982, March 1, probably the most memorable quote from Sterling Lyon was his description of the fact that he said the NDP is a party temporarily in office. It was a theme repeated in that speech and many speeches to come. His view was that somehow there had been an aberration, there had been a mistake, and that somehow that would be corrected soon but we saw in the election of 1986 what happened.

You know, those comments, I think, have reached their ultimate now with the present Leader of the Opposition because since the election, he has taken every opportunity to deny the fact that the people of Manitoba knew what they were voting for in this election. Let's face it, when a party has been in power - when it has won four out of five elections - when it has been in power 12 out of 16 years, there isn't much secret about the principles it stands for, its policies, or what it represents.

What is the response of the Leader of the Opposition to the election results? Well he said that if he has his way, he will cause the defeat of this government, in this House, as soon as possible and have another election. Where is the common sense in that, Madam Speaker? Where is the common sense in the Conservatives denying the fact that they lost the election?

The word for it isn't common sense, it's cynicism and arrogance, Madam Speaker, because that is exactly what the Conservative Party has been demonstrating after each and every one of the last four elections. You know, arrogance, it's a term that the Leader of the Opposition attempted to use but it's a very interesting term. I think it is particularly appropriate for the Conservatives as they have demonstrated their attitudes to be since the election, because arrogance is basically a feeling of superiority manifested in an overbearing manner or presumptuous claims.

Now, what could be more presumptuous than to claim that the people of Manitoba didn't know what they were doing on March 18, 1986? What could be more presumptuous? What could be more presumptuous than to suggest that the New Democratic Party didn't really win the election, that basically there was a tie? Well, there's no tie in terms of seats; there's not even a tie in terms of the — (Interjection) — popular vote.

One of the members opposite asks, "What is the difference?" It's 4,500 votes, in favour of the New Democratic Party, which happens to average out to about 72 votes per constituency. Well, Madam Speaker, that's what I was elected by in the 1981 election and it didn't stop me from speaking up on behalf of my constituency and it's not going to stop this government from continuing with four more years of progress.

I mentioned cynicism — (Interjection) — Madam Speaker . . .

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please.

**MR. S. ASHTON:** I think there can be no more evidence of the cynicism of the Conservative Party than the type of election campaign that they ran; no more cynicism. I want you to consider what they did, their basic bottom line, their policy bottom line.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Lakeside, on a point of order.

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**MR. H. ENNS:** Madam Speaker, it is becoming obvious that the Honourable Member for Thompson is picking on the Conservative Party.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** As the honourable member well knows, he does not have a point of order.

The Honourable Member for Thompson.

**MR. S. ASHTON:** Madam Speaker, I believe it is time that the members of the Conservative Party learned the truth.

Let's get to their election campaign, Madam Speaker; let's get to the bottom line of what they said. They said they wanted to decrease the deficit, decrease taxes and increase spending, all at the same time. Now, I didn't find one of my constituents who believed that. If you want to talk about cynicism and, in this case, I think realism, too — I think what one of my constituents said probably summed up the bottom line of the view of many people in the electorate about the Conservative promises.

His concern was the deficit, so he asked my position and I expressed that to him. Then he basically said that it was nice to be able to get an answer on that because he wasn't getting much of an answer out of the Conservatives on the deficit and he said that he was particularly concerned about the inconsistency of their claims but that didn't really matter anyway because he knew the Conservatives didn't keep their promises. There was a gem of truth, I think, in that comment.

I think that the election campaign run by the Conservatives was the ultimate in cynicism. It was based on the idea that no matter what they said, if they said it in the right way, the people would somehow be cynical enough not to take their inconsistencies seriously. I suspect that is why, when they announced one of the major planks in their platform — it was on a Sunday, I believe — a one-hour news conference at the Fort Garry Hotel, a 38-point economic policy — you know, the news coverage the next day — I'll read the headline, "Gutter Politics — Gary Exits in Hurry as Buddies Heckle Reporters."

Madam Speaker, it describes in the article that Tories seated in the back of the room apparently were upset at attempts to probe the party's 41-page platform titled, "PC Plans for Economic Growth." It went on to say, "Filmon didn't have a total tab for all of his 36 promises and suggested reporters add them up."

