



**First Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature**

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES**

and

**PROCEEDINGS**

**(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay  
Speaker*



**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Sixth Legislature**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 24, 1995

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**PRAYERS****ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS****MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****National Forest Week**

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources):** Madam Speaker, I have a ministerial statement.

Madam Speaker, National Forest Week took place between May 7 and May 13 of 1995. Members of the Manitoba Legislature, today each MLA has received a tree from the Manitoba Forestry Association in celebration of National Forest Week as has been the tradition for many years.

Manitoba has been celebrating National Forest Week for almost 50 years, and in honour of this special occasion the Manitoba Forestry Association is distributing 20,000 trees to Manitobans. Each MLA has received a tree to plant in his or her constituency to mark this special week.

We also recognize the importance of a forest to all Manitobans.

This government is committed to ensure the sustainable development of our forest and land resources, and the Department of Natural Resources manages and allocates forest resources for the best long-term social and economic benefits to Manitobans.

In Manitoba, we plant more than 11 million trees annually and use natural regeneration to ensure that future forests meet environmental as well as industrial needs.

We all recognize the importance of forests for wildlife habitat and recreation, and we are here to ensure that future generations can also enjoy and appreciate our forests. We have maintained our

support for National Forest Week and Manitoba Forestry Association educational materials and continue to work in partnership with this organization to demonstrate co-operative sustainable forest management.

Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate and thank the Manitoba Forestry Association for its efforts and encourage all Manitobans to plant a tree. Thank you.

\* (1335)

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** Madam Speaker, I wish, too, to express our support for any co-operative sustainable forest development that this government is willing to undertake. I look forward to the day when it does actually get serious about this problem. I offer any kind of support from this side of the House when I see that happening. Thank you.

**Introduction of Guests**

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us this afternoon His Holy Highness Sant Roshan Singh of Maqsdapur, Punjab, India.

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

Also in the gallery, we have with us this afternoon from Laureate Academy ten Grades 10 to 12 students under the direction of Mr. Bill Rambo. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk).

We have seated in the public gallery from River West Park School forty Grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Gary Perrett. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Ernst).

Also, we have with us from the Ralph Brown School thirty Grades 5 and 6 students under the direction of Mrs. Cora Duffy. This school is located in the

constituency of the honourable member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh).

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

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Winnipeg Arena Provincial Funding

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** My question is to the First Minister.

On June 24, 1994, less than a year ago in this Chamber, the Premier rose to table the Burns report. The Burns report concluded that \$30 million of public money was not enough to support a new arena facility for the Winnipeg Jets. The Premier quoted at that time that the taxpayers will have to fund the total cost estimated to be \$111 million for the new facility. The Premier went on to state in this House that he cannot, and I will quote, in all good conscience expect Manitobans to fund a \$111-million facility.

I would ask the Premier why this was unacceptable to his conscience before the election and why now after the election it is acceptable to the conscience of the Premier, Madam Speaker.

\* (1340)

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, the member opposite is very well aware of the method in which the MEC attempted to raise monies from the private sector to fund the purchase of a team, as well as a new facility for hockey in Manitoba. Their efforts which arrived at approximately, I believe, about \$40,000 to \$45,000 of fundraising were inadequate to be able to both fund the acquisition of a team and also contribute to the development of a facility.

A new proposal came forward led by Mr. Asper and others who joined on with the efforts of MEC and made a proposal that they would not only raise the funds to purchase the team but create an endowment fund that would take care of ongoing losses for the foreseeable future of the team. That significantly

increased the target on their part to in excess of \$100 million on the understanding that the private sector would provide a facility, the construction of a facility, called an entertainment complex for the ongoing use of the citizens of Manitoba that would recognize the major investment being made for the acquisition, operation and covering of losses for the team.

That proposal was one that we considered very carefully, and given the fact that it resulted in us not only getting \$10 million back in direct revenues to the taxpayer from the construction of the facility but \$6 million a year of tax revenues afterwards, we decided that this was a reasonable proposition, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, regrettably, the Premier did not answer the question.

The question was, on June 24 of 1994, why was it against the conscience of the Premier to go ahead with \$111 million—this was before MEC was created—and the Premier did not answer the question, why is it acceptable to his so-called conscience after the election?

Madam Speaker, during the election campaign, on many occasions, the Premier stated that he would only place \$10 million of taxpayers' money on the table. This is months after MEC was created. In fact, at the end of March, on a CBC debate which was covered by all the media outlets, the Premier said that he would cancel the operating loss agreement, and the only amount of taxpayers' money he would spend would be limited to \$10 million.

Why did he say one thing before the election and proceed with more money well in advance of that after the election, Madam Speaker?

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, I, in the response to the first question, did indicate to the Leader of the Opposition that, as a result of the private sector coming forth with a proposal to raise considerably more money than the original proposal that was there, on the understanding that the public sector would create a facility, an entertainment complex, that would be there for the use and enjoyment of generations of Manitobans to come, we made the decision, given that the tax

revenues would be \$10 million directly from the construction of the facility to the provincial government and \$6 million a year from the operations of the team within that facility, that there was a direct benefit to the taxpayers of Manitoba and there was reason for us to entertain that thought and to go into that agreement, which we did.

We then proposed to the other two levels of government who subsequently have indicated their commitment to the construction of the complex.

\* (1345)

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, the Burns report and the Mauro report dealt with the whole issue of taxpayers' so-called return all the way through, and the Premier said, it is unconscionable to proceed with \$111 million dollars, last June, prior to the election. Then, during the election and at the end of March, he said, and I quote: Only \$10 million.

At the Taxpayers Association debate, again covered by the media, the Premier then promised, again, only \$10 million and cancellation of the operating loss agreement.

What democratic mandate has the Premier got from the people of Manitoba to maintain his word when he promised \$10 million, and now, after the election, he is proceeding with amounts of money well beyond what he promised in the election?

How can he say one thing in the election, one thing prior to the election, and do something completely opposite which he condemned before the election? That is the essence of the question.

**Mr. Filmon:** One could ask why it is that the Leader of the Opposition, when it appeared as though the Jets were not going to be able to remain in Manitoba after the election, said: Why did the Premier not do something about it? He promised to save the Jets during the election campaign, and he has broken his promise. That is what he said.

He also said to other people, Madam Speaker, that if he were in office, he would have found a way to save

the Jets. That is the kind of duplicity that we get from the Leader of the Opposition all the time. He gets away with it and he expects that other people are not going to notice the sorts of things that he says, but we have noticed and so has the public. That is why the public did not elect him as the Premier.

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, the government has condemned to the conscience of the Premier \$111 million. The Premier has not answered that question. Why was it acceptable to be against his conscience before the election, and now, to change his mind after the election, it is acceptable?

During the election, on three separate occasions, the Premier said his limit was \$10 million. He said it in the CBC debate which was covered by all the media, the radio debate. He said it at the Taxpayers Association and four days before the election, he again said on the CJOB all-party debate, and I quote: The \$10 million is all and the limit we are going to put on the table.

What democratic mandate did the Premier receive in the election campaign to go beyond \$10 million, Madam Speaker?

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has asked the same question a third time. I will respond, again, that the proposal that was put forward by Mr. Asper and the new group of people who got involved, involved them raising a considerable amount of money greater than their original proposal.

Instead of about \$45 million, they were now coming up with \$110 million which saw them have the ability not only to buy the team but create an endowment fund that would provide for ongoing losses that would assure the ongoing operations of the Jets here.

#### **Business Plan Tabling Request**

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** The issue here is the word of the Premier.

On four occasions, he condemned what he is now agreeing to. Three times during the election campaign, the Premier promised only \$10 million. How can Manitobans listen and believe the Premier on any

subject if during the election campaign he says one thing and he does something different shortly thereafter? That is the issue.

Madam Speaker, can the Premier table today, because he condemned other parties in the past for asking for support for the Jets—in fact, he condemned the former member for Crescentwood for a \$30-million proposal in 1990 without a business plan. Can the Premier table today the full business plan, all of the costs to the taxpayers, directly and indirectly, all the conditions, all the revenue considerations in terms of the rent that will be paid back to the public who are paying for a whole new arena?

Can he table that in the Chamber today in light of the fact that he has always said before that he will not proceed with any public money without a plan first?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, as I have indicated, the proposal is that the private sector will provide the funding for the purchase and acquisition of the control of the Winnipeg Jets Hockey Club, as well as for the ongoing funding of any losses and the operational costs of that team, and the public sector will be constructing a new arena facility, an entertainment complex, that will be provided for the future use and enjoyment of all Manitobans.

\* (1350)

#### **Agreement Tabling Request**

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, the Premier did not answer the question.

Given the fact that he has broken his word on four occasions in the last nine months, we want to see it in writing, and I think all Manitobans have a right to see it in writing, because they heard the Premier say time and time again, \$10 million is our limit, \$10 million is our limit, \$10 million is our limit, before the election.

Quite honestly, Madam Speaker, that is why the people of Manitoba deserve to see it in writing.

Finally, Madam Speaker, the Premier has said before that he required an ironclad agreement, an ironclad agreement of 20 years—no weasel words, no escape

clauses, no notwithstanding clauses—a 20-year agreement that the team would stay in the city of Winnipeg or the province of Manitoba prior to any money—any money, let alone the \$37 million or \$45 million being forwarded by our public to the building of this arena.

Can the Premier table today the ironclad agreement, the full agreement, because we found before with the operating loss agreement, Madam Speaker, what the Premier said was not what actually happened in the end.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, as the member knows full well, negotiations are ongoing among the private-sector partners. In fact, the acquisition of the team and all that detail continues ongoing, so we are not yet at a stage where we will negotiate that agreement, and we have not yet put any money forward or made any contractual obligations.

At this point, we are dealing with the matters in principle, and when the private sector gets their part of the agreement together, then we will be able to proceed with matters such as he has raised.

#### **Winnipeg Arena Provincial Funding**

**Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance, who is apparently playing the point position on the arena deal.

We are asking that the minister acknowledge clearly and explicitly the nature and level of expenditures associated with the private-sector purchase of the Winnipeg Jets and with the so-called endowment fund to offset the ongoing massive losses of the Jets.

Specifically, Madam Speaker, what are the estimated tax expenditures his government and the federal government are preparing to make to subsidize the MEC owners and the private donors to the endowment, or, in other words, the losses sinking fund?

What is the size of those expenditures you are going to make?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, as the Premier (Mr. Filmon) just indicated, literally while we are meeting, discussions are ongoing between the private-sector group here in Manitoba and the current owners of the Jets in terms of finalizing an agreement that will lead to a Manitoba solution with a change in ownership here in Manitoba, which will lead ultimately then, if that is successful, to the development of a facility here in our province.

When those agreements are concluded, they will be brought forward. Everybody is working aggressively to conclude those as soon and as quickly as possible, and they will be outlined and disclosed at that time, Madam Speaker.

#### **Donations—Tax Deductibility**

**Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood):** To the same minister, Madam Speaker, can the minister confirm that he has sought and received a full and formal legal opinion which he can share with this House as to the tax status of the donations to the losses sinking fund by the thousands of Manitobans who were led to believe that their donations would be tax deductible? Have you such an opinion?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, the issue of tax deductibility on any donations is a matter to be dealt with between the private-sector group and Revenue Canada. When they have that kind of information provided, they will be forthcoming with that.

Madam Speaker, whether or not the kind of structure that is put in place qualifies for tax deductibility is a matter to be determined by Revenue Canada. That will be a matter to be discussed between the private sector and Revenue Canada, and we await the decisions of the federal government and Revenue Canada on that issue.

\* (1355)

**Mr. Sale:** Again to the Minister of Finance, Madam Speaker, does the minister then endorse the views of Mr. Asper who has stated that donations to offset the losses of the Winnipeg Jets are just like donations to

the Christmas Cheer Board or to the Children's Hospital Research Foundation?

In other words, does the minister endorse the view that the Winnipeg Jets are now a charity?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure if the honourable member is looking for my opinion on comments made by Mr. Asper. Those are Mr. Asper's comments, and, obviously, we all judge those comments individually.

I have outlined for the member and the members opposite how the process works, where the determination lies in terms of whether or not the matter is tax deductible as a donation, and we will await the ruling of Revenue Canada.

#### **Dauphin Recreation Centre Funding**

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Rural Development.

Many rural Manitobans have watched the flip-flops of this government over funding both a second arena and the Winnipeg Jets with a great deal of concern.

Can the minister tell rural Manitobans whether provincial commitments for important projects such as the Dauphin recreation centre will be affected by an extra \$30 million or more that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has now committed to the Winnipeg Jets project?

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** Madam Speaker, I would just like to inform the new member for Dauphin that, indeed, it is this government that made a fairly substantial commitment to a new complex in the Dauphin area that would serve the Parkland Region.

In essence of looking at the balance in the province, I have to tell this House that, indeed, we do look at every region of the province and try to ensure that there are facilities that can be enjoyed by the citizens in all regions of this province.

It is for that reason that we made a very substantial commitment to the Dauphin area for a complex in the Dauphin community.

**Mr. Struthers:** I am aware that the headline in the Dauphin Herald is about \$600,000 worth of money that you put into this fund, and I am sure you got as much out of the headline as possible.

Is this government prepared to top up support for the Dauphin recreation centre, so that the arena can be built to provide a necessary facility in Dauphin?

**Mr. Derkach:** Madam Speaker, the agreement that was reached with regard to the Dauphin complex was one that was done by three levels of government through the infrastructure program.

As a matter of fact, there has to be a commitment both locally and from the federal government. In that respect, we have, indeed, been very generous with the infrastructure program to the Dauphin community, because we recognize the need for that facility in the Dauphin area and also the fact that that arena, that facility, will serve more than just the community of Dauphin but, indeed, will serve that region of the Parkland area.

**Mr. Struthers:** Will this minister commit to assist the construction of the Dauphin arena as a priority?—as this is a very urgent issue in the community, the arena.

**Mr. Derkach:** Madam Speaker, we have made a commitment to that arena through the infrastructure program. Our commitment is a solid one through the infrastructure program.

### **Granville Lake, Manitoba Negotiations**

**Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas):** Madam Speaker, as members of this Assembly may be aware, I represent a riding where aboriginal people comprise 50 percent of the electorate. Members are also aware that I represent all of those people in my riding without differentiating between aboriginal and nonaboriginal, because to do otherwise would be regarded as not doing my job or even being racist.

When will this Premier start representing all of the people of Manitoba, instead of saying to aboriginal people all the time, you are aboriginal, you are out of luck, you are a federal ward, and besides, you are creating havoc with my statistics on child poverty?

When will this Premier represent all of Manitoba, including—

\* (1400)

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The question has been put.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, we do represent all Manitobans. The Constitution assigns certain responsibilities for jurisdiction, responsibilities that are clearly delineated in the Constitution and responsibilities that, I might add, are referred to by the leadership of the aboriginal people.

When they say publicly that we, the province, are not involved in any of the discussions with respect to self-government because we have no jurisdiction over the aboriginal people of this province living on reserves and that they will only deal with the federal government on those matters, they have clearly spoken that they do not regard us as having any jurisdiction over those people.

They have said it publicly, and they have argued it to the point that the federal minister, Mr. Irwin, has not allowed this government to have any say or any part of the discussions with respect to aboriginal self-government of the Status aboriginals living in this province. They have delineated it. His people, the aboriginal people and leadership, have said so publicly, Madam Speaker, and those are the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

**Mr. Lathlin:** You know, this government—

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for The Pas, please pose your supplementary question now.

**Mr. Lathlin:** What is the status of negotiations between Mathias Colomb First Nation and this government over the Granville Lake situation?



Has the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) met with anyone on this yet, or is this government going to continue to pretend that poverty is somebody else's responsibility?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Madam Speaker, I thank my honourable friend for that question because it does give me the opportunity to stand and reiterate and talk about one of the questions that was asked by his colleague the critic for Family Services just before the last session ended.

I want to quote from the critic's question to me that does indicate clearly, I will quote, that both my colleague the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Praznik) and myself had written to the federal minister responsible for aboriginal affairs. He says, I quote: Since these people are treaty and a federal responsibility, I would like to ask the minister if she has received a response from the federal government about this offloading to this community—and he was referring to South Indian Lake.

Madam Speaker, the situation around Granville Lake is exactly the same situation that surrounded South Indian Lake, and his party was on record supporting our government in fighting the federal government for not living up to their financial responsibilities to Status Indians. I would hope that he would be onside in our fight and our dialogue with the federal government to live up to their responsibility.

**Mr. Lathlin:** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the First Minister again.

Will the Premier acknowledge that the people of Granville Lake are citizens of Manitoba and therefore deserve to be treated as such from this government?

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, just as the member for The Pas' colleague the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) indicated previously, the responsibility and the jurisdiction for Status aboriginals living in this province is with the federal government. They have always accepted that fiduciary and constitutional responsibility in the past, and I believe it is incumbent on all of us to ensure they continue to accept that responsibility.

That is the position the member for The Pas took when he was a chief. That is the position that is taken by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs today, and that is the position that I believe all of us should take as Manitobans to ensure that the federal government lives up to its constitutional and fiduciary responsibilities.

### **Child Poverty Rate Reduction Strategy**

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, during the last several weeks, we have seen an unparalleled outpouring of passion by the citizens of Winnipeg and Manitoba towards keeping the Jets in this city.

What we also need is a similar outpouring of passion by this government towards alleviating the situation of the poor. Instead, what we have seen is only one increase in the minimum wage since 1990, cutbacks in social assistance rates, a lack of initiatives to create jobs for people on social assistance and no increase in social assistance rates in two years and five months.

I would like to ask what the Minister of Family Services and her government plan to do by way of concrete action to change this situation and to address the very serious rate of poverty in this province.

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Madam Speaker, I thank my honourable friend for that question. I think our government's record stands for itself in the initiatives that we have undertaken in order to try to alleviate child poverty and ensure those that are on social allowances have the opportunity—we have always said that the best social security is a job.

I think this government has a track record that has tried to encourage private-sector activity and job creation—not job creation by government, Madam Speaker, but having those that can create the long-term jobs and help our economy in the province of Manitoba be here and make that happen.

We have initiatives that are ongoing and underway with the federal government that are leading edge across Canada. We have the Taking Charge! initiative

which will help single parents on social allowance develop their own individual plan of independence and move off of social allowance into the workforce. We are working on Making Welfare Work projects with the City of Winnipeg. We have rural Making Welfare Work projects where the private sector has the opportunity to hire social assistance recipients with wage subsidy. We are trying to do our part.

**Mr. Martindale:** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the minister what her government is going to do to reduce the disgraceful level of child poverty to which their policies have contributed—the worst record in Canada of any province.

What are they going to do to reduce the disgraceful level of child poverty, and when will they increase social assistance rates which would affect this problem directly?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Madam Speaker, I have to indicate that we in the Province of Manitoba have some of the most progressive tax incentives and initiatives for families living in poverty of all provinces across the country. We leave more money in the pockets of those poorer Manitobans than almost any other province across the country does.

If you look back to the budget—I guess it was a couple of years ago—that was presented in the province of Saskatchewan by the New Democratic Party, it does indicate that those living in Manitoba with an income of \$25,000 or less have the best tax incentive regime across the country, and it moves to families with an income of \$50,000 have the second-best tax regime, and those with incomes of \$75,000 and more are the third best across the country.

Madam Speaker, we have tried to do our part again in Manitoba to ensure those that are living with lower incomes have an opportunity to do better than others across the country.

#### **Social Assistance Rate Standardization**

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, can the Minister of Family Services assure those people

who are employable and are on municipal assistance, particularly the 89 percent of the caseload on the City of Winnipeg assistance, that when this government takes over city or municipal assistance, which in theory is a good idea, there will not be a reduction in rates, because the rates certainly will be standardized?

Will the minister bring the rates for food for infants to eighteen-year-olds up to the level of the city level currently, or will they reduce them and thereby contribute further to the problem of child poverty in Manitoba?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Madam Speaker, I think I indicated, just at the end of the last session when a question very similar was asked by my honourable friend, that, indeed, we have taken a step towards ensuring that welfare in the city of Winnipeg will be a one-tiered system.

