

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 25 February, 1988.

Time — 1:30 p.m.

**OPENING PRAYER by Madam Speaker.**

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

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security.

**HON. L. EVANS:** Madam Speaker, I'd like to table a statement on "Social Assistance Reforms."

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please.  
The Honourable Minister of Labour.

**HON. M. SMITH:** Madam Speaker, I'd like to table the report on the administration of the Rent Regulation Program for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1986.

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

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**MR. M. DOLIN** introduced, by leave, Bill No. 5, The Manitoba Institute of the Purchasing Management Association of Canada Act; Loi sur l'Institut manitobain de l'Association canadienne de gestion des achats.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Before moving to Oral Questions . . .

**MR. G. MERCIER:** A point of order, Madam Speaker.

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

**MR. G. MERCIER:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker.  
The Page has just delivered to members of the House a document which reads, "Ministerial Statement, Honourable Len Evans, Social Assistance Reforms." We on this side would take this, Madam Speaker, as a ministerial statement, and I would ask that the critic be allowed to respond. She does not wish to table a written statement but wishes to respond verbally.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please.

On the honourable member's point of order, when reports are tabled, I am usually not given one but, seeing the statement that the Opposition House Leader has referred to, it is entitled a ministerial statement. It is not entitled a report. So, in my opinion, the Honourable Minister has tabled it as read and the honourable critic would have an opportunity to respond.

The Honourable Member for Gladstone.  
Order please.

The Honourable Government House Leader on another point of order.

**HON. J. COWAN:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** On another point of order?

**HON. J. COWAN:** Yes, Madam Speaker.

Just on the matter of the tabling of statements in the House and the making of statements in the House, it is in fact a gray area where there have been numerous disagreements . . .

**SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**HON. J. COWAN:** I would expect that if the members opposite, Madam Speaker, gave me the courtesy of hearing out what I have to say, they would not only agree that I'm not reflecting upon any rulings but they might also agree that I'm offering a constructive suggestion on how to deal with this issue in the future. And it is a point of order.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please, order please.

A point of order is to raise a point of digression from the normal proceedings. It's not a time for helpful suggestions, unless it's on a point of order.

I already recognized the Honourable Member for Gladstone.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm glad we can count on you to enforce some of the practices that have taken place normally in the House.

I would thank the Minister for coming up with this statement that was supposed to be a statement. It's been long awaited, of course, in the communities. The task force report of 1983 suggested that this system be brought in place. Last summer, the Minister announced in Brandon that he was going to come forth with a White Paper, and he told me that, in probably late August or early September, it would be forthcoming, so we're glad to see it's finally arrived.

It's rather interesting the form in which it's arrived. It has travelled throughout the news media for two days and finally we get to the House with it where I thought, in my naive way, things were supposed to be announced in the House and then circulate throughout the province. However, we can set that aside for a few minutes.

It is really unfortunate that we have to have more emphasis placed on social assistance. It's unfortunate the welfare rolls are rising in the rural areas partly because, and I would say mainly because, of the crisis in the farm community. So it is really unfortunate that we have to place so much emphasis on this.

Now the Minister says in the news release released this morning, he says he'll be introducing legislation, and I quote: "My department will then take a consultive

phased approach to bringing municipal assistance under the provincial social allowances program." Well, Madam Speaker, once again we see an example of the way this government consults.

In early February, the Minister of Municipal Affairs met with an advisory committee of the UMM, Union of Manitoba Municipalities, at which time he said that either he or the Minister of Employment and Economic Security would be meeting with that committee to discuss the approach that was to be taken to social assistance. That meeting did not take place. No consulting has taken place, and yet he's talking away again, as this government is wont to do, about consulting.

He is announcing the changes today. He has not discussed it with the UMM. A report in the Winnipeg Sun indicates that the Minister says that he has full support of the UMM. How does he know? They did not pass the resolution, Mr. Minister.

In November of 1987, a Resolution No. 6, if you want to check, came before the UMM meeting, their annual meeting, and was defeated. He may be thinking of the resolution of 1985 which was passed but the one in '87 was defeated, so I'm wondering where he thinks he has his support. As I said, once again, it's an example of the cooperation that this government gives and how they consult. They decide what to do. They tell people what they're doing, and then they talk about it with no indication of change.