Initial estimates show that the promises cost about \$150 million-plus per year, excluding the loss to the Treasury from lower hydro rates.

You know what caused this ruckus? I quote from this article once again. "The dispute with the reporters centred around Filmon's definition of what constituted a small business." The press asked what the definition of a small business was and the response of the Tories was to heckle. How cynical can you get; how cynical can you get, Madam Speaker?

That was the theme throughout the election, was to promise whatever people wanted without dealing with any of the inconsistencies and hope that they could somehow slide into office without anybody realizing it. Well, the fact is the people of Manitoba can't be fooled. They weren't fooled. They voted according to the party that they knew would be the best representative of their concerns.

So, Madam Speaker, there was that cynicism evident in each of the last speeches in response to the Speech from the Throne, in each of the elections where the New Democratic Party won, and also in the election as well. But, you know, it hasn't stopped. In the Leader of the Opposition's speech today, he is once again relying on this cynicism, this view that you can say whatever you want and not be judged on your inconsistencies.

Madam Speaker, let's talk about all the talk that the Leader of the Opposition made reference to in terms of openness, and suddenly he is a convert to openness. Well, I wonder if he will perhaps change his mind in terms of the conflict-of-interest legislation. The Leader of the Opposition has already indicated that he is opposed to greater disclosure. In term of openness, how about this for openness? During the election campaign, the Leader of the Opposition said that the Conservative Party would not accept money under The Election Finances Act, and what did he say after the election? He said, well, maybe they will after all because nobody cared about that. Isn't that a cynical comment? Is that openness on the part of the Opposition?

Let's talk about policies; let's talk about policies. I sat in this House for in excess of two years with the present member who is the Leader of the Opposition when he had the opportunity to outline his policies, his proposals for Manitoba. Where were they? They appeared two weeks into the election campaign; they appeared on a Sunday, which was calculated, I am sure, to receive the least possible press coverage and, now, as we come into this Legislature, this package of so-called proposals is barely audible from the Leader of the Opposition. We sat through close to two hours of debate, and there probably wasn't more than five minutes of reference to those policies or programs. That's cynicism, once again. It is based on the bottom line that the Conservatives have and have had, that they feel all they have to do is criticize. All they have to do is pretend that they didn't really lose the election, and that everything will take care of itself. They'll somehow wake up one day, and they'll be back in government.

Madam Speaker, members opposite may delude themselves, but the people of Manitoba are not going to delude themselves. There are many good reasons why the New Democratic Party Government was re-elected. One, first and foremost, was its record: its economic record, its record in terms of health and education, and its record on social policies. As much as members opposite may want to try and attempt to criticize that record, it's clear, if you look at any of the reports on the economy, that we have one of the best economic records in Canada. We're projected to have the highest growth rate in Canada, as a province, for the next decade. Those are inescapable facts, Madam Speaker. That is a record which is second to none in this country.

But, you know, there's something more to the New Democratic Party and its election victory than its record. Certainly, that speaks for itself. But there is one thing, I think, that makes the New Democratic Party unique in Canada, and that is the fact that it does have a vision. It does have a consistent set of principles which it has followed since its founding as the CCF and, later, as the NDP.

We're a party that doesn't talk about job creation only at election time. We don't talk about making sure that all people in our society have opportunity for employment just because a poll says that's what people are concerned about. We're concerned about that year in and year out. We're not only concerned about social justice when an election has been called. We stand for social justice, no matter what the occasion and under what circumstances. I mean, the number of times that New Democrats have stood alone - in the Second World War for the rights of the Japanese probably being the most classic example of when New Democrats have stood for social justice against the political realities of the day.

We stand for peace. We always have, as a party. I think one of the proudest moments that I had as a New Democrat in this Legislature was being able to speak in favour of and vote for the resolution that declared Manitoba a nuclear weapons-free zone. Peace, Madam Speaker, is something that is vital to this party, and will continue to be vital, and compassion and care. These are terms you'll hear a lot from New Democrats. It's because it's something that is, I think, behind the reason that we are New Democrats, the reason that we stand for those principles that we do - because we do care. We do have compassion for other members of society. Each and every decision that is made, that is part of that decision.