Everything is under negotiation right now. We are working and expecting or anticipating an interim report by the end of June that will give us some information on how we can go about making that a reality, but everything will be on the table for discussion and negotiation through that process.

\* (1410)

#### **Northern Manitoba Physician Resources**

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** Madam Speaker, my questions are for the honourable Minister of Health, and my first question is this. There is a crisis of doctor shortages in northern communities such as Leaf Rapids and Lynn Lake.

Why did the minister not consult with northern residents and hospital administrators prior to implementing his new regulations on foreign doctors?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for this very important question.

As the members of the medical profession continue, as they have for many years, to find their way to the

more populated areas of the province, this leaves us with difficulties encountered from time to time in rural and northern communities.

We are aware of the situation at Lynn Lake and at Leaf Rapids, and, indeed, I will be meeting with a delegation of people on Friday from Leaf Rapids. We are making every resource possible available to resolve those issues before they become critical.

**Mr. Jennissen:** A supplementary question, Madam Speaker: Why did the minister not urge the College of Physicians and Surgeons to grant an immediate extension to the Lynn Lake physician who will be leaving the province as a result of delays in government action on this situation?

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Speaker, through our partnerships with organizations like the College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Manitoba Medical Association and Manitoba Health, we work on a continual basis to ensure that physician resources are available for people wherever they happen to live in Manitoba.

I feel very strongly about this, Madam Speaker, as I know the honourable member does, too, on behalf of the people in his constituency. By working together with him, and with the other organizations we have referred to, we are determined to ensure that Manitobans, wherever they live, have access to physician resources.

Indeed the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation tells us that this is the kind of service Manitobans have been getting, wherever they happen to live, and our determination is to ensure that that state of affairs continues.

**Mr. Jennissen:** My final supplementary, Madam Speaker: Can this minister confirm when two new doctors will go to Leaf Rapids and assure the community as to how long these doctors will stay?

**Mr. McCrae:** It will be my hope, Madam Speaker, to try to answer those questions Friday when I meet with the delegation from Leaf Rapids, but if I do not have

those answers by Friday, then it would be very shortly thereafter.

I have made it very clear to Manitoba Health and to the others with whom we work that I insist that these matters be dealt with as a No. 1 priority. They are very, very important to the people in those areas.

### **Motor Vehicle Recalls Safety Belts**

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

Yesterday, the federal government announced that as many as 900,000 motor vehicles are being recalled due to faulty seat belts. I would like to know, has the minister discussed this issue with the motor dealers in this province? Can he tell the House how many vehicles could be affected in this province?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Madam Speaker, no, I have not spoken of this matter with the Motor Dealers Association in this province, and I do not know how many are affected here.

**Mr. Maloway:** Madam Speaker, many of these cars have changed ownership more than once. I would like to know what action has been taken to ensure that current owners will be informed of the recall. What action has this minister taken?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Speaker, this recall was issued by the Government of Canada. Perhaps he should address that to the minister responsible in Ottawa.

**Mr. Maloway:** Madam Speaker, has the minister intervened with his federal counterparts? Has he asked his federal counterparts to change the law to give Canadians the same rights that Americans have in being able to force the auto manufacturers to correct the defects? Has he done his job and will he do his job?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Speaker, if memory serves me correctly, the issue in the U.S.A. is a voluntary recall by the auto manufacturers in that country, not an

insistence or a law or an issue raised by a government there.

The federal government has acted in this case dealing with all of those cars. They have that responsibility and have taken that responsibility seriously.

### **Pan Am Games Federal Funding**

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Madam Speaker, part of the proposed financing for the new arena is a \$5-million advance from the federal government's Pan Am Games fund.

I want to ask the Minister responsible for Sport (Mr. Ernst), what was the \$5-million Pan Am Games money allocated for? Can he tell us what the total federal government commitment for facilities development for the Pan Am Games in Manitoba will be?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, after an analysis of the facility requirements by the Pan Am organizing committee and their administrative staff, they determined that there could be and would be benefits to a new facility for various sports as required, so that organization made a commitment of \$5 million out of their total allocation.

The expectation is that the federal government has committed \$37 million to the 1999 Pan American Games in Winnipeg, of which \$7 million would be in kind, \$30 million would be in cash. We as a provincial government have committed \$23 million. The City of Winnipeg has made a commitment, and the expectation is that the community at large will probably end up contributing some \$50 million to \$60 million. So it is from that total allocation of funds that the \$5 million to a complex is being earmarked.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Can the minister tell us what percentage the \$5 million from the Pan Am Games fund represents from the total amount of money coming to Winnipeg for facilities development for the Pan Am Games?

**Mr. Stefanson:** In terms of the total budget, it would be less than 5 percent in terms of the federal government commitment, if you are attributing it to

that, although I think the Pan Am committee themselves are acknowledging that this is not money that is coming from any one level of government.

The levels of government have made a commitment to the Pan American Games here in Winnipeg in 1999. Based on their total funding, the committee is determining that they will use the facility. They will use it for various events, and it will save them an allocation of funds in many other areas, so they are committing the \$5 million.

If the honourable member is asking how does that relate to the \$30 million, you can calculate what that is as a percentage, but the Pan Am committee is saying that it is a portion of their entire budget which is in excess of \$100 million.

### **Amateur Sport Government Support**

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** My final question is for the Minister responsible for Sport or the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson).

Can we have a commitment from this government that monies allocated for facilities development at the arena will not jeopardize the Manitoba development programs offered through the Sports Federation, that we are not going to have money coming to the Pan Am Games and the arena at the expense of amateur sport development in Manitoba?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister responsible for Sport):** I can indicate to my honourable friend that this government has been second to none in terms of its commitment to amateur sport in this province. We have, in fact, been exemplary in terms of our support for amateur sport development, sports of all kinds, up to and including national and international events, so that she need have no fear. Our continuing support for amateur support in this province will be ongoing.

### **Manitoba Telephone Service Privatization**

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Madam Speaker, the Manitoba Telephone System is an important public

asset for all Manitobans, and many questions are being asked, given the ability of this government to change from day to day. We have seen that on the Jets.

Questions are being asked about the future of the Manitoba Telephone System.

I would like to ask the Premier if he can indicate whether this government has any plans whatsoever to privatize part or all of the Manitoba Telephone System. In fact, will he assure Manitobans we will maintain public ownership of the Manitoba Telephone System within the province of Manitoba as a Crown corporation?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** I can indicate that we do not have any plans to do that. We continue always to operate on a pragmatic basis. We continue to always look at ways in which we can ensure that our economy will grow, that we will take advantage of new changes in technology, of all of the things that are important to us as an economy and as a society.

We are not driven ideologically or hidebound as are members opposite. We continue, obviously, to always keep an open mind on all opportunities that are presented to us, but we have no plans to do that. That is as much information as I can share with him.

**Madam Speaker:** Time for Oral Questions has expired.

To continue debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Riel (Mr. Newman) for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, in answer to his speech at the opening of the session, standing in the name of the honourable Leader of the official opposition.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** I believe there is a nonpolitical statement across—

\* (1420)

### NONPOLITICAL STATEMENT

#### 100th Birthday, Jessie Pallister

**Madam Speaker:** I am sorry. With the House's indulgence, may I please revert to Nonpolitical Statements? Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

**Madam Speaker:** Leave has been granted.

**Hon. Brian Pallister (Minister of Government Services):** I appreciate the opportunity to inform members of the House of an important event that is taking place this Sunday, May 28, in the constituency of Portage la Prairie. This is truly a momentous occasion for many family and friends of one of my good constituents who resides at the Douglas Campbell Lodge there. It is her birthday, and not just any birthday. This is her 100th birthday.

It is someone whom I have had the great privilege of knowing and learning from. This great lady has taught me a lot about the history of our province, the history of our area, taught me a lot about the life that she has led and the life that many of our predecessors have led of toil, of family farm life. The hardship, the self-sacrifice that she has endured in her life has obviously partly contributed at least to her good health and her long life. She has taught me a lot about family and about closeness. I have benefited tremendously from this woman and from the wisdom of her age. I think we can all learn a lot from our elderly people.

It is particularly significant to me to tell you her name is Jessie Pallister and she is my grandmother. Happy birthday, grandmother.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (Second Day of Debate)

**Madam Speaker:** To resume debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Riel (Mr. Newman) for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in answer to his speech at the opening of the session, standing in the name of the official Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** It is an honour to rise to address the Speech from the Throne. We are paying tribute to people who have gone before us and taught us many things. It is an honour to rise today when the former member for Winnipeg North

David Orlikow is here in the gallery with us, a person who has served us very well.

I would first of all like to start by thanking the people of Concordia. We all start our careers and our responsibilities and our obligations with the mandates we have been given by our constituents. I want to thank again the people of Concordia for my re-election. It is not something we take for granted. None of us should take for granted, ever, the responsibility that is given to us in the election campaign.

I also want to congratulate all members in the Chamber for their election. It is, again, when people are comparing their pluralities, et cetera, I just remind you that whether it is one vote, 35 votes or 3,500 votes, we all live on temporary employment by the people we serve. We can trade our election successes across the way but we all owe our debt of gratitude to the people we serve. We all owe our responsibilities, our hearts, our minds and I dare say our integrity for keeping our word, not just before and during the election but our word after the election.

I also want to congratulate all the new members. I understand it is one of the lowest turnover rates, as they say—to use that terminology, that terminology that is used in the workplace—one of the lowest turnover rates in the history of the province. From our side, we are pleased that it was a low turnover rate. From the other side, it would be less than honest to say we would not have preferred a higher turnover rate.

But I want to congratulate members opposite, especially the new members. We look forward to all the speeches that will be made by new members of the Chamber. We will try as much as possible from the tried and true traditions of heckling in the speeches and we try, as I say, as much as we can, but you are so colourful in your comments and have an ideological flourish from time to time that will be met by some ideological response, I am sure, and I hope you take that in the spirit of democracy.

One must remember that the House of Parliament in England, of course, is even closer in contact between the members and they have, as I believe, even more members than chairs. We come from a tradition of

democracy that does appeal to differences to votes to a wonderful form of debate and, as I say, when ideological comments are made by new members, we applaud you, we do not agree with you and we will act accordingly.

I also want to congratulate the new members on our side. We did not get the quantity of new members we wanted but we got quality, Madam Speaker. We have quality. [interjection] Well, the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) should perhaps look in the mirror when he is making those comments, as I should as well. The member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) is to be applauded. He is, obviously, filling a spot from the former member of Dauphin, a very, very credible member in this Legislature; the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen), again, representing the former member for Flin Flon, Mr. Storie; another excellent member of this Chamber, the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale), who follows on a long line of good people of the wrong political persuasion and we applaud his efforts today. We certainly have the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford), our new member from that riding and the member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk). We are all very, very proud of the people that we have elected, and you will note that they are indeed from all regions of Manitoba.

I note in the document produced by the Executive Council yesterday that they are proud of the balanced representation from all around Manitoba, representation that will ensure the views of all regions, quote, all regions. Well, I would remind members opposite, you are not represented in the North, and perhaps that explains—

**An Honourable Member:** Yes, we are.

**Mr. Doer:** Well, the Golden Boy looks north, I would say to the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), but often the member's Executive Council do not look north when it comes to fair distribution of Manitoba's assets and Manitoba's investments. Perhaps that is the answer to the question that the member for The Pas asked in the last session of the Legislature. If it takes ducks to get highways built in the Interlake, why do you not consider the ducks in northern Manitoba adequate for northern highways here in the province of Manitoba?

I would point out, too, Madam Speaker, that in the glow of victory for members opposite—and our middle name in our party's name, and we do print our party's name, is democracy, is New Democratic Party. We congratulate you on your mandate. We would point out that 57 percent of the people of Manitoba did not vote for you, so we will point that out—

**An Honourable Member:** Two-thirds did not vote for you.

**Mr. Doer:** That is right. That is why we have to try harder, but when one has to consider the mandates we receive, we will be reminding the members opposite that 57 percent of the public did not vote for you. You do not have a dictatorship; you merely have a parliamentary majority, and we will hold you accountable to that in this Chamber.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to wish you the best in your new role as Speaker in this Chamber.

**An Honourable Member:** Not Madam Deputy Speaker. You have got to get it right, Gary.

\* (1430)

**Mr. Doer:** Well, you have had a lot longer to prepare your comments, obviously knowing your plans well in advance, but I am just now getting used to this new face in the Chair.

We wish you well, Madam Speaker, in this Chamber.

It is important that we have the balance between feisty and informed debate and decorum for the public. I think with the changing reality of television that it is important that we all realize how we look, how we act. Even if we are engaged in debate that may be enjoyable, I might say, we must remember that how it might look on television might be very different from how it appears in this Chamber. I think it is important for all of us to remember that the heavy responsibilities that we all have, and we all have heavy responsibilities in representing the people of this province. We must not only carry out our responsibilities with decorum but we must be perceived to be carrying it out with decorum. I would offer in this new term to do as much

as I can—not to be absolutely quiet—but to do as much as we can on that score, because I think we have a lot of work to do.

I also want to pay tribute to the previous Speaker. We had a lot of respect for his ability, his impartiality. I believe he had a lot of respect outside of this Chamber, and the member is to be congratulated.

When we are commenting on changes the government are making, we believe that the new Speaker—without any disrespect, Madam Speaker, to your appointment by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) just recently—we believe that Manitoba has to get into the 1990s. The House of Commons has moved to an elected Speaker. Many other Chambers in Canada have moved to an elected Speaker.

On one hand the Premier talks about an elected Senate. We believe the Senate should be abolished. We do not believe the Speaker's position should be abolished. We do believe in a presiding officer for this Chamber, but we do believe that officer should have the electoral mandate through an election in this House.

We will be bringing forward a private member's bill to correct that. We hope that all members of the Chamber would want to have a vote on the presiding officer for all members in this Chamber. If we believe in democracy in our own constituencies, let us go into the 1990s and move ahead with legislation that we will bring forward in a positive way, Madam Speaker.

I also want to pay tribute to the staff and the Pages in this Chamber. I know many Pages have gone on to run for elected office. Some Pages have gone into the media after being Pages in this Chamber, so they really know what goes on and what does not go on. Some could provide some very interesting stories in the past, when we used to sit in many evening sessions, of what really went on in the sacred halls of this building. I know it is a great training. I know that we rely on them very much in their duties.

This is the 125th anniversary of Manitoba's birthday as a province in Canada, and we want to congratulate people and volunteers that are working on the celebration of that anniversary.

We always were critical of the provincial government for eliminating Canadian history. Many members I think in their speeches yesterday talked about the role of history and the role of values in our community and how important it is for all of us in this Chamber.

I would again ask the provincial government in this the 125th anniversary of Manitoba as a province not to leave as permissive Canadian history in our senior high schools. We believe that kids should learn Canadian history right throughout their years in high schools. It should not be permissive. It should not be a decision made at local school boards. It should not be at the whim of school boards across Manitoba. It should be a core mandatory value in this province, and this, the 125th anniversary of the history of Manitoba as a province, let us reinstate Canadian history as a core subject right throughout Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, I also believe that we have to pay tribute in this, the 125th anniversary, to the contributions made to our great province by Manitoba's First Nations who of course are not celebrating their 125th anniversary here in Manitoba but I believe—and I have a number of experts around me—are celebrating anniversaries of centuries of development and community in our sacred land called Manitoba.

Many of the names of our communities, many of the names of our rivers, many of the names of our sections in our province, I dare say the name of our province, come from First Nations people. Yes, we celebrate the 125th anniversary of Manitoba as a province, but let us not forget and let us continue to incorporate the wonderful history and heritage of First Nations people who have begun this province and bequeathed tremendous amounts through their treaties, tremendous resources and opportunity for all of us.

Let us never forget in this celebration of Manitoba's history our treaties to the people who were first here. Let us not forget our obligations to the people who first founded our great province and first resided in our beautiful, beautiful province of Manitoba. Let us redouble our efforts to fulfill the treaties, because treaties are, after all, our word, and our word, I believe, is worth keeping. I believe that we have to do that here in the province of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, we believe that Manitoba is a province of hard work and fair play. We believe that most Manitobans believe that this province should be run like a family where you celebrate the success of each member of your family. You celebrate the joy of their success, and you also as a family share in creating opportunities to make sure that each and every one of our members of our families is given a helping hand when they need it.

We believe our province and our government should be run like a family. We do not believe it should have the kind of bottom-line values that are so linear in a corporation where something is not profitable you cut it off and you rationalize and you do the things that you have to do.

We believe this province is a family, and we believe that a province and a government should be operating with all of its citizens, yes, to celebrate its joys and successes, but when people need a helping hand the government is there to provide the bridge of opportunity to give those people that helping hand.

One of the disputes in this election campaign obviously was some of the bridge programs that have been eliminated by the Conservative government in the past number of years. We did not agree with the vision of a government that would cut back on ACCESS, New Careers and BUNTEP programs in the province of Manitoba.

We did not believe in taking that money in public-sector opportunity for people who needed the help the most in our society and diverting that money to corporate training grants. Corporate training grants may be a great idea if you have the luxury of that money, but to take away money from the people who need the opportunity, to take away money from programs that have proven to be successful, to take away money from programs that have trained more aboriginal people to be teachers, nurses, doctors, engineers and social workers so they can return to their own communities as positive leaders in their community with positive professional accreditations, we think that was a mistake.



We think that was a mistake, Madam Speaker, inconsistent with the values not only that we talked about in the last election campaign but many candidates on the other side talked about. It is a question of choices. Why would you give more money to car dealerships and less money to First Nations people who need New Careers, need ACCESS and BUNTEP?

I would ask the government in the spirit of co-operation and Manitoba's 125th Anniversary to consider the fact that the two opposition parties, the Liberals and the NDP, campaigned to reinstate money for New Careers, community colleges, ACCESS and BUNTEP programs.

Clearly, the majority of people did vote for that program. It was a very consistent message, and I would ask you to open your hearts and also open your minds to putting that money back to people who need it the most.

Government's job is not to give resources and finances to companies that have the most. It is government's job, in our opinion, to provide opportunity to get the bridges of opportunity so people can move from dependency, can move from welfare, can move from no opportunity and no hope to getting hope, getting opportunity, getting economic dependence and getting the tools to get that.

I would ask the new members opposite to consider those programs. Even Sterling Lyon in his exercise in looking at government programs between '77 and '81 came to the conclusion that it was cost effective and smart to keep New Careers, ACCESS and BUNTEP programs here in the province of Manitoba. Change your mind, Madam Speaker.

This government, in our opinion, has a very, very secret style of governing. This government, in our opinion, is like an iceberg. It has to some degree its agenda above the water, programs above the water, and to a larger degree its real agenda, its real strategy, the real information for the public of Manitoba, the majority of which is below the water and below the surface for public debate. I say that regrettably. Let me consider a couple of examples. Let me just consider a couple of examples. Let us even start with

the name of your political party.

It's an old saying, I guess my dad—we were talking about the values we were taught—and my father used to tell me always worry about somebody who puts something in small print. Always worry about when the print is so small that you cannot even read it. Even worry more when you cannot even read it without even using a microscope. This is a government who had signs and all you members had all the signs on all your lawns and you were too ashamed of your party name to put it on your signs.

Are you ashamed to be Progressive Conservatives? Are you ashamed to be Tories? Are you ashamed to be a political party? Are you afraid to run on your political name, on your political philosophy, on your ideology? Do you think if the people knew your name they would not vote for you? Maybe you are right. But never be afraid of your values. If you want to hide your values from the people of Manitoba, how can they trust you on what you are going to do after the election? Is this the way you do business with the people of Manitoba, you do not even tell the people who you are? Is this honesty and integrity that we heard about yesterday? Is this openness that we heard about yesterday?

Let us look at a couple of other examples. Well, I remember the member for Pembina—it is interesting the member for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger) is sitting in the same seat as the member for Pembina—because he was the only one in the last election who ran as a Progressive Conservative, and look where that got him. It got him demoted from cabinet three years later.