I would suggest that he use this advisory committee of UMM to set up this program. I'd further advise him that he should use, as his advisers, the president of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, some representative from the Secretary-Treasurers' Association, who are intimately involved with this problem and have had all kinds of input to me on the problems, and I have passed those onto the Minister. So the Minister has been aware for a long time that there are problems in this area. I think he should also consult and have on his committee somebody from the rural area who is receiving social assistance, because those people will also know the problems.

Now one of the inequities in the present system, Madam Speaker, is that rural people cannot tap into the job creation programs that the Minister has in his department. I hope that he addresses that inequity. I hope, as we ask questions and as the Minister responds to questioning in Estimates and question period, etc., that we are given a clear understanding of what the cost implications of this are to the province, and what it will do to help the people on social assistance and relieve some of the municipal people of a burden which they themselves will tell you they have been having difficulty with. I wish this Minister had consulted with them more and found out what the difficulties were first-hand.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Before moving to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have from the Murdock MacKay Collegiate, sixty Grade 9 students under the direction of Mrs. Swetz and Mr. Remple. The school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Health.

We have, from the Red Sucker Lake School, ten Grade 10 students, under the direction of Ms. Pat Graham. The school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

On behalf of all the members, we welcome you to the Legislature this afternoon.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### MPIC - revised projection

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for MPIC.

There have recently been statements attributed to the Minister and to the new president of MPIC that Manitobans can expect ever-spiralling costs in Autopac repairs, ever-spiralling costs in the premiums that we'll be paying. Is the Minister now in the possession of a revised projected financial statement for the corporation for the year 1988, and would he care to share that with the House?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister responsible for MPIC.

**HON. B. URUSKI:** Madam Speaker, if the honourable member is asking whether I'm carrying a crystal ball around, I am not. Madam Speaker, there will be discussions, I am certain, in committee as to projections of claims and costs, and what extent the claims experience will be on the performance of MPIC for the fiscal year ending October 31, 1988. We will have those discussions but those, at best, are projections and guesstimates as to what the claims might be. We will have those discussions in committee.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Madam Speaker, obviously someone in the corporation had better have a crystal ball, as the Minister refers to. They better be making some projections as to where the corporation is headed.

I wonder if he would confirm to the House that two of the reasons that they may be revising the future of Autopac are: a) the people of Manitoba are reducing their coverage because of the high deductible, because of the expense that they've been faced with in their Autopac and, therefore, the premiums will be reduced to the company this year; and b) that the last-minute changes that the corporation, as a result of this Minister's interference, have brought in - they were very quick to tell us there was a \$17 million change because of the merit system. The Minister is now continuing to make changes. If he hasn't got a projection, what satisfaction is there to the people of Manitoba? He must tell us where we're headed with this corporation, and he can't pretend that he doesn't have a crystal ball.

**HON. B. URUSKI:** Madam Speaker, I think my honourable friend is confused, as usual. He just wrote me a letter about 30 days ago, alleging that the corporation lost \$28 million in the years '84 and '85. In those two years, the corporation made \$18 million in '84

and \$9 million in '85. I just don't want the honourable member to get too confused.

The honourable member, as well, indicates that Manitobans are in fact reducing their coverage. I don't know where he gets those figures. It may very well be that some Manitobans will in fact change the level of coverage that they have but, Madam Speaker, that will as well have an off-setting effect on the other side of the ledger in terms of reduced claims costs and administrative costs, because claims have to be adjusted. So, he can't come to the conclusion that he's come to, just by virtue that there may be some changes in coverage.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Madam Speaker, I was hoping that somebody was in charge of the shop.

The Autopac agents of this province just received the information booklet today, I understand by courier, that was supposed to have been available for the customers of MPIC when they were renewing their Autopac this year. Can the Minister please explain this shoddy management position?

**HON. B. URUSKI:** Madam Speaker, I don't know what brochure or booklet the member speaks of. The new rating books that the agents have used and the guidelines were in agents' hands prior to the renewals being issued in the mail. If there are some other additional instructions that the member is speaking about, I'm not aware of those. Those would be administrative matters that the corporation would look at. But the rating manuals in which the new 1988 rates that motorists had to deal with were in agents' hands prior to the renewals being put in the mail.