So there are differences, but probably the greatest difference between the New Democratic Party and other parties, as I've said, is that we have a vision. We don't just look to the end of the Session. We don't just look to the next election. Our perspective is longer than that. We see ourselves being on a road, perhaps a long road, but on the road of progress toward economic justice and social justice in Canada. We see ourselves, in each and every decision we make, as moving toward that eventual goal.

You know, it was described by the late Tommy Douglas as the New Jerusalem. It's been described by many New Democrats with the same sort of fervour as being a vision that sees those qualities that we often assign to some hereafter as being achievable on earth. I think that's one thing that is consistent with the New Democratic Party, is that we continue to have that vision even in government.

As I look back on our record from 1981-1986, I look back at the record since 1969 of 12 years of New Democratic Party Government, I'm mindful of just how much we have accomplished, just how much progress there has been in this province. I see it in my own area. I see how we have developed the economy, how we've developed our health and educational facilities, our social services. In fact, I can't even imagine the time before we had that.

As someone who grew up during this period, if I think of the many years of progress that we've seen, I really can't imagine what the province would have been like prior to that time. I certainly remember, growing up in Thompson, how little we had and how much we have today. I see that across the province. I see in particular that, rather than rest on our laurels in 1981, because certainly we accomplished a great deal under the eight years of the Schreyer NDP Government, what I'm particularly proud of is that we took it further. We took it further in terms of economic development, in terms

of health and education, in terms of social policy and social programs. That's, once again, because we had that vision.

We're not a party that is happy standing still. We are a party that sees itself as moving forward. It's that kind of vision that I think is needed today. It's never before perhaps been as needed as it is now. When you look at the challenges we face of technological change, the continued problems with unemployment, particularly the structural unemployment that has not been responding to traditional economic measures; when you look at the continued fact of poverty in the midst of plenty, Madam Speaker, you see that never has there been a time when this vision has been as badly needed as it is today.

Madam Speaker, one press report said that we included the term 'vision' in the Throne Speech 23 times. I make no apologies for that as a New Democrat. I think that we have to be continually calling for vision, for direction. I, quite frankly, actually welcome any assistance the Opposition can give in terms of constructive criticism, because that I think is the role of the Opposition. It's not to claim that the election result was a mistake or a fluke; it is not to attempt to frustrate the operation of the government through denying pairs or other mechanisms which are at their disposal, but the role of Opposition is to provide constructive criticism. And I really look forward to it from members of this House in the upcoming four years, because I do believe that we will not be faced with another election until the full term of this government has run its course.

Madam Speaker, as I look forward to the next four years, I hope that there is something else that all members of this House will do on a regular occasion. It gets back to what I was saying at the beginning of my speech, and that is to seek out the common sense of their constituents at every available opportunity because that common sense, I think, is what binds this province together. It's that common sense that people in my constituency see in working together to improve our community.

Over the last four years, I've worked with New Democrats, Conservatives, Liberals, people without any political affiliation. We've worked toward the same goal, building a better community. I think that goal is achievable for the province. We may have our different perspectives from time to time, but I do believe it is achievable. What we need is common sense. What we need is respect for democracy and the will of the people; what we need even is the common courtesies, some of which are traditions of this House, in terms of our normal proceedings, our normal operation.

You know, perhaps I'm being unrealistic here. Perhaps I'm dreaming when I see this as achievable, but I look back at the dreams of my party of 50 years ago, and see that many of them have become realities today. I hope that in debate, in consideration of the direction of this province in this House, we will all take that opportunity to perhaps dream of it, where we dream of a more co-operative society, a more fair society, because it is achievable.

You know, the bottom line for New Democrats, I think, was probably best expressed by J. S. Woodsworth more than half-a-century ago. He said: "What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all."

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You know, in this Throne Speech, as imperfect as any Throne Speech is, I think that message comes through. When we talk of vision, that's what we are talking about, Madam Speaker, a fairer society, a society in which there is no poverty or unemployment, a society where there is social justice. Perhaps that is a dream, Madam Speaker, but, for New Democrats, we know that dreams can become realities.

Thank you.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for River Heights.

**MRS. S. CARSTAIRS:** Madam Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kirkfield Park, that debate be adjourned on this motion.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**HON. J. COWAN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I move, seconded by the House Leader of the Opposition, that the House do now adjourn.

**MOTION presented and carried** and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).