The slick communication strategy, I give you credit, you are a slick, slick operating machine as a political party, but that does not mean good government, that does not mean honesty, that does not mean integrity. You may have good ads, but it is going to be very important for us to get the real public agenda out in the public. I think the public have a right to know.

Many times you said one thing before the election campaign and another thing after the campaign. You said one thing in December in the Speech from the Throne that you presented, and then you said

something else after the election campaign and during the election campaign.

Let me give you an example. Before the election campaign, you said: My government is concerned about poverty and children growing up in poverty and their prospects for a better life. That is what you said before the campaign. After the campaign you say—it is almost like Pontius Pilate—you wash your hands of the problem, almost a scene out of Macbeth, washing your hands again from the problem. You are always washing your hands before you point the finger at somebody else.

Madam Speaker, you again say on child poverty that it is Ottawa's responsibility now. It is Ottawa's responsibility to deal with child poverty. It is Ottawa's responsibility that Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in Canada. Well, where does the buck stop? Why is it Ottawa's responsibility when Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty? Why did you say you were concerned about it before the election? These are children, they are our future, they are the most important people we have to deal with in this House. These are the people who cannot represent themselves in this Chamber.

The highest rate of child poverty in Canada—and you can put out documents that says, oh, we are concerned about it before the election, and then you can cynically say it is Ottawa's responsibility after the election. Now, do you not care about that? Did not the members opposite read that? Do you not want to represent the future of the children here in this province? Do they not get a chance with you? Is it jurisdictional buck-passing from you? Is there any integrity, is there any honesty, is there any commitment to the children? Many of us come from decent homes. Many of us do not know what it is like to have to go to a food bank at night.

Many of us do not know about the 30 percent of kids that are now increased in one year who are utilizing our food banks all across this province. Many of us are worried about whether we are going to, you know, be able to enjoy two holidays a year or one holiday a year or whether we are going to be able to afford this or that. Maybe we do not have those realities, unfortunately, of

those kids that are in poverty, but that does not mean to say that you can say one thing before the election and say something after the election. That is not good enough for the people of this province. It is cynical, it is slick and it is not good enough.

What about a nutrition program for children? What about an affordable daycare program for children? What about a minimum wage strategy for our families? What about making work more affordable for the working poor? What about a strategy to deal with prenatal programs? What about a strategy to deal with jobs and work and opportunity? What about a strategy to deal with the many families now that are faced with part-time jobs with no hope of getting full-time jobs because of differential benefits? What are you going to do about it? Why did you not come in with a ten-point plan today on child poverty, or yesterday?

How can you possibly sit in your seats and say it is Ottawa's responsibility? I have seen slick governments before, I have seen slick speeches before, but to pass that off to Ottawa, I think was morally reprehensible. I am very, very disappointed and so are members on this side. One thing before the election, another thing after the election.

Let us deal with the honesty of this government. Let us deal with the integrity of this government, because honesty, we have differences of beliefs, we have differences of values, and that is good. That is what a democracy should be all about, but let us deal with the integrity of issues and honesty of the government.

In 1990 I remember the former member for Crescentwood asked the Premier about the new arena, and he said, I could not possibly put \$30 million total public money—10, 10 and 10—into a new arena without a full business plan I could table in this House.

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

Then the Premier went and signed an operating loss agreement in December of 1991, and everybody stood up like Neville Chamberlain and said, we have peace in our time, the Jets are here forever, hallelujah. I have saved the Jets, says the Premier. When we asked what

the costs would be, he said, oh, it will only be \$5 million, a small price to pay. We will have tax revenues and indirect benefits and payrolls and on and on. This is a recorded announcement. You have heard them before.

Why did we have to go to the Auditor for two years in a row? Members opposite talk about honesty and integrity. Why did we have to go to the Auditor to find out that you knew, the government knew, the Premier knew, and with help from the public, that the losses would be \$43.5 million? The previous member for Rossmere, Harold Neufeld, said, I had no idea; I was a member of Treasury Board; I had no idea that it was \$43.5 million. It took an Auditor to produce that money that went before the Premier and his negotiating group that looked awfully reminiscent of the old gang of 18 at City Hall, that handled this.

Is there any coincidence that everybody that touched this thing in City Hall is touching it now? Is it any coincidence we have not resolved this darn thing ever since the bunch of them, the gang of them, got hold of this deal years ago? I mean two former deputy mayors, and the head of Works and Operations, they have been handling this darn thing for 15 years, and we still do not know what is going on. They still cannot give us a straight answer. They still cannot tell us how much it is going to cost. All they have got is big shovels of our money that keep going into this team, shovelful after shovelful after shovelful without any accountability whatsoever.

Now, how do you members opposite take this? Well, the Jim McMahon of this government, you know, the foghorn across the way—and I am not referring to any individual member, Mr. Deputy Speaker—but, you know, there was a question asked. He laughs at his jokes. He claps at his statements, sometimes off beat. If it was not so serious, you would be very funny—a heartbeat away from the big job, you know, lock up your family when he is in control.

\* (1450)

Where are the rural members? Where are you? This question was asked in the Brandon Sun yesterday. Where are you? Is the gang of 18 from City Hall now

the surrogate government in Manitoba just because they messed it up in the last number of years at City Hall and they are going to mess it up again and keep shovelling more of our money? It does not matter? Where are you? Can you not stand up to them?

**An Honourable Member:** I missed the point.

**Mr. Doer:** He sure did miss the point. A lot of you are missing the point.

What about the integrity of the word of the government? We have now had the leader of the government, the Premier of the province, who should be setting the example for honesty and integrity, and I know this has been a nightmare for him over the years at City Hall and then with his deputy mayor and his other deputy mayor and the Minister of Finance and operating loss agreements that will only be five and pop up at 43, but last year Jim Burns produced a report.

The Premier got the report and tabled it in this Chamber. He said: \$111 million is unconscionable. It is against my conscience. It is against my conscience as the Premier of the province.

Was it against his conscience only before the election? Does his conscience and his word change after the election? What kind of conscience do we have over here? How can \$111 million in June of '94 be against the conscience of the Premier and now how can it be acceptable to the conscience of the Premier after?

Now, the government talked about MEC today. MEC was not even created when he said, it is against my conscience. It was created to again amend the agreement that amends the agreement that amends the agreement that the Premier and his gang got involved in years ago. What about people across the way who come from chambers of commerce that say, do not give any public money to private corporations? Do those feelings not feel anything to you? Do they not matter any more? I have always wondered why the Chamber of Commerce, on the one hand—first of all, it runs deficits all the time; I always thought that was interesting—but on the one hand can say do not give any money to private corporations and can be doing the

Hallelujah Chorus on \$111 million with no business plan. I do not understand it.

Now, let us go back to the word of the Premier. On March 29, in the election campaign, \$10 million was his final and bottom line. That is my position to put on the table, no more. That is my limit. I will not go any further. I will cancel the operating loss agreement. Ten million dollars is it. That was in Brandon in the bullpen session at the CBC radio debate broadcast all across Manitoba. My word, my integrity, the integrity of my Filmon team government on the line.

April 13, the same day the NHL met with the team owners—whatever the team owners were that day, that week, part of which was us—oh, I did not know anything about that meeting, of course, said the Premier. Nobody ever informed me what happened on that April 13 meeting. I mean, Jules Benson and Mike Bessey and all these people, they never tell me what is going on. Oh, I do not know what is going on. I only found out after the election campaign. We all believe you, sir, yes, we all believe you. I did not know what was going on. Trust me. I am out of the loop, yes.

April 13, at the Taxpayers Association, again, the same day as the NHL met with MEC, the Premier again said that evening, in front of the media and the public of Manitoba at the Taxpayers Association, \$10 million is all we are going to put in the team. That is it, fini, no more. That is it.

April 21, CJOB debate, all-party debate, again, the Premier's word four days before the election, \$10 million. That is it. That is fini. That is all. No more. That is the only amount of money, all the amount of money we are going to put on the table.

So here we have a serious question. What mandate do you have? What kind of contempt do you have for your own word? When one is contemptuous of one's own word, one is contemptuous quite frankly of the whole democratic process. It is not as if this thing was three years ago you gave your word. You gave your word three times during the election campaign. You are not only contemptuous of your own word, sir, you are contemptuous of democracy because you have a mandate for \$10 million. I accept that. We did not

totally agree with you. I accept that you have that mandate, but you do not have any democratic mandate to mislead the public of Manitoba and say one thing on three occasions during the election campaign and just the sky is the limit after the election campaign. You have no authority to do that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 1993, I asked the Premier, would he put any public money into a new facility without an agreement to keep the team in Manitoba for 20 years, because we are going through the Peter Pocklington episode, who did have a lease with the Northlands Coliseum. Those leases always have escape clauses, especially if you are only paying one dollar in lease. What are you going to do? Oh, okay, we will leave in five years and then we will pay one dollar a year in penalty, because that is all we are supposed to pay.

If you are going to build an \$111-million facility, where is the iron-clad agreement? I do not mean giving us one clause, because I do not trust you not to have another clause somewhere else. I want the whole agreement. The public of Manitoba deserve the whole agreement, the whole thing. We do not want some secret deal with the new owners of the team that allows them to take this team out of Winnipeg, after you build the facility for five times more than what you talked about the day after the next election, because you have not done your due diligence. And members opposite, because a couple of fans hung the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in effigy for misleading them during the election, will sign anything away in terms of dealing with this issue. Iron clad means iron clad; 20 years means 20 years.

If you, sir, sign anything with one weasel word that allows them to break this agreement within the 20-year period, you have again broken your word. How many more times? I guess it does not matter after four or five times, but I say it does matter.

I say that we do not want a Repap agreement that talks about a billion-dollar expansion and a thousand more jobs. We do not want all those wishy-washy agreements that you brought here in the past that have all fallen apart like a house of cards. We want iron-clad agreements from members opposite.

We also want to know why the Premier again, in his words in Estimates last year, said that he would not favour any tax deduction or any provision from the federal government to reduce taxation by any foundation. The Premier criticized that proposal last year and he pointed out, rightly so, that would cost the taxpayers additional money. We do not want him to break his word there either. You have broken your word on the amount of money you are putting in there. You are breaking your word on the tax provision. We do not have an iron-clad agreement. We do not have a business plan.

Let us look at the real numbers: \$37 million, four times what you promised; \$9 million in our shares that I understand we are going to hold, that is \$46 million; \$7 million or \$8 million on tax loss provisions, that gets us over \$50 million. We do not know what the provisions are for the revenues into the new arena. What are going to be the provisions for the concessions, the lease, and where is the iron-clad agreement?

You said before, sir, that you would not sign anything without a business plan that you could table in this House. You condemned the former member for Crescentwood for even talking about a \$10-million contribution here in this Chamber. It seems to me what you condemned the former member for Crescentwood for doing is exactly opposite, times five, of what you are doing now in this Chamber—one thing before the election, another action after the election. I think that is unfortunate from the head of government, from the senior officer in this Chamber—I think it is important whether we agree or disagree. I think we should have disagreements in this Chamber on the basis of beliefs, on values, on decisions on issues.

I do not think we should be asking questions on the first day of this session. I find it regrettable that we have to ask questions about the word of the government. I think that is very, very unfortunate and very, very unfortunate for the people of Manitoba.

Again, secrecy, secrecy, secrecy. Let me give you some other examples. The government had a report on healthy children for nine months and only released it the day before the election campaign, on the Friday

afternoon. Again, why were children so cynically treated that you could not bring in a health program prior to the election campaign? Before the election you had 102 committee reports on health care. Where are they? Why have they not been made public? Who is hiding them, and why?

\* (1500)

Let me give you a couple of examples. Every MLA in this room has people and residents in personal care homes. If you care about people and residents in personal care homes, you are going to require the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), who has been withholding a report on personal care homes, to make that public. The public paid for it. The public is entitled to have it, and you have a responsibility to take those secret reports and make them public.

You have had five reports on the conflict of interest on doctors and private labs, a \$100 million health care item. Why have you kept that hidden, your report out of the Health Services Commission? Why are you not dealing with this issue—the Hammond report, the rural lab report, on and on and on? You have got a document that says remove the conflict of interest from doctors owning their own labs—no action after seven years from the government. Secrecy and no ability to move.

You have had a report dealing with many other items of the 102 committees in health care, and the biggest area of secrecy of course is before the election there was a pause on health care cutbacks, there was a pause of what reductions would be made. Of course, after the election, I suspect—I hope I am wrong—but we are going to see cutback after cutback after cutback. It will not be those slick ads of the Premier walking on the riverbank talking about protecting health care after the election. I guess that ad was similar to previous ads we have seen in the past.

I suspect we are going to see the pause come off with a vengeance. Of course the only place the pause has come off in health care is in Flin Flon, The Pas and Thompson. Again, as we saw from the three-page document, the North does not matter because it is already represented by government even if they do not

have any northern MLAs—government that only reapplied the cutbacks to northern communities.

As I said before, where is the healthy child program that you promised in the Speech from the Throne previous? Where is the action? Where is the nutrition program, the prenatal program? Where is the strategy to deal with fetal alcohol syndrome? Where is your strategy to deal with nurses in schools as we proposed? There is nothing in this document. There is nothing in this paper.

In the election campaign you did make an announcement on children and health. This is a government that cut the audiology services for preschool children. This is the government that cut back dental nurses across rural and northern Manitoba. Then you have the audacity to come back in the campaign and basically promise something for healthy children that you cut in government. What cynicism of the people in terms of that proposal.

Slick ads on health care, slick promises in the campaign, but very, very sick decisions made with children. We have gone down from 6,000 kids in preschool ages getting tested for audiology programs and treatment programs from when the government was in office in 1991 to now up to just over 3,000 kids a year. The waiting list for preschool children is 18 months. The longer you wait for assessment, the longer it takes to get treatment. The longer it takes to get treatment, the more it costs the child, the family and the community. It is not cost effective. An ounce of prevention, an ounce of assessment, is worth a pound of treatment, and we would have expected more from this government after we saw a similar promise in the election campaign.

Another area where we saw a considerable amount of slick advertising was in the area of crime. Here is a government that had an ad with the Premier shutting the jail door. It kind of reminded me of the Premier paddling the canoe in 1990. I always worry when the Premier has an ad on a specific subject because usually it means that, after the slick advertising campaign is finished, we are in for a lot of trouble. How can you possibly cynically run on crime, Mr. Deputy Speaker? [interjection] Well, one should be very careful.

I know the member opposite is a good friend of the former member for Springfield, but—[interjection] Well, I think it is unfortunate that members opposite think—Manitoba is the only province where the crime rate has gone up two years in a row, and the only thing you can give us is a cynical, slick ad campaign. There are no community-based prevention programs. There are no crime-prevention programs in our communities. They have been reduced by this government. They have reduced the Victim Assistance Programs. They have reduced the support for police officers on the street. They have reduced the programs that would keep kids out of trouble. They have reduced the amount of investment in community recreation. They have not introduced the crime prevention foundation, which is necessary.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we believe in individual and community responsibility to prevent crime. We also believe very strongly in individual accountability when a crime is committed, and we need more than slick advertising Republican ads from this government. We need a strategy to keep our kids occupied. We need a strategy to keep our young people out of our prison system and keep our young people in our schools where they belong, and we do not see it from the Conservative government opposite.

There are slick ads on education, the slick ads of the Premier coming out of a computer in education. I know that Brian Mulroney ran great ads in the 1988 campaign, and now you will not even run on his name any more. So it is only a matter of time.

Why is this government, over the stewardship of this Premier (Mr. Filmon), having a situation where layoffs are a record number of people in the schools here in Manitoba, a record number of teachers that are being laid off in the province of Manitoba? Again we have a government that is not dealing with our public education system. You talk about preventing crime, but when it comes to keeping teachers in our school rooms to invest in the future of our young people, when it comes to having teachers in our schools to provide the structure and supervision and guidance for our kids to keep them out of trouble along with our families, we see nothing from members opposite in terms of dealing with that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government has taken all its blue books in the campaign and thrown them out in the election. Prior to the campaign we had three or four blue books. During the campaign the government was jettisoning the Clayton Manness policies as fast as people would criticize.

I remember going into Lac du Bonnet and the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) was going around to all his communities and saying: Oh, do not worry, we will not change your recess policies; oh, do not worry, we will not have this policy in education or we will not have that policy in education that was in our blue books; Clayton Manness is gone now and we are going to get rid of all his policies in the blue books in the campaign. That was what they were saying in the election campaign.

Say one thing before the election, another thing during the election, and God knows what they are going to do after the election, because in the Speech from the Throne there was absolutely nothing in terms of modernizing our education system. There was nothing to deal with recess. There was nothing to deal with Canadian history. There was nothing to deal with the curriculum for elementary students. There was nothing to deal with the junior high students' curriculum. There was nothing to deal with the suspension policy that we criticized in Bill 3 last December and the government, and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) flip-flopped in the election campaign. There is no indication whether Bill 4 will proceed. There is no policy on community colleges to deal with the federal government cutbacks on community colleges to have an education and training strategy. There is no policy to deal with post-secondary education and the cutbacks of the federal government. There is no policy to link community colleges, apprenticeship programs, Access programs with the future economy here in the province of Manitoba, no strategy at all.

\* (1510)

That is why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier is governing this province with the worst economic performance of any province in Canada in the last seven years. Your GDP growth is below the national average, in fact it averages out to .6 percent. Every

year you are below the national average for the last seven years. You are below the national average and your GDP, your measure of all economic performance is dismal. It is a poor performance, and there are only 3,000 more jobs today than when you began office in 1988—3,000 jobs over six years. You finally got over the plus figure, I have to acknowledge. We have always been straight up about the statistics.

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, you have really been straight up about a lot of things.

**Mr. Doer:** The Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) over there, the king of guffaw in this Chamber, the sort of Richard Nixon incarnate here in this Chamber of Manitoba—here is a minister that should have been fired by the Premier. He is the only Minister of Tourism in Canada that sent out a brochure that had American advertising and had a centrefold for the United States.

The Deputy Premier of this province spends hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money to give people in Manitoba coupons to go to Grand Forks and Fargo. What an absolute disaster. No wonder our economy is in such dismal shape. He should resign. The buck stops there. He should resign as Minister responsible for Tourism here in the province of Manitoba. Instead of guffawing, he should resign.

Also, dealing with the whole issue of the economy is the whole issue of lotteries. The Premier whined about the articles on lotteries during the election campaign. Remember the promise that the Premier made in this Chamber and then in the election campaign? I know promises do not mean anything to the Premier. I know his word does not mean anything to him, but I remember at the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities the Premier said the information about how much money was taken from each community would be released prior to the election campaign. He said it in that debate. His minister said that in the Chamber.

When we produced a bill called The Lotteries Accountability Act to make it law so that communities like Dauphin and Swan River and Thompson and Steinbach and Roblin-Russell would know how much

money is coming out of their community, the government said, do not worry, we will release that information. The Premier gave his word again, and, of course, the Premier's word is worth nothing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Of course, he broke just another election promise. Secrecy, deceit and hiding the true government agenda are the hallmark of this government, not honesty, integrity and straightforward dialogue with the people of Manitoba.

Unfortunately, the Conference Board again today reports that after 1994 when we are below the Canadian average in terms of economic performance—again we are below the Canadian average—that 1995 promises again another year below the Canadian average. The real true ads of the Conservative Party should have been, vote for us, we will perform below the Canadian average.

The real true ads, the honest ads produced for the people of Manitoba, should not be to use a term like Manitoba Works, a term that was developed by the NDP in its alternative speech from the throne, absolutely plagiarized out of our document, Manitoba Works. In terms of their strategy, they should give hope and opportunity to people, not slick ads. People do not get jobs out of slick ads. They get jobs out of real economic development, real economic opportunity, and real hope for the people.

I also want to talk for a moment about the fallacy of a balanced budget. Two members already have talked about balanced budget. Now, whom do we listen to? Do we listen to this Premier who promised \$10 million to the Jets and the budget would be balanced, or do we listen to the Dominion Bond Rating agency that said, oh, the budget is not balanced?