### Manfor - sawmill - sale inclusion

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

**MRS. S. CARSTAIRS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for Manfor.

The government has been engaged in negotiations for the sale of Manfor for some time, and rumours abound that the deal signing is somewhat imminent. Can the Minister assure the House today that the sawmill operation will be part of the sale?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister responsible for Manfor.

**HON. J. STORIE:** Madam Speaker, the Member for River Heights, I think, has probably read in reports that we are in negotiations. I have made it a habit not to discuss negotiations in public. That's at, obviously, the request of the parties who are interested in pursuing the possible purchase of Manfor.

I can assure the member, as I have assured the people in The Pas and the surrounding area, that the intention of our discussions is to make sure that there is increased employment, that there's increased investment and that wood resource in that area of the province is put to the highest and best use.

**MRS. S. CARSTAIRS:** A supplementary question to the same Minister.

Will the government obtain guarantees from any purchaser that the sawmill will continue to operate, in that it is the sawmill that employs most of the Natives employed at the Manfor site?

**HON. J. STORIE:** I certainly don't intend to engage the Member for River Heights, who has an astounding level of ignorance about what Manfor is about, about what its history is, about what has been successful and what isn't successful, and I don't intend to negotiate on the floor of the House.

### Manfor - Native retraining

**MRS. S. CARSTAIRS:** Madam Speaker, I won't stoop to the same depths as the Minister, but will the Minister respond to the following question?

In meetings with northern chiefs earlier this week, the Minister promised equity for Natives. Will the Minister guarantee that, if there is any displacement of workers as a result of the Manfor sale, this government will provide retraining programs?

**HON. J. STORIE:** Madam Speaker, I don't know where the Member for River Heights is getting her information. I've given the Member for River Heights and the House the assurances that I have given everyone to whom I have spoken about the potential sale of Manfor, Madam Speaker, and I will reiterate those. There's increased employment, increased investment, increased and better use of the wood resource.

### UMM - exclusion re social assistance changes

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

**MRS. C. OLESON:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs told the Advisory Committee of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, when he met with them in early February, that he or the Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security would consult with the union before making an announcement on changes to the delivery of social assistance to rural communities, and that did not take place.

Why did he not consult with the Union of Municipalities?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Employment Services.

**HON. L. EVANS:** Madam Speaker, the Union of Manitoba Municipalities and indeed the Urban Municipal Association have advised us in writing some time ago their concern that the Province of Manitoba should take over this social service area, and indeed this was recommended by the Task Force on Social Allowances that was set up a few years ago, and we've indicated this in this House.

As a matter of fact, in Hansard last year, there was some considerable debate on this. So there's been a

lot of discussion with many organizations, including municipal governments. We still wish to discuss but, in principle, we believe in a one-tier system. It's high time, Madam Speaker, that we enhance social justice in this province, and it's simply not good enough to have the inequitable situation that we have, particularly in the small municipalities of this province. The point is, Madam Speaker, that there are many things to be discussed with regard to the mechanisms and so on, and these discussions will go on.

Having said that, Madam Speaker, I'd like to remind the honourable member that seven out of ten provinces have indeed a provincial system of social welfare. There are no municipal governments involved. But I'm satisfied that, along with my colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, there will be ample consultation. As a matter of fact, he had a meeting not long ago. (Interjection) Yes, yes, this is a good question. I'd like to find out from the member eventually whether she is in favour or against what we are trying to do to improve social assistance.

**SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please, order please.

#### **Social assistance changes - coat**

**MRS. C. OLESON:** Madam Speaker, we're not here to consult about what the seven other provinces in Canada are doing. I asked you why you did not consult with the UMM, and I'll ask a further question. After the November meeting of the Union of Municipalities, did the Minister ascertain why that motion was defeated? Did he find out what the reasons were behind the defeat of that motion?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

**HON. B. URUSKI:** Madam Speaker, I'd like to point out to the House that I did meet with the president and the executive of the union just recently.

Madam Speaker, the Honourable Minister was out of town that day and could not join me at that meeting. We did discuss the very issue that the member raises that there was no consultation on, and the president of the Union of the Manitoba Municipalities recognized that something should be done.

In fact his words were that, generally, we have chased people out of rural areas into the towns with our welfare policies, and that we would move. We did discuss the matter of implementation and their desire for further consultations, and that assurance, Madam Speaker, was given. In fact, the Minister's staff will be meeting with the union during the spring meetings to talk about the implementation process, Madam Speaker.