You know when the last time the budget was balanced? It was 1988-89, because, Mr. Deputy Speaker—the last budget that was balanced on the Public Accounts. Anybody can produce a balanced budget. The issue is Public Accounts. What is your final bottom line at the end of the year? The Chamber of Commerce can produce a balanced budget for its clubhouse and then show a deficit at the end of the year. It is still a deficit.

You know, the Orwellian language that is being used by the Premier opposite to say, we are the only ones that produced a balanced budget in 20 years, is quite slick and clever, but anyone in this Chamber can write a balanced budget. The question is: Do you come in balanced at the end of the year? What is your bottom line balanced books, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

So let us not listen to the Premier. His word means nothing to us any more. With the greatest of respect, you lost your credibility during the election campaign as far as we are concerned. Your word means nothing to us any more. I just want you to know that. That is unfortunate, because I would rather disagree on ideas and issues rather than not being able to know from one day to the next when he is telling us the truth and when he is not telling the truth.

The Dominion Bond Rating agency clearly states, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the last year there was a Public Accounts balanced budget was 1988-89. The NDP budget was the last balanced budget in the province. You know what they—[interjection] I believe the Premier, if you check Hansard, if it is on the record, used a word that is unacceptable to this Chamber. I know he is a little sensitive about the fact that the Dominion Bond Rating agency criticized—every promise he made fell like a house of cards when their document came out. You know what? You know when the record high deficit—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I am having a little bit of trouble hearing the honourable member, and it is coming from both sides, so if I could have a little bit of order, we will continue.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, the year the deficit was the highest was \$742 million two years ago. Two years ago, who was the Premier? The fiscal conservatives, the fiscal managers of Manitoba. If we remember the former accountant who was in the caucus, who quit the caucus a couple of years ago, stated that the real deficit was \$862 million. [interjection] I know the Premier does not like to hear the truth, but if he can just be a little quiet, a little patient—I know the Premier is a little thin skinned when his words come back to haunt him, but if he could just



be a little patient, try a little integrity, it will go a long way on this side of the Chamber.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Dominion Bond Rating agency says that there is a deficit in 1995-96. The Dominion Bond Rating agency says what we have criticized the government for in the past. You cannot—and I would ask members opposite when you are participating in this little gimmick, really pay attention. You cannot take a Crown corporation such as the McKenzie Seeds corporation, sell it a year ago, and then show that in your next year's operating account to show a balanced budget. It is a one-time only capital asset. You cannot do it. It is called manipulative financing.

The bond rating agencies which are not exactly rife with New Democrats do not agree with you. They call it manipulating finances. You know what they do? Their bottom line is that you are running a deficit of \$90 million. Their bottom line is that you are really running a deficit. I know the Premier does not want to face the facts, but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no wonder your credit rating was worse than the Pawley government's credit rating. It is quite interesting that your credit rating has declined since you became government here in Manitoba.

They also comment about the secrecy and dishonesty of using the Lotteries corporation as a one-time-only payment to look like you are balancing the budget here in this year. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know the Premier threw the dice—[interjection] I know they are very sensitive over there. They can keep heckling all they want. I know that they do not like being pointed out to be running a deficit when the whole election campaign was about balancing the so-called books, but we would point out—

**An Honourable Member:** Manitobans have heard you and disagreed.

**Mr. Doer:** The Premier will get his chance. I know he does like—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I am really having a very hard time hearing the honourable member. If the honourable member would be given the

opportunity, I am sure he will be finishing up in the very near future and I would like to hear the end of it.

**Mr. Doer:** I would like to thank the Deputy Speaker for that nonpartisan ruling.

Now, I raised these gimmicks and the Dominion Bond Rating agency for a reason. Your caucus is now committed to bringing in the so-called balanced budget legislation. Let me give you a couple of examples of why this has not been thought out beyond the pre-election gimmick and the gimmick in the campaign of why this is not very well thought out.

\* (1520)

Duff Roblin, a Conservative, built what is commonly known as Duff's ditch in the province of Manitoba. Did that come in in a balanced budget year? Did that come in in a year a one-time-only capital investment or did it take more than one year to pay for that investment? If you check the record, Duff's ditch or the floodway cost was paid for over three budget years. Now I ask the question, was that not a worthy investment to have a capital investment that would have exceeded your proposed balanced budget legislation that has saved us money year after year after year in preventing floods? Look at the example of previous Conservative Premiers, and I mention Duff Roblin in that example. Look at the whole area of having a long-term strategy to deal with children's poverty. We know that an ounce of prevention that may be spent in one budget year may save us dollar after dollar after dollar in future generations. Look at the Economic Council of Canada that talked about investing in children. Keeping them in school, keeping them in nourishment, keeping them in safe and secure settings will save the taxpayers money year in and year out as well as providing opportunity and dignity for our children.

Look at the long term. Put a human face on the balanced budget proposal that you have. Do not have manipulation. Disallow the sale of Crown assets to go against the operating debt because you really will not have, as the Dominion Bond Rating agency has said, real balanced budget legislation even under the Conservative ideology and extremism of balanced

budget legislation before this House unless you have flexibility to deal with long-term capital and no flexibility to manipulate the sale of public assets of Crown corporations which are already being discounted by outside independent observers and outside independent financial institutions.

Let us look at the taxpayer protection legislation. Now this is a government that said they did not raise taxes and then raised everybody's property taxes by tens of millions of dollars. Property tax credit reductions are an increase in taxes. If my taxes in my home go up \$75 a year because of a Filmon team measure, that is in essence a tax increase. That is outside of the ambit of the so-called referendum legislation, kind of a warning to all of us, I guess, about where you are going to proceed to deal with the federal government cutbacks that would not be subject to your so-called referendum legislation.

Let us look at the sales tax. This government in the last 1990 election promised not to expand sales tax on children's clothing and other essential goods. Yes, now it is expanded. Your referendum legislation would allow you to put the 7 percent PST on food, for example, again without a referendum. So do not think that your so-called legislation before this Chamber, beyond the gimmickry that is contained therein, is good effective long-term fiscal management and good long-term capital investment here in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are pleased that this legislation will be dealt with in the fall sitting of the Legislature. We know that other legislation will be dealt with in this sitting of the Legislature. We will ask the government to provide us enough time on family maintenance legislation so that we can put in the amendments that we believe are necessary to improve the bill that is before this Chamber and presented to this Chamber last December.

We believe the family maintenance bill is timely but we want enough time to improve that legislation and to hear from the public, and we will ask the government to proceed on a timely basis so that improvements can be made to a bill that we believe needs radical improvements.

We still ask the government to provide us information on education bills. Bills 3 and 4 died on the Order Paper. I know the Premier flip-flopped during the election campaign. The small Speech from the Throne did not advise us of where they are going on that very vital matter.

We will continue to provide positive alternatives in this Chamber. We have proposed a healthy child program. We have proposed nurse practitioners. We have proposed a personal care home code of conduct. We have proposed neighbourhood health organizations. We have proposed the health reform accountability act. In education, we have proposed funding tied to the economy. We have proposed a safe schools policy as an alternative. We have proposed the revitalized Curriculum Branch to deal with not only the existing basics but the basics of the future. We have proposed mandatory phys ed. We have proposed a core subject being Canadian history.

We have a jobs and economy strategy that calls for an all-party committee so that we can deal with our jobs and our future growth in an all-party way.

We have proposed an economic summit as an alternative. We have proposed a Manitoba works program that we were flattered that the government xeroxed and advertised on in the election campaign.

We have proposed Investment Manitoba. We have proposed a seasonal job strategy. We have proposed a building bridges program. We have a small business career start program that we have proposed. We have proposed community safety infrastructure programs. We have proposed community safety programs. We have proposed community police officers. We have proposed youth places grants to deal with crime prevention.

We have dealt and proposed a long-term transition program for agriculture, to deal with the Crow rate and the Port of Churchill.

Where is that in the original December document from this government dealing with the agricultural economy? Where is the Port of Churchill as part of their transition strategy? We have an alternative, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, and we will continue to propose that, not only to the government but to the full public of Manitoba.

We have proposed a stay option to the year 2000 for young farmers. We have proposed increased agricultural research, which of course has been decimated by the federal government. We have proposed fair funding for northern highways. We have proposed mining safety here in the province of Manitoba. We have proposed northern economic development programs for fairness of all programs, and we have proposed access programs for all Manitobans—positive ideas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we expect to disagree with the government on policy and on their extreme ideology. We expect that will happen. We expect from time to time to disagree on issues. We expect from time to time to disagree on policy decisions. We expect from time to time to agree on legislation and to disagree on legislation.

We expect from time to time and will continue to propose positive alternatives, but what we cannot understand on this side of the House is a government that says one thing before an election and acts another way after the election. That is something we will never ever tolerate, and that is something that we will never understand. We expect honesty and integrity from every member opposite. We expect members opposite to be straightforward.

Starting from the Premier, we feel we have been misled in terms of the policies of this government before the election, during the election and after the election.

Therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier said in all consciousness he could not support \$111 million of public money to a new facility for the Jets. We say, why did you change your conscience after the election?

\* (1530)

We therefore in our consciousness cannot support this government. The NDP conscience will not allow

us to support this government and therefore, I move, seconded by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen),

THAT this motion be amended by adding the following words:

This House regrets:

(a) that in the face of record teacher layoffs and recent education policy flip-flops this government has failed to indicate any vision for a public education system and our children's future; and

(b) that this government, after cutting audiology services and the Children's Dental Health Program, failed to articulate a strategy for ensuring the future health of our children; and

(c) that this government has no plan to address child poverty in Manitoba, the highest rate in Canada, and instead blames the federal government for this problem; and

(d) that through the manipulation of the sale of Crown corporation assets this government was able to project a surplus for '95-96, but, according to Dominion Bond Rating Service, Manitoba will actually have a deficit of \$96 million; and

(e) that this government has failed to develop a transition strategy to include the Port of Churchill to address the elimination of the Crow benefit; and

(f) that this government has shown a blatant disregard for transportation and health care needs of northern Manitobans; and

(g) that this government has no democratic mandate to commit taxpayers' dollars to the Winnipeg Jets and the construction of an arena beyond the \$10 million committed in the election campaign; and

(h) that over its seven-year term with this government Manitoba's economic performance is the worst in the country, according to Stats Canada; and

(i) that this government has no plan to address the \$247 million in cuts in the federal government health and education funding;

THEREFORE this government has lost the trust and confidence of this House and the people of Manitoba.

Thank you very much.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris):** It is a great honour and privilege for me to stand here today and respond to the Speech from the Throne. I say to all of you quite frankly, I am not myself today. Today I am the thousands of men and women who believed in me and put their faith in me to be their voice in government. I am humbled by their confidence and strengthened by their faith in me to bring their concerns to this Legislature.

My predecessor for Morris, Mr. Clayton Manness, is a tough act to follow, to say the least. Having served the people of Morris constituency faithfully since 1981, Clayton had served the people of his constituency and this province tirelessly and faithfully.

I congratulate Madam Speaker on her much-deserved appointment. She brings a proven record of impartial and prudent judgment and impeccable execution of her duties as a Deputy Speaker. As a Speaker I am sure that she will continue to have every confidence and respect from her peers that she has come to deserve.

The honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), our Deputy Speaker, I congratulate you on your appointment as Deputy Speaker. I know that you will continue in the fine and honourable tradition of prudence and fairness as your predecessor. To all of the honourable members gathered here today I would like to express my sincerest thank-you for welcoming me and the other new members to this Legislature with such warmth and genuine spirit of united purpose.

When you welcomed me you have welcomed the thousands of families and individuals of Morris whom I represent here today. We all thank you for your kind considerations.

To the Pages, I look forward to serving the people of this province with your help, and I hope that this will prove an educational and productive experience as you participate in the making of Manitoba's history, and what place of honour these times will place in the history of Manitoba.

Today we are standing on the edge of the greatest age Manitoba has ever known. We are entering into a new era, a new century and a new millennium charged with the obligation of governing with a resounding mandate from the people of this great province, to continue along this road of evolving and growing prosperity. There is something in the air. It is a freshness like a spring prairie sprinkled with a glistening morning dew. It is an energy of light and movement like crisp pure winter's evening with the aurora borealis dancing across the sky. There is something sweet in the air in Manitoba like the waft of fragrant blossoms which seep across the balmy breezes of summer. It is so powerful you can almost taste it. It is optimism. It is hope. It is a faith in a bright and prosperous future.

This is not something new. It has been lingering throughout Manitoba since 1988. It has just become more and more powerful with each passing day. It is an evolving determination by Manitobans and has been reflected in their chosen government and our Leader for the past three elections to make this province the best place anywhere to live, to work, to invest and to raise a family.

I am proud to stand before all of you here today as a member of this government, which has guided Manitoba through the worst recession this country has seen since the Dirty Thirties without burdening the taxpayer by freezing taxes for more than seven consecutive years and, I might add, with no end to the tax freeze in sight. That alone would be enough to put a smile on the face of any hard-working Manitoban, but even the want-to-be hard worker in our society is smiling because month after month after month to this day Manitoba is consistently one of the best places in Canada to find work. We have among the lowest unemployment rates in the country, coupled with a balanced budget and legislation to keep our budgets balanced today and for the governments of the future. Our businesses are confident in their ability to grow.

A word of warning though to the honourable members sitting in opposition and, of course, to the few other members of this House as well, this optimism and confidence in Manitoba's ability to work, prosper and grow is highly contagious and may creep up on you when you least expect it. For example, you may be sitting here brooding in this very Chamber or you may be lying awake in the middle of the night and wham, it hits you. You will jump out of bed, shake your significant other awake, and shout, the honourable member for Morris is right. Our future is very bright, and we can do anything world class from right here in Manitoba. It is going to happen, mark my words.

For all I know, it may even happen tonight. You will be getting yourself ready for bed and all the while you will be thinking about all the progressive and dynamic initiatives this government has made over the years. You will be thinking about the attractive business environment that has been fostered in Manitoba while you brush your teeth or drop them in a glass, whatever the case may be. Then, as you change your clothes to get ready for bed, a torrent of thoughts comes flooding to you of this government's record of fiscal responsibility, including balanced budgets and our record of holding the line on taxes like no other jurisdiction in North America. Then you will dismiss this dawning revelation maybe as quickly as it came, but then as you tuck yourself in and lay your weary head on the pillow visions of excellence in leadership will drift across your mind.

Fleeting flashes of sustainable job creation and income growth will flicker across the inside of your eyelids, and a renewed respect of the prioritized spending in health, education and family services will leap into your heart. Before you know it you will be propped up in bed bright-eyed and bushy-tailed with the optimism and faith in ourselves as Manitobans that I have been speaking about today.

\* (1540)

This throne speech is a vision for the future of Manitoba, and Mr. Deputy Speaker, the future is not what it was. It is a rapidly changing global village at our doorstep, and in order to remain competitive we must have a highly-skilled and adaptive society to

remain on the cutting edge while keeping abreast of the latest developments and advancements in our world. But not only that, we must be able to see potential in everything around us. We must dare to dream. In dreaming we begin to plan. In planning we begin to produce. In producing we begin to prosper.

In my constituency of Morris there is an abundance of possibilities and potential for the people of today to ensure that there is a future for our children of tomorrow. Of course, none of this is, or ever could be, possible without energy, drive and dedication of the people of Morris, to their community, to their home and to their faith in a promising future for their children. My neighbours in Morris have a very great tradition of attachment and dedication to our parcel of creation, and families live and remain in Morris because of the wonderful neighbours that they have. We are a people who are adaptable to the changes of times and technology and have proven time and time again the flexibility and agility in learning new and innovative ways of getting things done.

Adapting to some of the recent initiatives of the federal Liberal government is going to test the flexibility of Morris constituents and indeed people from across Manitoba. The diversification in the agricultural sector has been accelerated by the total elimination of the Western Grain Transportation subsidy by the federal Liberal government. They have taken that away from us and in turn are trying to give us a new gun control legislation, whether we want it or not, and make us pay for it. But despite the actions of the federal government, Morris constituents and all Manitobans will persevere.

Whether it is a new skill on the job, a new technology or a new system in the world, adaptability has been the hallmark for the success of Morris to withstand the changing times.

One of the current constraints of Morris has been summed up in a recent edition of the Valley Leader, relating the reaction by Carman mayor, Murray Ryn, welcoming the news of plans for a new multipurpose medical clinic in Carman. The existing building would be freed up for retail space. Mayor Ryn said that having additional space in Carman was appealing

because business real estate is in such high demand that there was simply no extra office space available in Carman at the present time.

We are growing, and in some regards we are bursting at the seams, and there is every reason in the world to be optimistic about the future, especially in light of the present and the past. The future is ours. All we have to do is reach out and take it. If we build it they will come.

The future is ours because our common sense approach to government is aimed at achieving some very clear and significant objectives. Our economic strategy is creating jobs, 15,000 more full-time jobs in the past two years alone. We have among the lowest unemployment rates in the nation. That is from British Columbia to Newfoundland and all points in between. We are among the best in Canada for ensuring that for those who want to work there is the opportunity for them to work.

We have exemplified national leadership and responsible fiscal management, which are the underpinnings of our job and economic strategy, freezing, as in the case of personal income taxes, and reducing small business corporate taxes. We have achieved long-term, stable fiscal management with spending smarter, balancing the budget and reducing the deficit. Our exports have helped Manitoba keep a sustained economic growth overall. Thousands of families rely on the manufacturing and export of goods, and this means more jobs right here at home.

The planning and creation of an attractive business environment through responsible fiscal management was rewarded when last year we hit a record level of 4.7 billion in world exports, an almost 30 percent increase over the year before. But the net has been further cast with a clear plan by this government to continue to attract trading partners from around the globe.

Our business growth is booming in the health care industry and products. The information and telecommunications industry is expanding with new services relocating or being established right here in Manitoba.

Tourism is reaching tremendous potential and growth. International travellers clearing customs in Manitoba increased 28 percent last year, the best growth in Canada and the best for the last two years in a row.

Agriculture has and will continue to be one of the most vital aspects of our economy, accounting for one out of every eight jobs in Manitoba. This government has helped expand markets and encourage innovation, diversification and value-added processing activities in this province.

In the last four years, exports in agricultural commodities have increased by one-third and value-added food products have grown by more than 50 percent.

We have done much, but there is still much left we can do. To stimulate diversification and innovation in the agricultural sector and create more jobs for Manitobans, this government has a plan to establish a \$10-million agricultural diversification fund through the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation.

This will provide loan guarantees of up to 25 percent to encourage farmers to produce higher valued agricultural products. Coupled with our efforts to establish a new whole-farm program and to continue to work with the agrifood sector to market our products around the world, our agricultural industry will be assured a continued significant role in the economy of Manitoba and the life of our province.

The mining sector has seen unprecedented growth lately due in part to the lowered mining taxes and exploration incentives which have resulted in heightened exploration in the province. With an eye to double the value of mineral production by the year 2000, this government is continuing to attract an increasing share of mining exploration in Canada.

The transportation sector employs over 25,000 Manitobans, the highest number of people per capita in this industry in Canada, and we are centring ourselves as the hub of distribution of goods throughout North America. Through many initiatives such as the Northern Hemisphere Distribution Alliance, the

horizon is rising on an international multimodal cargo centre for the entire northern hemisphere established right here in Manitoba. It is exciting, in just one word.

This throne speech speaks of a vision for the future that is based on established, experienced strategies of today and yesterday. We are building on a momentum of innovation from yesterday and partnership with skills and leaders of today, and by the way, if the next time you are brushing or dropping your teeth and your thoughts helplessly drift to all the marvellous things that this government and Manitoba are and have been doing, or better yet, you wake up your neighbours in the middle of the night yelling at the top of the lungs telling the world that this government was right, do not say I never warned you. Thank you.

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** I too would like to commence by welcoming all new members to the House, and remind everyone here that we are all honourable members. I look forward to interesting debates and interesting discourse, but I hope we can all genuinely remain friends outside this Chamber and outside some of the words that cross this floor.

Being an MLA requires major sacrifice on the parts of all of use, but I can assure all the new members that there are major rewards as well for being an elected member; and, though I have only been elected for five years, I feel that those rewards have been there, and I appreciate them and I urge all members to continue to work on behalf of their constituents.

I would also like to congratulate Madam Speaker on her elevation to the Speaker's Chair. I know her to be of integrity and warmth, and I hope we can continue to have a good working relationship in this Chamber. I would also like to recognize the elevation of the Deputy Speaker. I note that he is in the Chair at this point, and I will miss his invigorating response to some of my comments in this Chamber. He is one of the members who helps promote some of my better rhetoric in this Chamber, but I certainly welcome his appointment as well and hope he as well will continue his fair relationship in this Chamber with all members.

It would be remiss of me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to not recognize the efforts of the former Speaker, the member for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan). I believe that member epitomizes some of the best characteristics of all members of this Chamber, and I have come to view him, and I think members on this side of the House have come to view him, as a friend in this Chamber. We look forward to a continuing relationship, and we hope, and I am certain, that he will continue to conduct himself above approach, as he had throughout his tenure in this Chamber as Speaker.

I would also like to thank all the constituents of Kildonan for again returning me to this Chamber on their behalf. I appreciate their support. I appreciate their concern, and I will continue to try to represent them to the best of my ability, and I thank them for their confidence in me and in the New Democratic Party in the recent election results.

I would also like to thank my family for all of their support and their dedication, not just my immediate family, but all of my extended family likewise. Without their support it would be very difficult to carry out my activities in this Chamber and represent my constituents adequately.

I would like to start off on a positive note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is to congratulate the government and all the members for a re-election and its renewed mandate in this Chamber. I accept the verdict of the people and I recognize that this government has won a majority, and we will do our best to work with this government to try and improve conditions in Manitoba.

I must emphasize that the government ought not to misinterpret the mandate that was given to them by the people of Manitoba, and I will have more to say on that a little later in my comments with regard to the misinterpretation of the mandate by members opposite.

One of the real pleasures of being an elected member is, you have a chance to attend a lot of events and a lot of functions, and I find myself in synagogues and in churches and in temples and all kinds of forums as an elected representative and otherwise.

I recently had occasion to hear a very remarkable sermon or homily that was well delivered, and I wish to repeat some phrases of it, because it struck me quite profoundly. I think it might bear some recognition in this Chamber. It was on the issue of peace, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I found it to be moving, and I would like to highlight some of the points of that particular sermon.

The priest started out by talking about the recent Special Olympics in Seattle, and he talked about a particular race that took place where a number of children were running up the track, nine children, and one small girl fell and hurt her knee. As the children moved towards the finish line, one girl looked back and went back to help out the girl who had fallen. She was followed by all the seven other children who all came back, formed a protective cordon around the injured girl, tried to help her up, helped her up, and they all walked together holding hands across the finish line, much, obviously, to the applause and the overwhelming response of the crowd.

The point made by that particular story was dealing with the whole issue of peace and the whole issue of co-operation and how we deal in society with each other. The message was that we ought not to be a society that is attempting to stand on each other's heads and fall over each other trying to get to the top, but we should be working together. The point made was that what peace is is not something that one feels just good about, but peace is justice.

The definition of peace according to this sermon is justice, and I accept that. The sermon went on to say that children going to bed hungry is not justice. People not having jobs is not justice. Lack of education opportunities is not justice, and a proper and caring health care system is not justice in our society.

I reflected long and hard on this particular sermon, because I believe it reflects what we in this Chamber should be striving for at all times in our activities in this House.

I also believe, fundamentally, that it represents something that we in the New Democratic Party fundamentally believe in. We may not achieve it, but

it certainly is fundamental to our goals, to our values and to our philosophy.

I think members opposite will probably say that it reflects their goals and their values but, unfortunately, if the campaign is any indication of what members opposite stand for, those goals, values and philosophies are not within the heart and soul of the Progressive Conservative Party opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I say this sparingly, but I say this in hopes that perhaps it will flicker some concern and some recognition by members opposite.

Why do I say that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I say that firstly because, as our Leader indicated in his comments, any political party that jettisons its name and attempts to run on form as the "Filmon party" is not being up front, and the jettisoning of their name and their philosophy is something that speaks volumes in terms of where they stand and where they intend to go.

It is just as cynical, unfortunately, as when, for example, the Premier fired the former Minister of Health, the former member for Pembina, in an attempt to try to salvage some electoral success in the five by-elections that were held a year and a half ago, and nothing changed. In effect, they put a new face in, a new minister to try to attempt to persuade the public that they were doing things differently in health care, but nothing really changed. Oh, you know, a little political massaging here and a little political massaging there, but nothing really changed. It was still the same philosophy, the same cabinet.

Basically it is wrong and dishonest to do that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think that any political party that goes to the electorate and tries to cover up what it stands for, in fact cover up its name, speaks volumes about where they are in terms of their heart and soul.

During the campaign, members opposite and the leader in particular, the Premier, the member for Tuxedo, said many things one way during the campaign and then said another as soon as the election was resolved, and the best example is the issue of the Jets. This party and this political Premier went around publicly saying no more than \$10 million will go to the Jets, and we could debate the issue how it should be



spent and where it should go, but they went on record saying no more than \$10 million.

Now off the record, in some constituencies, they went around saying, do not worry, vote Conservative. If you vote Conservative, we will keep the Jets, and I dare say it probably had some effect during the campaign. But notwithstanding that, within days, within hours of the election results, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they had changed their position, and now we see millions, tens of millions of dollars going into the Winnipeg Jets. This is unfair and this is fundamentally dishonest and that speaks volumes about where the heart and soul of members opposite are.

Now they come back to us about health care, and members opposite say what did we say about health care? We dealt with the issues. We did not have ads of our Leader going up and down the riverbank holding his wife's hand saying, trust me, trust me, trust me on health care and saying no substance. The members ducked the issues and stayed away from health care. We talked about the issues and members opposite, if they think that they have a mandate to continue doing their cutting and slashing in health care, then they are entirely wrong.

The member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) knows that. They know that. The Minister of Health who forever, and who is again doing it from his seat, invokes the images of other provinces and talks about other provinces but never, never, hardly once during the campaign dared talk about Manitoba as he was running for his political career in Brandon, did not talk about Manitoba, brings up the other provinces. That speaks volumes as well.

They are not prepared to face their own record. I daresay if they believe they have a mandate on health care to continue the cutting and slashing and nonconsultation, then they are mistaken. They are mistaken badly.

Third, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is their economic record. Our Leader spoke, I think, quite convincingly about the balanced budget legislation and how within days of the election the Dominion Bond Rating Service indicated that this was not a balanced budget.

\* (1600)

It is amazing how members opposite, who could not find money for all kinds of projects, instantly found money for the Winnipeg Jets following the campaign. If members opposite think that they were re-elected based on their economic record and continuing that economic record, then this province is in for dire economic times in the years to come.

Fourthly, the reason I say that this party is without substance—it is basically a shell—is because of the health care campaign they waged. It was a classic campaign of duck the issues, stay away from the issues, because they did not want to face the electorate on the real issues of health care in the campaign.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thought it spoke volumes when finally after years and hundreds of answers in this House, saying that Connie Curran was the best thing that happened since sliced bread and blaming everything and blaming us for their own problems in terms of health care, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) finally admitted in the public debate that they had made a mistake for Connie Curran, something the present Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) was not prepared to do, even though he jettisoned her out of the province and even though he paid her her money, having paid her her \$4 million, plus \$800,000 in expenses tax-free U.S. Despite that, the Premier actually stated that—now, we must take that in context.

While the Premier is saying yes, you were right, we were wrong on Connie Curran, this government is negotiating secretly for a further \$100 million of our tax money that will make the Jets deal seem like small potatoes. Although the costs of the Jets deal are rising as we speak, they are negotiating a \$100-million contract with the Royal Bank, and they refuse to make—[interjection] The minister corrects me. That is right. It is probably \$150 million. The minister corrects me. That is right. His own briefing notes say that it is somewhere up to \$120 million and could rise to \$150 million. I thank the minister for correcting me on that.

The \$150-million contract with the Royal Bank, they refuse to make it public. The biggest contract probably contractually in Manitoban history, they refuse to

provide us with documentation, and they refuse to make the deal public. I think their failure to deal with that issue, their failure to take on meaningfully the health care issues and discuss them in the debate, speaks volumes about where the heart and soul of members opposite are in Manitoba.

I genuinely feel that, although this government was re-elected, the public elected a party without a soul, dedicated to keeping itself in office at all political costs and at all costs.

I know members opposite might indicate or ask me why we are speaking and I am speaking so harshly on the first days of the debate. Well, I have concluded, not just in the campaign but in four years of observing members opposite, that this is a group of individuals that is very inclusive, inclusive of their friends, inclusive of their supporters. The majority of Manitobans—people in health care, people in the education field, people who require jobs—have been excluded not only from benefits of this government but from any kind of equitable basis of distribution.

I have had occasion to review the Progressive Conservative Party donation list, for example, last year, and I know how many of their friends and how many of their people that they do business with are profiled as major donors to the party. We see things like private nursing homes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that gave thousands and thousands of dollars to this government. We see examples of banks, CIBC, for example, \$4,000. Gemini Fashions of Canada has done very, very well by this government—good friends of the Premier, Gemini, thousands and thousands of dollars.

I see there is an interesting discourse between the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) and the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) talking about support, and I remind the member for Inkster that one of the reasons that the party was probably rejected, the Liberal Party, was they are without soul, without any kind of policy or any kind of issue, any kind of issues that they could be seen to stand on. That was to their own peril, because the public of Manitoba saw that the Liberal Party had no substance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and had very little to stand on. But I digress and I will continue.

I know that places like car dealerships gave thousands of dollars to this government. Pine Falls Paper Company gave over \$12,000. Power Corporation of Canada gave \$5,000. Royal Bank—interesting, not only Royal Bank but the vice president of Royal Bank gave thousands of dollars to the Progressive Conservative Party.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you look at the donation list and if you look at the kind of policies that have been introduced by members opposite, you see very much a correlation between those that have in our society and those that have not. It is very much a reflection of where members opposite are going. It is also indicative of what happened in the recent events in terms of making sure that everyone was taken care of in terms of the recent Jets debate.

I am harsh because of what constituents of Kildonan told me not just during the campaign but before the campaign, how people are concerned about personal security, how they are concerned about break-and-enters, how they are concerned about people getting out on parole, how they are concerned about the long waiting list to deal with criminal matters, how they are concerned about the lack of consequences, how they are concerned about violence.

All we heard from members opposite were press conferences, get-tough press conferences but no real action. We do not see anything on youth activity centres. We do not see anything on community-based policing. We do not see anything about dealing with the long waiting lists in the courts. In fact what we see in measures opposite is to kick more people out of schools and put them back on the street.

When members on this side of the House try to get assistance for youth drop-in centres and to provide activities for youths to give them meaningful activities and to assist them in society, it is on deaf ears, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The minister makes great speeches and they have campaign releases and they have fancy gadgetry type ads, which I have not seen but I have heard about, but nonetheless there has been no action to deal with those very real issues that are felt very deeply by all members of the public, I am sure, not just constituents of Kildonan.

I am harsh and I am critical of this government because of what they have done in education. You know, they introduced a reform plan before the election campaign—as an enterprise under the then member for Morris to try to win votes. They introduced an ill-conceived and ill-thought-out education plan, the blue book and then daughter of blue book that followed.

Fundamentally, what bothered me about that plan, aside from all of the very valid and real criticism of the plan, is that it was done without real meaningful input from the public and from educators in general.

If there is one thing we heard on the doorsteps during the provincial campaign it was from educators who felt completely cut out of the process. We are used to that in this Chamber where the government tries through secrecy and tries through hidden committees to cut out as much information to the public as possible, but it was genuinely felt by members and people in the education community that they had had absolutely no input into the so-called reform process under this government and that it was basically a one person show or a couple of persons show emanating from the minister's office. I think this is repugnant to democracy, but more importantly it is a failure to understand and grasp the significance of education in our society.

By cutting out some of the people that have, obviously, some of the best informed opinions in the education system, they have done an injustice to all the people of Manitoba. I was struck at how genuinely hurt teachers and others were by actions of this government.

I can only hope that the new Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh), who has varied experience in the education field, can do something to try to turn around this terrible morale problem and this terrible lack of hope in the education system. I certainly give the new minister full marks for her integrity and her hard-working ability.

I only hope that members on the opposite side have heard what the public had to say during the campaign and do not confuse their re-election with a mandate to steam roll over the education system and to put in place

holus-bolus their so-called reform plan that was put together by the previous minister.

I was further distressed by the fact that within days after the election we hear that in Manitoba we are going to have a loss of, what?—approximately over 200 teachers. In fact, I think that is further, Mr. Deputy Speaker—I believe that is full time teaching positions that are going to be lost in this province which will translate to a lot more positions over the next year. That is after hundreds of teacher positions have been lost over the last several years.

I ask how it is that members opposite could spend day after day after day and hours negotiating a franchise for a hockey team, but they do not put the same attention into matters that Manitobans have said over and over again are most important to Manitobans, that is health care and education, and how they could not have taken the same time and energy to try to talk with people in the education system, to try to deal with some of the major problems confronting us in education in this province.

I only hope that perhaps members opposite and the new minister will reverse some of their decisions, because it is only going to lead to more conflict in the education system, larger class sizes, more difficulties in the classroom, difficulties with dealing with special needs children and the like.

I could probably go on for the balance of my comments talking about some of the failures in education, the failure to deal and co-ordinate programs to children that was recommended in good faith by the Manitoba Teachers' Society, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees and other organizations to try to get this government to look at a new approach to how we deal with children and children's problems in education, and all issues dealing with children that fell upon deaf ears, except in the last week of the campaign when we have seen the establishment of some youth programs—not the last week of the campaign, the last week of the previous mandate, all of a sudden a flurry of announcements, a blizzard of announcements, I called them at the time.

\* (1610)

The government did set up a Youth Secretariat. We have yet to see how effective that will be. We have yet to see whether or not this government, which takes very tentative steps whenever it comes to social progressive programs, whether or not that Youth Secretariat will in fact make a meaningful difference in terms of the lives of our children and education in general.

I am also concerned, because never in the rhetoric from members opposite do we hear the talk about accessibility or equity any more in the education system. Those words seem to be missing from the comments of members opposite. The whole issue of access inequity is becoming a major crisis in our education system. When we see small school divisions that lose 20 percent of their teachers, that do not have the ability to offer programs, I would only hope that members opposite will not misinterpret their mandate and will consult and will try to do the right thing for the province of Manitoba.

On the Winnipeg Jets issue, I think it was well covered by our Leader with respect to the flip-flops and the basic lack of forthrightness by the Premier with regard to what they were going to do with the Jets. I want to reflect a little bit about the whole question of this grassroots involvement and the public's concern with the loss of the Winnipeg Jets, and I think it was genuine. I think that most Manitobans felt very, very badly about the potential loss of the Jets, but I think it goes further than just the hockey team.

It was not so much that it was just the hockey team, and it was not so much that hockey is our national sport, and it was not so much that there may not be things to do in Manitoba—said by some people—during cold winter nights, I think it goes to the root of the psychology of Manitobans. We are so used to, particularly the last seven or eight years, so many people having to leave this province, so many young people having to leave this province, so many businesses shutting down, so many companies laying off, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I think the Jets became symbolic, particularly amongst the young people.

The Jets became symbolic of something that was wrong in this province. I think that is why people

jumped on the bandwagon. That is one of the major reasons. They were fed up with the losses. They were fed up with the job losses. They were fed up with the cutbacks. They were fed up with people picking up stakes and leaving this province. They drew a line in the sand and they said—and I think psychologically Manitobans were saying, you know, we have lost so much in the last seven or eight years and the Jets were symbolic of all of the losses and came to represent so much that we have lost in this province in the last seven or eight years.

I note that members on the back bench are nodding. I assume that is in the affirmative with respect to my comments. I think they ought to reflect on that, because there was a general outpouring of emotion and anger with respect to the potential loss of the Jets. I think it has to do with what happened in this province in the last seven or eight years. Try as they might to reposition the statistics and talk about how glowing things are in this province, things have not gone well in this province for the last seven or eight years.

I am sorry to have to say that as a Manitoban, but too many people that I have met in this province, door knocking in particular, have told me that they are telling their kids to leave the province when they get older, or they are urging—it just happened too often, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is not political. That is not partisan. I am sure members opposite have heard the same thing.

I think that the Jets came to symbolize that. The Jets came to symbolize that loss. That was one of the reasons for the great outpouring of emotion and the great outpouring of sentiment during the recent campaign to try to save the Jets in this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with regard to health care—[interjection] The comments of the member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) are quite indicative, I think, of what I had said earlier with respect to the lack of reflection, the lack of any opportunity to sit back and say, you know, perhaps we have done something wrong. When you keep going on and on and barging ahead as if nothing is wrong, you will eventually be betrayed for what in fact you are.

There is lots more to come out. Members opposite cannot be proud. They have discovered child poverty finally, although the source of that evil now appears to be the federal government and not any of their own actions. No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it happens to be the federal government. That is what they have discovered.

**An Honourable Member:** Do you know what they said on the 25th of April, 1995?

**Mr. Chomiak:** The member for Virden is trying to give me an interpretation of the mandate. I have already acknowledged that you have your majority. My point is, and I will repeat it for the member for Virden in case he did not get the point, I think that your party is basically a party that is just a shell, that has only been elected and will almost do anything to get re-elected and, in fact, did during the election campaign, including hiding from the real issues and failing to deal with the real issues, not even having the integrity of putting your own political party but running on one person's name. If the member for Virden wants me to repeat my comments, I will, because obviously again it is indicative, a complete inability of the member, a complete inability of that political party, to reflect or to pause to see that perhaps Manitobans did not give them the overwhelming mandate that they seem to somehow have interpreted their re-election to have been.

On health care, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government does have an opportunity to make a fresh start in health care. The government has an opportunity to actually consult with the public of Manitoba, to consult with caregivers, to consult with patients to actually see what the problems are in the health care field. Again, if members opposite were listening to their constituents and are reflecting on the comments of their constituents, I would think that would be a top priority of the members opposite.

The government has an opportunity to put in place a meaningful dialogue and they could start by introducing one of our private members' bills, The Health Reform Accountability Act, or any other bill for that matter that would provide for some kind of input from the public and from members on this side of the House and will provide for information, proper release

of information, not the hiding of reports behind 102 committees to be released some on the week or the last day leading up to a campaign but for a meaningful distribution of information to allow the public to have comments and input with regard to what is going on in health care.

They have the opportunity to stem the flow of doctors, nurses and other professionals out of province. If the members opposite spend half the amount of time in health care trying to deal with physicians and nurses going south as they did in one hockey team going south, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then perhaps they could arrive at a solution. They could do something to solve some of the problems in our health care field. If the members opposite spent half the time or a quarter of the time dealing with health care and the losses and the lack of services in the North as they have working on their hockey team, we could do something about the terrible inequity in the distribution of health care services in this province.

If the members opposite want to do something positive in health care—and I am reminding them they do not have a mandate in health care to do what they have done the last five years. They do not have a mandate to cut and slash and they ought not to misinterpret the decision of voters on the 25th. They ought to do something to expand home care. They could do something about continuing care. They could do something about bringing home care into the 1990s and to take the program that was developed by previous NDP governments on this side of the House and they can develop it to make it reflective of the needs and requirements of Manitobans in the 1990s.

\* (1620)

They could do something about morale in the health care field. If there is one thing that I think is evident, it is that people in the health care field are without hope. They are without hope or any confidence that the health care system can improve. I think by showing genuine ability to listen, something they cannot do in this House, but if they could do something outside of this House at least, try to listen to what the public and what caregivers are saying. If they try to put down their blinders and try to not be so defensive and try to put in

place some of the recommendations that have been made by the public, if they can try to actually reform health care without it only being an exercise in fiscal restraint. If they can do that then perhaps they can embark on a new course in health care in this province.