#### **Social assistance changes - cost**

**MRS. C. OLESON:** Could the Minister tell the House today, and the people of Manitoba, what would be the total cost of implementing these changes? What will be assessed to municipal taxpayers and how much to provincial taxpayers?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Employment Services and Economic Security.

**HON. L. EVANS:** Madam Speaker, after discussing this matter with the honourable member over the years, including last year at some length, I'm still at a loss to know where the honourable member stands on this or where the Opposition is.

Are they in favour or against improving this system in the Province of Manitoba? Are they in favour of enhancing social justice in Manitoba or not? The estimated net cost is just a ballpark figure at this time and, recalling that we do cost-share with the Federal Government, our estimated net cost, once we get it on a full year's operation, is approximately \$2.5 million.

We will be discussing, as the Minister of Municipal Affairs stated, various details with regard to the implementation of this and the contributions and so on, but I can assure the honourable member that the municipalities in Manitoba will not be paying out any more, and likely a lot less, than they have in the past.

Northern Tax Allowance - exclusion

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

**MR. S. ASHTON:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Finance.

Last year, I raised my concern in the Legislature about the exclusion of Thompson and Wabowden from the proposed Northern Tax Allowance. At the time, it appeared that Thompson and Wabowden were two out of 48 communities that have been excluded.

According to the new guidelines for Northern Tax Allowance, it now appears that there are 200 communities in Manitoba that are eligible, and Thompson and Wabowden are still excluded, and communities as far south as Swan River, Winnipegosis are eligible for the Northern Tax Allowance. In view of the fact, Madam Speaker, this is outrageous in regard to the residents of Thompson and Wabowden, I'd like to ask the Minister whether he will once again, as he did last year, raise this issue with the Federal Government and demand a review of the criteria that will give justice to the residents of those two communities.

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

**HON. E. KOSTYRA:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the member for his question.

I too share the concern that the Member for Thompson has, and I know other members who represent communities in the North and indeed all or many people in northern Manitoba feel over the discriminatory practices of the Federal Government when it comes to Northern Manitoba.

I will, as the member suggests, take up this issue again with the federal Minister of Finance and urge him to reconsider and use some common sense in terms of the approach to the treatment of various northern communities.

**MR. S. ASHTON:** As part of my supplementary, I'd like to table a copy of the list of the communities and a

map outlining those communities that are included, and the two that are excluded. I'd also like to ask the Minister whether he will also raise the concerns of some of the border communities, such as Benito, which is 20 miles from Swan River, which now finds that it is excluded from the Northern Tax Allowance and faces the possibility of its community being faced with an exodus of population because of, once again, the arbitrary and unfair guidelines that the Federal Government has introduced for this allowance.

**HON. E. KOSTYRA:** I look forward to receiving the material that the member tabled. The issue of the community of Benito has been raised with me by the member representing that area, the Minister of Agriculture, because he expressed some degree of shock and amazement over the arbitrary treatment of that community in his area. I intend to also review that matter and raise those concerns also with the Federal Minister and hope that common sense also will be dealt with in terms of how Benito is being treated by the Federal Government.

**MR. S. ASHTON:** One final supplementary, Madam Speaker.

I was wondering if the Finance Minister could also ask that the Federal Government consult directly with the communities affected, including specifically Thompson and Wabowden and other communities, such as Benito, since they obviously have no concept of what the North is all about when they have to turn around and say that those communities are not northern and are not eligible for the Northern Tax Allowance. Will the Minister ask for consultation?

**HON. E. KOSTYRA:** Yes, I will. In fact, I will invite the federal Finance Minister to take the opportunity when he next comes to Manitoba to visit the North to get a better understanding of the needs of northern residents and the fiscal layout of those communities so he can better understand that a common-sense approach should be dealt with in terms of the treatment of those communities.

### Trial date - delays

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

**MR. G. MERCIER:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question follows upon the comments of the Member for Brandon East and the Member for Thompson about justice.

Madam Speaker, when the NDP assumed office in 1981, it took just three months to set a criminal case down for trial in the Provincial Judges' Court, Madam Speaker. That delay is now 10 months or longer. I would ask the Attorney-General whether the Deputy Attorney-General, Tanner Elton, was articulating the policy of the Attorney-General's Department when he said that a 10-month delay was no reason for alarm, or was the Deputy Attorney-General wrong?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Attorney-General.

**HON. V. SCHROEDER:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We're always working on that problem and it goes up and down. The member refers to it being three months at a specific time. It was longer than that during other times and has been shorter than what it is right now as recently as six months ago. In fact, I was involved with one particular case yesterday where we were looking back at a file where a trial date was set for about six months down the road from July in 1987. Those things are concerns. We would like to get speedier justice.

I've had, in fact, a meeting with the chief judge, at which we had a fairly lengthy discussion of some of his ideas as to how to go about reducing the backlog. He feels that there are things that can be done within current resource of allocations without spending more provincial funds to bring down that backlog some. We are working toward doing precisely that.

**MR. G. MERCIER:** Madam Speaker, the Attorney-General is correct when he says that the delay was longer than three months prior to 1981. It was a six-month delay when the now Premier was Attorney-General in 1987. We reduced it to three months, Madam Speaker, when we were in government.

Madam Speaker, in view of the concerns of the Association of Crown Attorneys and the concern about the administration of justice and how this has been adversely affected, for example, with difficulties in witnesses giving evidence at trial. Since the delay has been increasing significantly ever since the NDP took office in 1981 and has now reached this deplorable state of taking 10 months to set a matter down for trial, Madam Speaker, I ask the Attorney-General: What specific steps is he taking to reduce the delay in setting matters down for trial?

**HON. V. SCHROEDER:** One specific item we're looking at is to do what we can within the system to ensure — (Interjection) — Do you want an answer or do you want to yap? If the Member for Emerson could possibly contain himself and listen, it's a serious question and I'm trying to provide a serious answer, an answer with respect to which we've been attempting to deal.

Madam Speaker, what we're attempting to do in those instances where it's clear from fairly close to the outset after particulars are exchanged with the lawyer for an accused and where it is intended that later on there will be a guilty plea, we are working on ways to reduce any temptation of setting those kinds of dates down as though they will be contested, thereby blocking off court time now for six months or two months or three months from now, whatever, when we know now that in all likelihood we won't use that court time. We're also looking at possibly overbooking in the way we're doing right now in other courts and is occurring in other provinces on the assumption that a fairly significant proportion of cases may not go ahead because of changes in pleas or because of other circumstances at any given time.

Having said that, Madam Speaker, I point out that fairly recently we've been able to set down cases for as early as several months from now. There are always openings. Those who say I want justice tomorrow can be accommodated. There are holes generally because cases fall apart because people change pleas, because

witnesses are unavailable and so on. So if people want speedy trials, there is that availability.

**MR. G. MERCIER:** Madam Speaker, the president of the Crown Attorneys Association has said there are insufficient number of prosecutors and that the administration of justice is being threatened by these undue delays which are not in the public interest but are in the accused's interest. Would the Attorney-General consider hiring more Crown prosecutors to deal with the delay and perhaps eliminating some of the 116 communicators that the government employs?

**HON. V. SCHROEDER:** Obviously, today is spending day for the Opposition. If you want to have determination made on the basis of employees, as to how many should be employed, we would have a massive increase in employment in this province. You go and talk to nurses, they will tell you they're overworked. I believe they are. They would say we should have far more nurses working. If you talk to court reporters they would say we need far more court reporters. If you talk to highways workers, police officers, fire fighters, what have you, all of them will tell you that they need more, and they're probably all right. Optimally, we could use more help in each one of the areas that all of us are responsible for.

We also hear from these people about taxes. We shouldn't increase taxes in this province. Taxes are too high. The deficit is too high and yet every single day, other than Budget day, when they complain about taxes and the deficit, they're telling us to spend more: more on roads, more on the justice system, more on the health system, more on social assistance, more on every single area that they get involved with, more on agriculture, and so on.

Well, Madam Speaker, we are attempting responsibly to deal with the justice system, which we believe is a fine justice system, which is working and will continue to work. We will do our best to fine tune it, but we will not simply throw more money at the problem.

### Rideau Park Centre - delay in opening

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

**MR. J. McCRAE:** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Health.

The Rideau Park Centre is a brand new \$5 million, 100-bed, psycho-geriatric facility in Brandon. It was completed on January 1, and it's expected to be vacant until April 1 and perhaps beyond. Why?