They only need look to their last week before the election, Mr. Deputy Speaker. More announcements were made about programs in health care in the last week before the campaign, about improvements and about reform, than were probably made in the previous five years. They did that in the last week.

Now, what inspired them in the last week to release reports like the "healthy child," that was sitting on the desk of the minister for nine months? What inspired them to announce programs? Well, I dare say it was the pending provincial election. If they could do that facing up to an election then surely following an election campaign now that they have a renewed mandate perhaps they can actually step back and say, we are going to get off of this track that we are on in health care, this slash, this secrecy, this setting up straw people to set up different groups against each other, we can get off of this track and we can go forward with a meaningful look at reform.

They can go back even to their blue book and take out some of the promises that were made at that time and try to implement that. If they genuinely wish to, they have an opportunity, and I invite them. I suggest that we on this side of the House would only be too pleased to support actual, meaningful health care renewal in this province and not just make health care reform an exercise in downsizing and a race to the bottom and, frankly, something that the public has come to do with justifiably a good deal of suspicion and concern.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if members opposite truly had a vision for this province and truly were concerned about the goals and the values and justice in our society, something would have been done immediately about the closure of the North Y. The North Y offers programs to hundreds of individuals in the north end of the city. There is no like facility within miles of the North Y. Without a lot of fanfare that facility has been announced to be closed.

I note that the city is getting involved. The City of Winnipeg is getting involved to try to continue programs in the North Y, and I give them credit.

I know in my endeavours to assist my community in setting up a youth drop-in centre, we have got assistance from the City of Winnipeg, but we have got no assistance whatsoever from the Province of Manitoba in our youth centre, and we have heard nothing from members opposite regarding the North Y.

If they want to truly do something about poverty, if they truly want to do something about helping children in our society then that would be a high priority for members opposite, dealing with the North Y situation and providing meaningful recreation. Social and community output to people in that part of the city would go a long way towards alleviating future problems that could be encountered in our society.

So I basically will close, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with just a reminder to members opposite that they ought not to misinterpret the mandate that was given to them by the public of Manitoba.

I am basically quite concerned about the lack of values and goals and philosophy that this party brings to government of Manitoba. I remind them, they have an opportunity over the next four years to change that. They have an opportunity to actually stop this confrontationist approach. They have had opportunity to consult with the public of Manitoba, and they have an opportunity to bring back something that has been seriously lacking in Manitoba for several years and that is hope. That is something that I think all members found during the election campaign, the real lack of hope that is being felt in our society, be it the person with the degree sitting in their parents' home, married even, with family and children, who cannot find jobs. Not because they do not have the ability or not because they have not tried, but because jobs are just quite scarce in our economy.

Part of the reason is the lack of government initiative and government assistance in this regard, and the lack of direction of proper economic activity. They can return some hope to the education system and give teachers, students and parents the ability to feel that

their efforts will be recognized and that they will be acknowledged as contributors to our society and be given full value for what a difference they can make in our society, and not be set up as somehow the enemies of government or the enemies of society or greedy, for example, teachers who request too much money.

They could do something in the health care field to try to remove the suspicion, to try to restore some hope and morale in our health care system. I dare say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if people who are caregivers do not feel comfortable because of what this government has done in health care in delivering the services to the patients, then that speaks very poorly about the future of our health care system.

But they do not have hope, they do not feel confident, and they do not feel that they are being listened to, and that is not just caregivers, that is in fact anyone who has any kind of contact in the health care field recently.

Now, I do not say that the health care system does not do a good job, but clearly the kind of health care being offered in the province of Manitoba today is of a lesser quality that has been offered in the past, and it is incumbent upon us to improve that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, with those comments, I will look forward to the rest of the debate, and I hope that we have an opportunity to provide and again return hope to the province of Manitoba.

Thank you very much.

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, by way of introduction, I would like to begin by offering you and Madam Speaker my congratulations on your respective appointments.

I would ask for your understanding when confronted by my inexperience in this House. It is my hope that I will not try your substantial patience which you are required to exercise in the performance of your duties.

I would also like to welcome the Pages and thank them for the services that they perform for this House.

I also welcome all of the new members, both on this side of the House and the opposite side.

It is my sincere wish to participate in the discussions in this House in a positive and constructive manner. I know I have much to learn from all members of this House regardless of political affiliation.

In my years as a political servant in the employ of the Province of Manitoba, I have worked with and for many individuals whose political philosophies differed from mine. I must say their dedication to the well-being of the province was always genuine. My experience as a public servant engendered in me pride as a Manitoban, and I am confident my association with the actions of this House will provide me with a similar source of pride and satisfaction.

To the constituents of Rossmere I wish to extend a sincere thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent their interests in this House. I know they expect their representative to adhere to a high standard of conduct and action in representing their interests. This is evident from the quality of individuals they have elected in the past.

\* (1630)

As the MLA for Rossmere I stand in the distinguished company of the Honourable Ed Schreyer, former Premier of Manitoba, and Honourable Vic Schroeder, the former Minister of Finance, whom I served as legal counsel in the Department of Labour and the Department of Justice. My respect for him continues to this day.

The Honourable Harold Neufeld was a former Minister of Energy and Mines, Minister responsible for Seniors and a member of Treasury Board. Mr. Neufeld is remembered for his unique, important and often colourful influence on the debates of this House as well as his considerable talent as an analyst acquired through his lengthy career as a chartered accountant. He can be credited with laying the foundation for the balanced budget when he served on Treasury Board.

Mr. Harry Schellenberg, a well-known school teacher at River East Collegiate, ably served the constituents of

Rossmere prior to my election. Mr. Schellenberg studied and taught the history of Manitoba politics and is versed in the history of the social democratic movement of the Prairies. I commend Mr. Schellenberg for the work he undertook for the people of Rossmere and for the fair election campaign he waged.

I will not claim my abilities are similar or even equal to the talent of my predecessors; however, I hope to assist the government of this province in a positive manner by bringing the skills I possess to bear on the difficult issues which this House will be facing in the coming years.

Except for a period of one year in St. Boniface and three years in Brandon where I served as a Crown prosecutor, I have lived in the area of Rossmere since 1956 when I arrived in Canada with my parents from Paraguay, the country of my birth. I went to school in Rossmere, I went to church there. I made many friends there. I consider the area my home.

In 1990, electoral boundary changes left me just outside of that constituency. I now reside in the same constituency as a number of members and former members of this House. These include the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer); the former member for Rossmere, Mr. Neufeld; and the present member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) who is here today. I hope, perhaps optimistically, that the constituents of Elmwood consider this abundance of politicians a blessing rather than a burden.

In addition to the trust the people of Rossmere have placed in me, the Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Filmon) has seen fit to honour me with the appointment of Labour, Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board and the Civil Service Commission. I thank the Premier for this honour, and I look forward to the challenge and opportunities these appointments offer.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

In approaching my duties as an MLA and a minister, I will no doubt be influenced by the values and belief instilled in me by my parents and my Mennonite

heritage. Along with my educational training, my professional experience and my life in that community, these values and beliefs will provide me with a strong basis upon which to act as a representative for all of the people of Manitoba generally and the constituents of Rossmere specifically.

As Manitoba celebrates its 125th anniversary, members of the Mennonite community can look back with pride to their contribution to the success of their new homeland. Their history in Manitoba is built on the qualities of hard work, thrift, dedication to principles and a desire to help others. It is the part of my heritage of which I am most proud and which I will endeavour to uphold in my actions within these Chambers.

While I was campaigning in Rossmere, a number of constituents who know me and my background were curious about my reason for running. Like many of you in this Assembly, I came here as a result of my belief in public service to the people of Manitoba. I assure you that this is not because of some misguided, starry-eyed idealism. I do believe that we can make a difference as a group if we look forward and work toward common goals, grounded on principles we hold to be true.

Having been influenced by the social concerns articulated by leaders in the social democratic movement and by my late father, Reverend Victor Toews, a minister of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Rossmere, my political philosophies may not square in all respects with what political scientists consider to be within the mainstream of Progressive Conservatism.

However, I do wish to acknowledge the strong influence of two present members of this House in shaping my political views. These two men, in my opinion, have demonstrated by their actions how we can be both progressive and conservative. They have done this by channelling their concerns for the social well-being of the people of Manitoba into the context of fiscal responsibility. In doing so, the people of this province continue to look forward to the security of our social programs that we, as Manitobans and as Canadians, value highly. The Premier and the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) have both



demonstrated by their actions and roles that decisions, although not immediately popular or generally acceptable, must be made with a view to the future and to the well-being of not only the present generation of Manitobans, but for those to come.

While I was a director of constitutional law with the Department of Justice, I had my first opportunity to develop a program which would be of direct benefit to a great number of Manitobans. We set out to reduce the number of deaths resulting from drunk driving. Madam Speaker, we know more people in North America die as a result of drunk drivers than at the hands of murderers.

My honourable colleague from Brandon West, who was then the Attorney General, gave me the inspiration and the latitude to develop and implement Manitoba's tough drinking and driving laws. What impressed me was my colleague's nonpartisan approach to the matter. When we introduced the legislation the legal community said it would not stand up in court. I am pleased to report the legislation has withstood every legal challenge, and it has significantly reduced the number of deaths caused by drunk drivers.

I was privileged to be a participant in the Meech Lake negotiations in Ottawa in 1990. I recall a particularly tense negotiation between our Premier and another First Minister. It was late at night, and there was a great sense of urgency and uncertainty.

I remember thinking the future of Canada might be in the hands of these two individuals. I looked at the Premier and realized how human he was and how heavy was the responsibility we had placed on his shoulders. I was struck by how much he sacrificed in terms of his family life and his own professional career. There was no personal glory in that room. What I witnessed was a man who cares greatly about his province, someone who wants to give his children and those of other Manitobans a future.

In 1990 I ran as the Progressive Conservative candidate in Elmwood, which was subsequently won by the current member. I then pursued a career in the private sector and was later approached to run in the constituency of Rossmere, which is, in my opinion, the

most unique constituency in the province. It is the people and the community within its boundaries which set it apart.

It is populated by two major influxes of immigrants, the first immediately following World War II and those who have come in recent years. Many immigrants arrived from war-torn countries of Europe, including the Dutch, Germans, Mennonites, Poles and Ukrainians.

They looked to Canada to re-establish their lives. It is truly amazing what they have accomplished. Many arrived in Canada with very little money and few possessions. They struggled to find gainful employment and to learn a new language. As I grew up among them, their fierce determination and pride was a constant source of inspiration.

\* (1640)

The second wave of newcomers in Rossmere includes among others the Sikhs who have arrived from India. During the election I had the privilege of attending a sod-turning ceremony for a new temple that they are constructing on McLeod Avenue. They are representative of other new groups of immigrants determined to make Manitoba their home. We must continue to welcome all industrious hard-working people to assist in building a strong Manitoba.

I was fortunate in the composition of my campaign team. Not only did it represent every major ethnic group within the constituency, but they also represented every political stripe. What drew us all together was a solid platform laid out by the Premier.

Our platform contained two distinct yet complementary planks. We are progressive in that we are ready to face and adapt to the future to ensure the programs and policies of government provide the necessary services and support to the citizens of this province. We are conservative because we realize that unless we are fiscally responsible the very underpinning of the social programs we cherish will crumble. It is with this same pragmatic yet responsible approach to government that I wish to assist in resolving the concerns that face Manitobans presently.

This government has taken very important steps to ensure that good quality health care in this province remains a priority. The contribution of the present Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to this priority continues to be positive and significant.

I am encouraged by the appointment of the Desjardins commission which has the mandate to examine the impact of gambling upon the people of our province. The action taken by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) to help make our neighbourhoods safe, and the Economic Strategy of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) are fast becoming role models for governments across Canada regardless of political affiliation. Yet, we have a long way to go.

Again, Madam Speaker, I look forward to assisting this House in addressing those concerns.

As I begin my role as Minister of Labour and Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board and Civil Service Commission, I read their statements of purpose. Since I have been speaking of principles throughout this speech, I thought it would be useful to announce the principles of my departments for the members of the House as a reminder of what we are about.

The Department of Labour is dedicated to serve Manitobans by promoting safety, health and fair and equitable treatment in the workplace, enhancing public safety, fostering a stable labour-relations climate and supporting workplace training and adjustment. We will serve Manitobans efficiently, courteously and effectively. We will consult equally with labour, management and other client groups. We will provide information and support to our clients to enable them to act responsibly in respect to fairness, safety, health and equity.

To achieve this purpose and these goals, the department will subscribe to the principles of accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public funds. We will recognize that staff are our most important resource and the key to achieving our purpose, the purpose of serving the public of Manitoba. We will develop a flexible organization which is

responsive to changing needs and circumstances and promote consistently the principle that safe workplaces, fair employment practices and harmonious labour relations are essential to the economic and social well-being of Manitobans.

As I turned to the pages of the policy manual for the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba, I discovered its mission statement offers a commitment to the public consistent with those of this government. Its mission statement commits the board, "To provide superior compensation services to Manitoba workers and employers in a manner that is sensitive, responsive and effective . . . in order to minimize the impact of workplace injuries."

Similarly, the Civil Service Commission has established definitions of its stating that wherever practical they should be in a position to steer rather than row and has positioned its core functions based on various principles, emphasizing service and policy direction and anticipating various changes for the future.

Madam Speaker, with these examples of purpose and goals before me, I look forward to working with the public service, in my departments, with the public we all serve and with the members of this House. Lastly, I wish to thank my family and my campaign team for all their support during their campaign. I look forward to this session. I look forward to working with the members.

Thank you.

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, I want to begin by congratulating you on your appointment as Speaker. I wish you much wisdom, tolerance and patience in your esteemed position. In a previous speech in this Chamber, I recommended an elected Speaker, and I look forward to speaking on a private members' bill or even a government bill to that effect.

I want to congratulate the Pages on being chosen to serve here, and I hope you find this experience interesting and educational. Congratulations are also in order to the government members who were re-elected,

particularly the ones who we did not expect to see re-elected and who, therefore, denied us the opportunity to form government.

Congratulations to my colleagues in my caucus who were re-elected, particularly the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) who was elected for the eighth time. I want to welcome and congratulate my new caucus colleagues, the member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk), the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford), the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale), the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) and the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen).

Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to be back here to represent the constituency of Burrows, and therefore, I want to thank everyone who voted for the New Democratic Party. I also want to thank the 300 and more volunteers who worked on the campaign, especially my wife, Carol, who did a lot of cooking for the campaign workers and also my son Nathan who foot canvassed three polls and our daughter Tanissa who worked on phones, did office work and recruited about 10 friends to drop literature in mailboxes.

There was a considerable vote of confidence for the New Democratic Party and its policies since we received 67.7 percent of the votes in Burrows. The only member of this Chamber who received a higher percentage was the member for Steinbach (Mr. Driedger). We both got higher percentages than our Leaders, so I would suggest that the Premier should be concerned. Maybe the member for Steinbach wants to become the next Leader of the Conservative Party. However, my Leader does not need to worry. I support my Leader, and I have great confidence in my Leader. We want him to lead this party in the next provincial election and be the Premier of the province after the next general election.

In three elections, I have not won less than half of all polls. The second time in a row, I won every poll, including the advanced polls, the hospital votes and the prisoners' votes. I want to particularly thank the voters in Ivan Franko Manor, where I won every vote except four and 94 percent of the votes, which was an improvement over 1990, when I received 83 percent in that poll.

I am very fortunate to represent an inner-city constituency which is only a 15-minute drive from the Legislature to home. I can drive around the entire circumference of Burrows constituency in 25 minutes, and I have the luxury of being home every evening for supper if I so choose. [interjection] I certainly appreciate it because I know that rural members and northern members make much greater personal sacrifices than those of us who live in Winnipeg.

Over the past four and a half years I have come to know my constituency much better, and I would like to spend some time describing Burrows constituency and to make some observations which, I believe, have implications for how we view our society and the choices that this Conservative government will have to make.

The Health Sciences Centre dominates the southeast corner of Burrows constituency. It occupies 32 acres, employs 5,000 people plus 750 physicians who have hospital privileges. There are 860 beds, 30,000 patients a year, and 3,900 babies begin life there. Madam Speaker, 485,000 people are seen or treated in one year. The total budget for 1994-95 is \$262 million. It is really a small city in itself.

If you have never been to the underground tunnel system, I recommend you pay a visit since it is interesting and gives an idea of the size of the Health Sciences complex. The tunnel totals one mile in length. I discovered it in January of 1994 when our son Nathan was hospitalized due to a benign cyst on his spleen. I am pleased to say that he received splendid care at the Children's Hospital for which we were all extremely grateful.

I also had occasion to visit a doctor at the Health Sciences in the last year. My caucus colleagues will probably find this as no surprise, but I was tested for sleep apnoea. I have been known to occasionally nod off in caucus meetings to the amusement of my colleagues.

Many of my constituents either are employed by the Health Sciences Centre or are students there which makes door knocking quite fascinating. I heard many concerns about the declining quality of care from

patients, family members of patients and front-line hospital staff, particularly nurses and housekeeping staff. I heard it so often and so consistently that it was quite disturbing. I also heard that people were opposed to hiring American consultants to give us advice and are opposed to bringing the two-tiered American system to Canada. This would mean a superior system for those who could afford to pay expensive health care premiums and an inferior health care system for those who cannot. We can only hope that this government is also listening to Manitobans and will stop the drift to a two-tiered system that happens every time a service is deinsured or another drug is delisted or Pharmacare premiums are increased.

\* (1650)

One concern I have about the Health Sciences Centre is that they continue to buy up houses in the neighbourhood for parking or new buildings. It is a concern because in order to have a vibrant city we need people living in the inner city. It is safer to have people on the streets, particularly at night, rather than having an inner city wasteland such as many American cities have. Also, we should be discouraging, not encouraging, the flight to the suburbs and bedroom communities because of the commuting involved and the harmful effect this has on our environment, to say nothing of the costs to the City of Winnipeg to which ex-urbanites contribute nothing.

Burrows constituency continues to lose population as old houses are torn down and not replaced by infill housing. The main reason they are not being replaced by infill housing is that the federal Conservative government eliminated funding for social housing. This was severely criticized by the Liberal opposition of the day but, given the chance to correct this, they have not restored the funding. This provincial Conservative government has almost stopped funding new construction for public housing, and there is no infill housing program. The only exception is the nongovernment organization, Habitat for Humanity, which built four houses on Ross Avenue last summer and will build five houses on Ross Avenue this summer. I am looking forward to being on the work site again this year, and I will try not to fall off a scaffold. As important as habitat houses are to their

new homeowners, the number of houses being built is a drop in the bucket compared to the need.

Other institutions, in addition to the Health Sciences Centre, are buying houses and tearing them down for parking lots, particularly Ukrainian institutions. The result is whole neighbourhoods of parking lots, empty lots, rental houses and apartments. Homeowners or people who can afford to own homes have fled, leaving the poor who are caught in the treadmill of constantly moving from one inadequate house or apartment to another. Frequently people on social assistance are spending up to 50 percent of their income on rent, because the rent guideline on social assistance is inadequate to rent decent, affordable housing.

The Burrows constituency also illustrates the flight of good-paying jobs not only from the inner city but from Manitoba and even Canada. In the past the largest employer in Burrows would certainly have been the Canadian Pacific railway. Today some residents continue to be employed by CP Rail at the marshalling yards. Like this Legislative Building, the yards were built during an era of expansion and prosperity when Winnipeggers believed that this city would be the Chicago of the North. When the marshalling yards were constructed they were the largest in the world and consisted of 120 miles of track and room for 10,000 railway cars.

As the Free Trade Agreement and the North American Free Trade Agreement have begun the economic integration of our continent and the ties that bind Canada together as an economic unit begin to become unravelled, the railways have followed all the patterns of both continentalism and capitalism. As the trade barriers have come down the railways have moved from the east-west patterns that have existed since the completion of the transcontinental railway in 1885 to north-south routes. At the same time, they are practising the worst aspects of increasingly unbridled capitalism by downsizing, which in plain language means laying off employees and contracting out, whose purpose is the purchase of cheaper nonunion labour.

CP Rail along with other companies are increasing their profitability which for them means closing branchlines and getting out of everything that is

unprofitable, or more likely anything that does not produce the maximum return on investment. Completely gone is any sense of corporate responsibility to employees or to small rural communities who are losing their railways and their grain elevators and who will be forced to spend money on upgraded roads so trucks can haul grain.

Corporations and the federal government apparently do not care that this is a transfer in costs, from a wealthy corporation who at their founding were endowed with 25 million acres of land, to rural communities and their taxpayers who will pay the cost of upgrading roads and the environment since railways are far more energy efficient than trucks, and all of us will bear the cost of global warming.

My constituents in Burrows and small towns in rural Manitoba are the first to pay the price of branchline abandonment as they lose their jobs. These are union jobs at good rates of pay, and they will be replaced by Mcjobs at low rates of pay or no job at all.

There are a few recreation facilities in Burrows constituency. At Old Exhibition Park there is Krupp stadium, Old Ex Arena and Centennial Swimming Pool. There are three community centres. Boyd Park which is always struggling to stay open with a small core of dedicated volunteers. There is the larger Sinclair Park Community Centre, which has two hockey rinks, six ball diamonds and two soccer fields at Robertson School.

In summer there are 525 people in organized sports, namely baseball, softball and soccer. In winter 300 people are enrolled in hockey and ringette. A seniors club with 25 members meets there, and gymnastics involves 80 to 100 people. All of this is run with the help of a hard-working executive of 20 people. Burton Cummings Community Centre has one hockey rink, two ball diamonds and a large gymnasium which is home to a successful winter indoor cricket league with 10 teams. They are a thriving centre with 20 volunteers and 12 board members. They have operated in the black for eight years in a row in spite of subsidizing hockey and baseball to a greater extent than any other community centre, as far as they know.

Probably the best known recreation facility in Burrows constituency is the North Branch of the YM-YWCA of Winnipeg. It offers wide programs such as swimming lessons, nursery school, life skills, gymnastics, a weight room, exercise bikes, before-and-after school-age child care and a fine option staff person. In addition, there is an active seniors club, a large karate club, aikido and the Sunny Mountain Day Care Centre. Until March of this year there was a very successful program called Night Hoops, which saw young people using the gymnasium until three o'clock in the morning.

This recreation facility and other programs attract a large number of users from the north end and West Kildonan but also from other parts of the city. It was officially opened in the early 1950s, and the swimming pool was completed in the 1960s. In the mid-1980s a major addition was completed which joined the pool and the gymnasium and added new office space, classrooms and a kitchen.

Regrettably, the YM-YWCA of Winnipeg has announced that this facility will be closing on June 30. This is devastating news for the thousands of individuals who use the North Y. And sadly, the board and CEO downtown gave no warning other than laying off the North Y branch manager and the advisory board.

There was no attempt to turn around the financial situation, to encourage new members or to even consult with the community at large. It was a bureaucratic, callous, deceitful decision based completely on the economic situation of the downtown Y and pressure from their bank, to whom they owe \$4 million.

But we are not going to go down without a fight. A new community group has organized to operate the facility, and they have widespread community support including 2,000 people who signed their petition.

The North Y Community Centre must be kept open at all costs, even if it means occupying the building in order to prevent the doors from being locked.

Why have I spent so much time talking about recreation facilities? There are two main reasons. One

is that recreation is important to young people and keeps them busy, off the streets and out of trouble. The other reason is to point out that while there are millions of dollars for a new arena there is precious little for community facilities like the North Y which may need \$200,000 for renovations and improvements, and child care centres have no money for capital improvements in their budgets.

This Tory government talks about making tough choices, but they have made the wrong choice when it came to choosing between funding community facilities and funding a facility to enable multimillion dollar hockey players to continue playing. They chose to support the rich instead of the vast majority of Manitobans.

Door knocking in Burrows constituency can be a wonderful experience with delightful surprises. It can also be a depressing experience with scenes that rival Dickens' novels. One of the delightful experiences in the last election was discovering White Flower House and Sister Claire Jobin who runs it. I helped recruit a couple of volunteers for the ESL program for immigrant seniors. Regrettably, the house was subject to basement flooding, and Sister Claire recently moved.

There are many gracious people who invited me in for tea, which I sometimes accepted, or who invited me in for a drink, which I always refused. Their feelings were hurt when I said no to a drink, so I told them: You know, I could have a drink with you and no harm would be done, but you know, the next house I go to, they would probably be Tories, and they would say, Martindale was here and he was drunk, so I always declined.

I was given homemade pasta or bread, which delighted my wife. At another home, I had a long and interesting conversation with a woman who has the gift of faith healing. The saddest situations I ran into were drinking and sniffing parties. I found it very disturbing to find a living room full of young people who appeared to be about 18 to 25 years old, all of whom were drinking or sniffing. I believe this is the result of the hopelessness and despair that comes from having no hope of getting a job.

On one street, I spoke to a homeowner who identified two gang houses. On the same street, I went into a house which had been subdivided into three suites. The smell of sniff in the hallway was overwhelming. I went upstairs and knocked on a door; no one answered. There were about 15 pairs of runners outside the door. There were also three pairs of brand-new skis and two pairs of brand-new ski boots, including downhill boots. I reported what I saw to the police, since people in that neighbourhood cannot afford to go downhill skiing. They are simply too poor. In fact, what I saw was the result of poverty.

Going door to door, I also heard great concern about violence, particularly youth violence. At a press conference at Rossbrook House, on the topic of poverty, Sister Leslie, one of the directors, said poverty is structural violence. This kind of structural violence is grinding my constituents into the dust, driving them into a life of despair, crime, drinking and sniffing.

\* (1700)

For everyone who is oppressed, there is an oppressor. This Conservative government, which thinks that Manitoba is strong because they cannot see the weak and the vulnerable and the destitute in our midst, is one of the reasons that the inner city has such high rates of poverty. There have been no increases in provincial social assistance in two years and four months. The minimum wage has only been increased once in the last four years.

This Conservative government should be ashamed to be the child poverty capital of Canada while, at the same time, offering \$37 million for a new arena for the Winnipeg Jets. This is socialism for the rich when it comes to players and owners of the hockey team and a subsidy to those Winnipeggers affluent enough to be able to buy tickets to a hockey game. This is in addition to the public subsidy through the business entertainment deduction for business people who buy box seats and rinkside seats.

From my door knocking and conversations in my constituency, I estimate that at least 90 percent of the people in Burrows are opposed to any public funding for a new arena. Since the election, 100 percent of the

constituents who have phoned me on this issue have been opposed to public funding.

This government has nothing to offer the poor, not even a ray of hope, but they are quite willing to subsidize private enterprise to build an arena and subsidize the salaries of million-dollar hockey players and multimillion-dollar owners. Not only are their priorities mixed up, but they are morally bankrupt as well.

Madam Speaker, for the past 10 years, it has been my privilege to be the youth group leader at my church. I recently asked each of them to list 10 problems in our society and their solutions. Here is what they said: The most frequent response said that unemployment, job cuts, homelessness and poverty were the biggest problem. This was followed by crime, including youth gangs, violence, and people being jumped for their coats. The next largest response was the Jets, followed by racism, prejudice and discrimination. This was tied with education, specifically, not enough room in colleges, the cost of education and courses being cut. Two responses identified the deficit and debt which was the same number of responses for better health care and car accidents. The single response problems consisted of potholes, stereotyping, peer pressure, gambling, lack of trust, drugs and alcoholism, jumping to conclusions, the need for bike and rollerblade paths and keeping cats with their owners. One of the more intriguing problems identified was the need for military school for 14-year-old males, and there are too many stupid chemistry labs.

Regrettably, my youth group is a little short on solutions to the problems. In fact, not one mentioned that the only way to keep the Jets in Winnipeg two weeks ago would have been more public funding.

One suggestion for the problem of violence was to pray for the offender. This comes close to the Hebrew concept of justice which was to restore the offender to their rightful place in society. Our society needs more restorative justice and less punitive justice, which obviously does not work, to rehabilitate offenders. Other suggestions for the problem of violence included more police and creating more jobs for young people in order to keep kids busy and off the street.

Solutions to the problems of unemployment and hunger included sharing wealth, Winnipeg Harvest, donating clothing and shelter, and creating more businesses. The problems of discriminating and stereotypes can be overcome by getting to know each other's cultures and by treating everyone equally.

The high cost of education should not be borne by students since they cannot afford post-secondary education. The cost should be lowered since everyone has a right to an education. There should be more professors in university, not fewer. The debt can be paid off by keeping spending down to a minimum. When there are not enough jobs, create some. The problem of gambling can be addressed by reducing the number of VLTs. Bike paths should be created for cyclists and rollerbladers. Cats should be kept on a leash. Military school for 14-year-old males should be made compulsory. The solution suggested for too many chemistry labs is to ban Edwards. This referred to Mr. Edwards, the chemistry teacher, not the former member for St. James.

I want to commend these fine young people for their perceptions and to thank them for the privilege of being their teacher.

Madam Speaker, these are very interesting lists. They show that the primary concern of students in Grades 10 to 12 is unemployment, and concerned they should be. Although the unemployment rate in Manitoba appears to be relatively low compared to other provinces, there are reasons for that. The main one is that when people are faced with a lack of jobs in Manitoba, they leave for other provinces or the United States to seek employment. They do not want to leave, they feel forced to leave and the jobs that are left are increasingly part time and at lower wages than in the past. One can hardly blame young people for fearing for their own future.

Their second largest concern was crime. I am not sure why unless it is because sometimes they too are victims. I see a relation between high unemployment and crime. Any government that is serious about tackling the problem of crime had best also be serious about creating jobs since that is the only long-term solution.

Today in Question Period the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) referred to a supposedly new program called Taking Charge! Taking Charge! was announced at a press conference with the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy last September. They have appointed a board of directors, I understand, but as far as I know there is no storefront office. It has not been opened yet. We are still waiting since last September, and I doubt that very many people are going to get jobs as the result of the so-called initiative called Taking Charge!

For example, when the minister had her press conference, the media asked how many jobs will be created. Are there any goals for job creation, and neither minister, the federal minister nor the provincial minister, could come up with an answer because there are no job creation goals with the Taking Charge! program. Taking Charge! is all about people assessing themselves, setting goals, being referred to other agencies and counselling. It is not about job creation, in spite of what the minister said today, and in spite of this as being a solution to the problem of poverty, it clearly is not. It shows how bankrupt this government is of ideas when it comes to job creation.

I believe, and I said so on many doorsteps when people raised the issue of crime during the election, that Canadians have a choice to make. We can go the route of American society, which has severe punishment for crime, including the three strikes and you are out rule in many states, whereby third offenders receive 25 years in prison.

The other severe punishment is the death penalty. The United States has the highest rate of incarceration of all western industrialized countries. If longer sentences and putting more people in jail actually worked, then the United States would be the safest country in the world. But it is definitely not. It has, in addition to the highest rates of crime and incarceration, the highest rates of poverty and the greatest gap between the rich and the poor.

The other choice we could make, the other choice that this government could make, is to follow western European countries which have lower rates of crime and of incarceration. They also have lower rates of

unemployment, lower rates of poverty, and greater social equity. We can only hope that this government will give up on its tough-on-crime rhetoric and exchange it for getting tough on poverty, getting serious about job creation and creating a more equitable distribution of wealth.

\* (1710)

I hope that this government will lead Manitoba in the direction of full employment and greater social and economic equity, but I doubt it. But I want them to understand the link between poverty and crime. As more and more Manitobans are forced to live in poverty, more and more people become desperate and have nothing to lose.

I vividly remember one of the boys in my boys' group at North End Community Ministry who committed break-and-enters in order to get into the Youth Centre. At the Youth Centre he had a clean, warm bed and three good meals a day, something he did not have at home. It is much cheaper for the government to support people adequately in their own homes than to fund expensive institutions.

Madam Speaker, I support the amendment to the Speech from the Throne, which was moved by the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer). It has outlined the promises that this government has made, including during the recent election, which they have already broken, the most notable of which being a promise to commit no more than \$10 million to a new arena, which within days of the election, they had already broken by offering at least \$37 million, and it may be more before the day is over.

This government does not have a strategy for a healthy child policy that they have announced. They had the opportunity during the reading of the throne speech. They do not have a strategy on child poverty in spite of the answers by the minister today in Question Period, and their economic performance is dismal as recorded in this amendment to the Speech from the Throne.

So I commend it to all honourable members, and I look forward to hearing as many speeches as I can,



particularly from the new members, the new members in the government caucus and particularly the new members in my caucus.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina):** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to have this opportunity to stand before you today as a representative of the people of Pembina constituency to respond to the Speech from the Throne.

I am both honoured and humbled to be among such respected Manitobans as I see before me, and I look forward to working in co-operation with all members of this Chamber in continuing the evolution of prosperity for all people of this the greatest province in Canada, our Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, please allow me to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to you and my esteemed colleagues for your assistance and consideration to me and the other new members of this Chamber. I am sure I speak for all new members of this House when I say that the outpouring of assistance, advice and warm welcomes from our seasoned peers has been greatly appreciated and will prove invaluable as we embark on our duties and obligations of representing our respective constituents. Thank you all.

I would also like to acknowledge the much appreciated and significant services of our Pages, and to say that I am sure that this session will prove both a unique and enjoyable experience for you as I am sure it will be for us all. I am looking forward to sharing with you the unfolding of this chapter in our history.

I would especially like to express my sincere thanks to the people of Pembina who have entrusted me with the honour of being their representative in the government of Manitoba. I am humbled by the overwhelming confidence that Pembina constituents have placed in me to be their voice in government. This is reflective of the overwhelming confidence Manitobans have in this government and our Leader to continue along the course of prosperity that this throne speech charts as we approach a new century and a new era in the life of our province.

From the beautiful hills of the Pembina Valley with its picturesque landscape allowing excellent skiing and recreational opportunities and moving eastward to some of the richest farmland in the world, growing some of the finest potatoes in North America, we see the Pembina constituency in all of its diversity and welcome you to come and visit us.

International companies have chosen to locate in the Pembina constituency developing high-tech equipment, including some of the most modern recreational vehicles to some of the most up-to-date farm equipment. This tremendous expansion in industry has been made possible by the ingenuity of the local businessmen and then brought to completion by the greatest resource of the area, its people. Hard work is still the hallmark to our success. The Pembina constituency is on the cutting edge of technology but does not sacrifice the traditional values upon which the openness to this future is built.

My immediate predecessor, Mr. Don Orchard, whom many of you have learned to know and appreciate, has represented the interests of the Pembina constituency and the people of Manitoba with ability and distinction over the past 18 years. His advice and support has been crucial in my being able to stand before you today as a new representative of this great constituency. I want to take this opportunity to thank him publicly in this House for his excellent record of public service and acknowledge our gratitude for the many achievements in government and policy formation which he has undertaken. All of us owe him our gratitude and best wishes for the future.

I am proud to be a part of a government with a proven foresight that has been demonstrated time and again by this team of visionaries. The vision of where we want to be and how we want to grow together as a province has been established through our recent democratic process. The people of Manitoba have spoken. They have told this government, yes, you have grasped our vision, you can see where you want to be tomorrow and we expect you to have the political will today to keep Manitoba strong. This is our duty as a democracy. This is our responsibility as a government, and this is our obligation to the sons and daughters of Manitoba today and who are yet unborn.

This throne speech is about a new unity, a common bond and a shared vision of Manitobans. It is about the family which is Manitoba. It is about ensuring that our husbands and wives have the best possible health care as it is required. It is about our sons and daughters receiving the best possible education as they grow to meet the challenges of their developing hopes and dreams. It is about our parents and grandparents receiving the dignity, respect and quality care that they so greatly deserve. It is about all Manitobans having opportunity to grow and to flourish, secure in the knowledge that their province is built solidly from the ground up and able to withstand the pressures of the coming years.

The Speech from the Throne is about you and me and the family which we are all a part of—Manitoba.

Victor Hugo once said, and I quote: People do not lack strength; they lack will. I submit to you that the key to the strength of Manitoba is due to the tremendous will of Manitobans and this government to make Manitoba stronger still. Our will as people and as a province springs from our care and concern for those near and dear to our hearts. Our will has been and continues to be the protection of our vital services and the revitalization of our economy.

This government recognized, when first entrusted by Manitobans with the administration of the province in 1988, that one of the first priorities was getting spending under control without increasing taxes. Unlike our neighbours to the immediate west of us—and we wish them well in their coming election—we refuse to balance our budgets by raising major taxes.

I am especially proud to be a part of a government that has been able to weather the worst worldwide recession since the 1930s and yet has kept its commitment of holding the line on taxes. No increase in any major taxes for eight consecutive budgets is a record enviable of any jurisdiction in North America.

Almost every single additional program dollar was directed to spending priorities of health care, education and family services. Capital spending on productive assets such as highways, health care facilities, schools and other infrastructure increased to record levels.

Deficits were lowered and finally eliminated, and to show the wisdom of this approach, more people are working.

These achievements did not come about because of any one individual or group. It was a Manitoba family affair, if you will, with everyone doing their part to not only keep our house in order but contributing to make it a better place to live for everyone.

Under the leadership of the head of the household, Premier Filmon, Manitoba has built a model of responsible government comparable to any government in North America. Because of this leadership and foresight, we are poised, ready for the future, with much work to be done in order to continue this positive growth and evolution. The course has been charted with this throne speech and the diligence of this government of recent sessions of this Legislature. This year, with the support of the members of the family of Manitoba and, I hope, all members of this Chamber, we are laying the foundations for our future. We are building a stronger home for all of us to live in, and we are setting a solid foundation that will last for the benefit of many generations to come.

With the will of this government and the support of Manitobans, this year will see the pouring of the foundation of our new house, including the first balanced budget in over 20 years, without any increase in major taxes, the largest budgeted surplus in Manitoba history and the strongest balanced budget legislation in the nation to ensure that Manitobans will enjoy all the advantages and opportunities of deficit-free government into the future, and legislation prohibition against any increases in income taxes, sales taxes and payroll taxes unless Manitobans first give their approval in a province-wide referendum, and a manageable plan to eliminate the province's outstanding debt.

The groundwork has been completed and the building blocks of our new house are as Manitoba strong as the Tyndall stone of this very Legislature. Manitoba's income taxes have been brought under control and have moved from among the highest in the country in 1987 to among the lowest now. Tax breaks have been targeted to those most in need. For example,

low-income families and seniors actually pay lower taxes in real terms today than they did in 1987.

Personal disposable income in Manitoba is projected to exceed the national rate in 1994 and again this year. Unprecedented confidence in our resource industries: mineral exploration has increased by over 500 percent in the last two years. Impressive growth in new manufacturing investment to record levels over the past six years. Manitoba is leading the country in areas such as investment, housing starts, and export growth, which means more jobs for Manitobans and among the lowest unemployment rates in the nation.

\* (1720)

While the Liberals in Ottawa have cut more than \$5 billion from health, education, and social assistance, the Filmon team has managed to direct 90 percent of its additional program spending over the last seven years, more than \$1 billion into these vital services. This is the solid structure for the new home for our Manitoba family; these are the pillars that will support our house.

Balancing the budget without increasing taxes while investing more in health and social services and creating a more dynamic economy that generates jobs and new wealth, we have the will to achieve secure and satisfying jobs for everyone who is able to work and who values the dignity of employment. We have the demonstrated ability to manage our public finances responsibly and keep taxes under control. We also have the obligation to our husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters for our health care system to be high quality, accessible and well managed. We want our children to be equipped with the skills they need to meet the challenges of today and be productive and healthy citizens in the future. We need our streets, neighbourhoods, and playgrounds to be safe day and night for young and old alike. We are obligated to each other to honour and respect the rich multicultural mosaic, which is our heritage, and we desire a full and equal partnership in a strong and united Canada.

This throne speech and the course charted by this government contain some ways that we can afford to keep food on our table, a roof over our heads, and

health, happiness, and prosperity for all of our family to enjoy. These include getting entrepreneurs and companies more capital to work with, giving employees more education and training, promoting higher educational standards, investing in the economic infrastructure of the province, attracting private sector investment, encouraging companies to export their products, developing a long-term outlook, encouraging innovation, focusing on key growth sectors, not raising taxes, and lowering nonproductive interest payments by balancing the budget and eliminating the debt.

Although these measures will greatly assist in the overall economic outlook of our province, the real worth of Manitoba lies in not any one of the sum of these initiatives but in the same thing that makes a house a home—the members of our family, the citizens of Manitoba.

The skills and competencies upon which the progress of society rests are developed in our families, our neighbourhoods and in our schools, colleges, universities and other educational and training establishments. My experience within the education system as a music teacher for many years and as chairman of our local school board for the past decade has afforded me a firsthand view of the challenges that we face and are fundamental to our growth and adaptation as a learning society. While we greatly value our education system, we also believe that our children need to be better prepared for the challenges of the 21st Century. Our challenge is to be continually innovative in education. We intend to keep Manitoba at the forefront in the field of education reform.

Yet our goal is simple, to ensure that students can read, write, compute and think at a high level. By enhancing the role of parents and making educational choices for their children, we are putting the family back into the institution of our children's education. This way we will know how well our education system is serving our children and assisting them in meeting the challenges of their future through the use of standards that provide essential feedback to parents and their children.

I know personally that Pembina Valley, Western and Garden Valley School Divisions are constantly looking

at ways to improve the delivery of education through advances in technology to keep in step with the world.

Despite the opinions of some, the facts speak for themselves. During the years of the Filmon government education spending has increased 28 percent, when in fact our enrollment in the province has decreased by 1.3 percent. This government is dedicated to our children, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills they will need to succeed.

We must try to create partnerships with parents, taxpayers, students, educators, industry and the community to ensure that our education system remains vital and growing, interwoven with the fabric of our society.

This government has led the country in ensuring that criminal offenders are held accountable for their actions, whether it be violence against women and children, crimes from young offenders or those guilty of impaired driving. We are determined to bring about changes that will positively affect the safety and security of our citizens.

When we have gone as far as we can in our provincial jurisdiction, we will diligently lobby the federal government to enact legislation to further protect the safety of our family and friends in this province and across Canada.

With our No. 1 priority of health care we will continue to promote a greater wellness, better quality of life, reduced disability, and the provision of care closer to home for all Manitobans. Since 1988 the Filmon government has increased spending in health care by about 40 percent, from \$1.3 billion to \$1.8 billion, while our population grew by only 2.7 percent. We already devote more of our budget to health care than any other province in Canada, but we believe that is not enough. The key to quality health care is not to simply spend more but to spend smarter, and we are already well on the way to making our already high-quality health care system better again.

This will be further realized by the savings from the interest that was paid for our debt, savings which will

be generated because of the will of this government to pass balanced budget legislation.

We will make provisions that future governments will not mortgage our children's future with the tax-and-spend practices which were the infamous hallmarks of former administrations.

Health care resources are being redirected from costly institutional services to more effective community-based services and prevention strategies. Building the capacity of each generation to live as healthy and productive citizens lies at the heart of this government's will and vision, which translates to a stronger Manitoba for all citizens.

I once heard a remark that farming is the brilliant notion of going partners with the planet for the benefit of both. Nowhere in Canada is that truer than right here in Manitoba. My background in business and farming has shown me that the partnership with our planet has been the historical backbone of our economy. It is a partnership which now faces new challenges.

With the elimination of the Crow rate for grain transportation by rail, we will need to look at alternate markets and means of transportation. This government has developed an agricultural vision for the 1990s, a plan to guide the agrifood sector into the 21st Century.

In the tradition of this government, in thorough consultation with all stakeholders, this plan was developed with the input of farmers, produce organizations, researchers, agribusiness, consumers and other levels of government.

With the shift to higher-value commodities, 1994 farm cash receipts held steady at record levels of \$2.4 billion, an increase of 11 percent over the previous two years. It is only through innovative measures by farmers that we can have positive results such as these. In order to survive the changing global climate of the 21st Century, we need to be innovative and flexible. For the sake of our children and our communities, we will have to provide them with the opportunities of employment which are challenging and lucrative.

In my 26 years of farming I have grown many kinds of crops, raised hogs and kept a cattle feedlot. I have personally tried new crops, such as dill oil, monarda and coriander seed, and have been involved in exporting commodities such as beans, peas and sunflowers throughout the continent and overseas. I know first-hand the risk, the rewards and challenges facing the agricultural industry in Manitoba.

For the future of our communities and for the prosperity of our children, this government recognizes the challenges which face our agricultural industry. Success requires planning, vision and foresight. The benefits of what we sow today, we shall reap tomorrow.

\* (1730)

This government has the experience and ingenuity to keep Manitoba agriculture growing. We strongly believe that we can do anything at a world-class level right here in Manitoba. Manitobans are proving that every day.

The Filmon team has the vision and the leadership Manitoba needs to conquer challenges, to build new opportunities and to put us on the road to new prosperity.

I support the Speech from the Throne for these and many other reasons. I invite all members of this Chamber who care about the family of Manitoba in the strong home which we are building together to have the will to support these initiatives as well. Thank you.

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to get up this evening and speak on the—it seems like it must be the eight or ninth Speech from the Throne that I have been involved with. Again, as my other colleagues have, I would like to welcome you in your election as Speaker and wish you all the best and tell you that we on this side of the House will do our best, and I will do my best to maintain a level of decorum that will speak positively to the important work that this Legislative Assembly does. I would hope that other members of the Legislature will heed your words and participate in a mannerly and a more disciplined way.

I would like again to welcome the Pages back to their second term in the House and know that they will continue to do the excellent job that they have performed for us as past Pages.

I would also like to welcome the new and returning members of the Legislature. There are a number on both sides of the House in the government benches and the opposition benches. The interesting thing I find about the representation that we find in the Legislature between the two recognized parties is that, as others of my caucus colleagues have mentioned today, there is only one party in this Legislature which truly represents the people in Manitoba in all of its multifaceted nature and that is the party that I represent, the New Democratic Party.

The reasons that I say that it is the most representative party in this Legislature is because we are the only party which truly does represent every section of the province of Manitoba. We represent the entire North in the province of Manitoba. We represent the Parkland in the person of the MLA for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), whose re-election on April 25 was greeted with great pizzazz from our side, I will tell you, and will represent not only Swan River but will continue the strong representation from the constituency of Dauphin that has been represented by New Democrats for a very long period of time. We represent, as I stated, the Interlake.

We represent the city of Winnipeg in all of its facets. We represent within the city of Winnipeg the core constituencies of downtown Winnipeg. We also represent the second ring of older communities that have elements of the core area in them but also have suburban elements such as the constituency I represent, Wellington, the member for Wolseley's (Ms. Friesen) constituency and, again, the new member for the Legislature, the member for St. James (Ms. Mihychuk). Again, another wonderful election on April 25, bringing the constituency of St. James again back to the Legislature as a New Democrat.

We also represent constituencies in the province in this city of Winnipeg that are newer, that are still urban but have even more suburban components to it. Those again are two new MLAs, the MLA for Osborne (Ms.

McGifford) and the MLA for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale), both of whom have returned those parts of the city of Winnipeg to a New Democrat stronghold after a few years in the wilderness. Certainly last but not least I would go back to our final new representative from the North again representing the community and the constituency of Flin Flon and very ably representing those constituents as well.

Not only do we geographically and socio-economically reflect the entire community of the province of Manitoba, but we also represent the multicultural mosaic of the province of Manitoba. We have four aboriginal members of the Legislature representing urban, rural and northern communities. We have six women; over 25 percent of our caucus is now represented by women, and I would put that against the government benches where there are, if my count is correct, four women out of 31. So our representation as far as women is concerned is not fully representing the 51 percent or 52 percent of the population, but we are coming very close to critical mass. Many would say we have reached critical mass.

We also represent a range of occupations and backgrounds that enable us to do and will enable us to continue to do an excellent job of representing not only the interests of our own constituents, not only the interests of the areas that we are critics for, but also the interests of all Manitobans because we get calls in our caucus and in our role as MLAs from citizens and individuals throughout the province of Manitoba, many of whom are in constituencies represented by government members, so I am extremely proud to be a part of this NDP caucus team headed by our Leader, the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), who this afternoon very clearly and eloquently outlined our concerns with the current Speech from the Throne and, as well, the seven-plus years now of Conservative government.

Madam Speaker, as well, I would like to thank the constituents, the voters of my constituency who have returned me for a second term in office. I do not know if I speak for any other members, but I know that when I was first elected in 1990, the voters of Wellington did not have a history of myself as an MLA. They knew me in my other roles, but like all of us when we are

elected for the first time, the voters sort of elect you with a little bit of faith.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** For some it is a leap of faith.

**Ms. Barrett:** The member for Thompson said that for some it is a leap of faith.

In the 1995 election, for those of us who were going for re-election, we now had not only a government record to respond to or, in the case of members on the government side, to try and endorse, but we also have our own record as MLAs.

I speak for myself when I say it was a great source of pleasure to me that the constituents of Wellington have seen fit to return me to the Legislature to do—obviously, I believe that they felt I was doing an adequate job, that they felt that I had adequately, and I hope more than adequately, reflected their issues and concerns and represented them satisfactorily in the Legislature.

I must say that I am delighted to be back because this is—I am doing a job I love doing, and I hope to continue doing it for the foreseeable future.

\* (1740)

Madam Speaker, I would like to speak for a while about not only the Speech from the Throne that we heard this week but also the much longer Speech from the Throne that we heard last December. I would, if I may, like to comment briefly on some of the speeches that have been delivered in the House this week by the new members from the government side.

I think they have reflected very clearly some of the distinctions that are made between the vision, to use the phrase of a former president of the United States, that vision thing—are very clearly reflected in the speeches that we have heard in the last couple of days, both from the government side and from our side.

I would like to speak in terms largely of poverty because I believe that is a basic element that frames and infiltrates every other aspect of what we as legislators and we as citizens of Manitoba have to deal with.

In the Speech from the Throne from December 1 of last year, the government stated, and I am quoting here: ". . . my government will implement strategies for healthy child development focusing on early interventions for children at risk. Early nurturing of vulnerable children is one of the best investments in the future that can be made."

I find it very interesting that as has happened many times in the past, there is no one in this House who will disagree with that statement, absolutely no one, probably no one in the province of Manitoba that would disagree with the statement as presented by the Lieutenant-Governor in December.

Again, Madam Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne of this week, the government talks about poverty, and I would like to quote: The issue of poverty, in all its dimensions, must be a high priority for the years ahead, both in our province and across the country. Provinces can take some positive steps.

I think that again no one would disagree with the statements and the feelings reflected in that phrase or sentence from the current Speech from the Throne. However, the reality, as is so often the case, does not come together in any way, in my view, with the phrases that have been written in the Speech from the Throne.

Madam Speaker, the member for Riel (Mr. Newman), in his comments in his speech yesterday, talked about how he was glad to be able to live in this, and I am quoting: paradise on the prairie.

I thought that was a very nice phrase. I do like that because I feel that way about the province of Manitoba. As an immigrant to this country 20 years ago, I thank my lucky stars every day that I came to this province and have been able to live in this province and in this city. However, the reality for many people, particularly children in the province of Manitoba today, is that it is not a paradise on the prairie. It is, if I can take the analogy to the logical conclusion, a hell on the prairie for many people in this province, most particularly children in this province, and that is the major problem we have on this side of the House with the government, the huge gap between what the government says on the one hand and what the actuality is on the other.

The member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed) yesterday also spoke about the importance of protecting health and well being of all Manitobans, that his government was going to promote wellness and a healthy life style and implement prevention strategies. Again, Madam Speaker, these are words that no one could disagree with. The reality, however, is very different, because far from instituting prevention strategies, healthy life style strategies, wellness promotion strategies in all of its government departments, this government has, in fact, implemented strategies in virtually every single department that have had the opposite effect on people in this province—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Ms. Barrett:** —particularly children.

**Madam Speaker:** In fairness to the honourable member for Wellington, it is very difficult for the other honourable members to hear her remarks.

**Ms. Barrett:** Madam Speaker, as I said, the reality is far different. The member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck), in his statements just earlier this afternoon, just prior to mine, said that this government is dedicated to our children. Again, no one could argue with the fact that the children are our most important future and all of the kinds of things that we have all stated that are included in the comments from the member for Pembina, but, again, the actions of the government that he now represents do not jibe with that statement. The actions of his government since 1988 have had one very clear result for the poor people in this province, most particularly the children in this province, and that is to drive them further and further into poverty and despair and hopelessness. None of the actions of this government have had as their impact, no matter what their stated objective was, a lessening of the poverty for the children and of the families that live in poverty in this province.

Madam Speaker, so that members opposite do not think that I am just making these statements up out of thin air, I am going to quote some statistics, and I think they are statistics that no one will be able to refute, at

least I hope not. I would like to start the quotes on statistics with a quote that says about children: Many things can wait. Children cannot. Right now their hip bones are being formed, their blood is being made, their senses are being developed. To them we cannot say tomorrow. Their name is today, end quote.

I think, Madam Speaker, that encapsulates for me the awful sense of frustration and anger that I feel when I hear the stories about the children of this province, when I see that for years we have been the child poverty capital of the country. The only growth industry in this province since the Tories have come into power is in the industry of social assistance. Social assistance, in the express words of the current Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) and in her predecessor's express words, is a court of last resort. It is not meant to be anything but for people who have nowhere else to go—the last resort. Yet, that last resort is now the single growth industry in this province.

Who are the people who access social assistance? They are children. Children are poor because their parents are poor, and their parents are poor, not like many of the underlying feelings of many of the members of the government side, because their parents have done something wrong or are not taking the responsible individual action that will get them out of poverty. These families are poor and the children of these families are poor because there are no opportunities.

There are no education opportunities. The government has seen to that with their cutbacks to student social allowances, with their cutbacks to the ACCESS program, with their cutbacks to BUNTEP, with their cutbacks to New Careers, with their reliance on Workforce 2000 grants to large corporate donors to the Progressive Conservative Party.

This government, through its actions, the choices that this government has made over the last seven years, has guaranteed that those children will remain in poverty. That is, to my way of thinking, an unconscionable outcome of very conscious decisions made by this government over the last seven years, and continuing to be made by this government today.

Madam Speaker, 40 percent of the users of food banks in Winnipeg are children. Forty percent of poor children live in families that work full time. I think this is a very interesting statistic. We hear about, well, if people would just get jobs then they would not be on the public purse, they would not be a charge on the public purse and things would be better. Well, people are working full time and they are still poor. People are working full time at one, two, three jobs and they are still poor.

\* (1750)

Families are forced to have both parents work many times for more than one job themselves. They do not have access to adequate child care facilities because of the changes that this government under the previous Minister of Family Services undertook to the child care system in 1991, changes that this government, when they talk about the importance of children and services for children in their Speech from the Throne have no intention of reversing, changes that were made not to provide better services, better child care facilities, better paid early childhood educators, more access to child care, the changes that had as their only reason a cut in cost to the government.

That is what has pervaded the decisions that this government has made that have led to the child poverty that we see in such abysmal numbers in this province, conscious, well thought out, clearly defined choices that this government has made in the areas of Family Services, in the areas of Health, Justice, Education. Virtually any department that you want to name has had decisions made by its minister or ministers that have negatively impacted on the children and the families of this province.

Aboriginal people—51 percent of aboriginal children are poor, and this First Minister has the unmitigated gall to stand in this House today and say that this is a responsibility of the federal government. This government has made a fine art of offloading. They have offloaded onto the municipalities, they have offloaded onto the families and individuals and children of this province, and now they are offloading in the other direction. They are offloading responsibility onto the federal government.



As the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) asked in his question today, who is responsible for these citizens? These people are citizens of the province of Manitoba, and this government takes absolutely no recognition of that fact and gives virtually no support to the programs that would assist these people in getting themselves out of the cycle of poverty.

I think, frankly, Madam Speaker, the reason that this government has made these decisions since its first election in 1988 goes back to their view about the causes of poverty, why children and families are poor. I think to a very large extent it is a reflection of the fact of blaming the victim, of individualism run rampant: I pulled myself up from my bootstraps, and there is no reason that you cannot do the same thing.

**An Honourable Member:** Who said that?

**Ms. Barrett:** The member for Niakwa asked the question, who said that? I will respond to the member for Niakwa saying, I do not believe anyone specifically stated those exact words in the building, in the Chamber, but it permeates that kind of vision. That kind of value system permeates much of what is said in this House and many of the decisions that have been made by this government over the last seven years.

Choices, Madam Speaker, have to be made, yes. This government has talked ever since it was first elected about the tough choices that have to be made. I am not going to spend too much time on the latest tough choice that this government has made, because others have spoken before me far more eloquently than I can do and will speak after me on this issue, but I do think it is imperative to put on the record my views about the decisions that this government has made or in many cases perhaps the lack of decisions that this government has taken with regard to their support of the Winnipeg Jets.

I would like to state that the views of the members of my constituency, Wellington, reflect very closely the views of the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), and my constituency is not a core area constituency per se. It has very definitely working-class areas. It has very definitely middle-class areas. Professional people

live in Wellington, people who are students. All age ranges live in Wellington.

In my canvassing and in my discussions and in the phone calls that I have received, 90 to 95 percent of the people in Wellington say no public money for the Winnipeg Jets.

We have huge problems that we have to deal with as a society, and I have mentioned only one of them, that problem of child poverty which has tentacles that reach out into every heart of our society. We have huge problems dealing with the issues surrounding our infrastructure, and I could go on about the definition that this government and the federal government and to some extent the city government have given to the word infrastructure.

The people in Wellington feel that infrastructure means sewers, streets, back lanes, lights, those kind of concrete, if I can use that word, supports that the city was built on and needs in order to function effectively, and particularly in the older areas of this city, which includes much of the city of Winnipeg, although a rapidly decreasing amount of the city of Winnipeg, those things are vital.

There are cases in my constituency of back lanes that are so bad that people cannot get their cars out of their garages because the potholes and the ruts are so deep, and the city has no money to pave or to fix those back lanes. That is a tiny specific example of what is going on, what the needs are in our city and our province.

What does this government spend its money on at all three levels of government? They are going to put a minimum of \$111 million of our money—this government talks all the time about how there is only one taxpayer, there is only one taxpayer. Well, that is true, and it has never been more true than in the situation surrounding the Winnipeg Jets.

There is only one taxpayer and that taxpayer is going to pay a minimum of \$111 million, for what? For an arena. We do not know what that arena is going to look like. We have no idea of the impact that that arena is going to have on the ecosystem of the area that it is supposed to be built on. We have no idea of who

is going to participate, who are going to be the tenants in that arena?

There is no indication that the National Hockey League is going to come anywhere near the salary cap or the salary discussions that we need as a small centre to have in order to be able to function as a National Hockey League city, and is without a plan, without a business plan. How many business people are there sitting on the government benches who would never in a million years support, as members of the Chamber of Commerce, putting enormous amounts of money into a venture when you have never seen the business plan, you have no idea if you are going to have a tenant for your edifice?—but that is okay, because it is the vision thing.

Madam Speaker, I would like to close my remarks by saying, our vision for the province of Manitoba, to really make it a paradise on the prairie, which I think it can be, does not include \$111 million of public money for a private corporation whose continued existence in the city of Winnipeg is tenuous at best. It does not

include continuing with policies and programs that have as their only impact the degradation and the impoverishment of huge proportions of our citizenry.

We do reflect and represent every single citizen in this province, and it is incumbent upon this government, who have the rights and the responsibility and the authority and the power to make laws that impact on every single resident in this province, to ensure that they pay attention to every single resident in this province.

To date, Madam Speaker, I am sorry to say, they have not. It is our job as official opposition to ensure that we let them know their failings and hopefully they will take those to heart and change their ways.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 24, 1995

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