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

**HON. W. PARASIUK:** Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity of visiting that facility when I visited Brandon to open the CAT scan that the Government of Manitoba provided for Brandon.

I would like to say to the Deputy Leader of the Conservative Party that facility for today, that facility in fact was completed, that furniture had been ordered, the staff are being put in place. Furniture was late in

arrival, but that is being pursued, and we would hope that facility will be open and operational in the very near future, Madam Speaker.

**MR. J. McCRAE:** Madam Speaker, just to correct the Minister, the people of Manitoba, through their tax dollars, provided the CAT scan to the Brandon General Hospital, not honourable members opposite.

The Minister failed to answer the question, Madam Speaker, about why it is this government, and what is the matter with this government's planning that a facility like this has to sit vacant for three months.

**HON. W. PARASIUK:** Madam Speaker, the Government of Manitoba has the mandate of the people of Manitoba, and it's the New Democratic Government that made that decision to put a CAT scan in Brandon. I never heard of any Conservative Government in Manitoba from '77 to '81 making any commitment of that nature, Madam Speaker.

So I would like to indicate to today's Deputy Leader of the Conservative Party that program of establishing a psycho-geriatric centre makes eminent sense, reflects good planning. There was a hold up with respect to delivery of furniture. There is the matter of transferring staff. But, Madam Speaker, that facility will be there for tens of years. It will be serving Brandon and Southwestern Manitoba in a very good way, despite what appears to be the ill will of the Deputy Leader of the Conservative Party with respect to this project.

**MR. J. McCRAE:** The commitment made by this government to introduce the CAT scan to the Brandon General Hospital was made after it was dragged, kicking and screaming, into that commitment by this party, Madam Speaker. The plan was that the staffing for the Rideau Park Centre was to be employees made available by the demolition of the Valleyview Pavilion at Brandon Mental Health Centre. Is the plan still that the staff for the Rideau Park Centre should be BMHC staff, and which bargaining agent will speak for those staff?

**HON. W. PARASIUK:** Madam Speaker, my understanding is that is a matter of negotiation. It's also a matter of certification with respect to the local group, and we will see what happens following normal democratic procedures.

**MR. J. McCRAE:** Is it the problem, Madam Speaker, that the Minister has to wait to find out what the certification proceedings decide before they know what they can do about staffing? Is staffing the problem that keeps that place vacant for three or more months?

**HON. W. PARASIUK:** Madam Speaker, this side of the House believes in the rule of law. That side, Madam Speaker, occasionally sinks into anarchy. We will follow the rule of law with respect to procedures, as has been done in the past and as I hope will be done in the future, because that's the way a civilization operates in a democratic and effective way.

**Crown Corp'n - financial stmt release**

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

**MR. A. BROWN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Crown Investments.

Last week a news media person came to me with a list of Crown corporations' profits and losses, which had been given to him by the Premier's media aide. Would the Minister please tell this house just what he was up to when he had the Premier's media aide, Mr. Michael Balagus, inform members of the media that overall net profits of Crowns was approximately \$95 million? This, Madam Speaker, included a figure of \$142 million profit by the Manitoba Liquor Commission, an agency whose figures have never been incorporated among the Crown corporations because it's not a Crown corporation.

Madam Speaker, information was provided that was not available in the House; it was provided to the news media and that was not available in this House. Now that's an absolute breach of privilege. Can the Minister explain his actions?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister for Crown Investments.

**HON. G. DOER:** Madam Speaker, most of the information that was requested, quite frankly, was available to this House. The member mentioned the Liquor Commission. That report was tabled and copied to all members of this House, I believe, some months ago. The figure used in the Telephone System, for example, had been released in a press release. Projections for '87 had been put in a press release and released publicly and given to the Opposition and the Opposition critic. Many of those numbers had been released to members of the public. There were some projections for '87 that have not yet had the final bottom line, and one of them obviously is the Public Insurance Corporation which the Minister will table.

Madam Speaker, the numbers that were requested were only dealing with the Crown holding company. The Liquor Commission, as the member knows, is part of the holding company. It is part of the holding company, Madam Speaker, so that we can have public hearings on the Liquor Commission. For the first time in the history of this Chamber, the Liquor Commission will be heard in committee with the senior officials of the Liquor Commission present before the Legislature, consistent with the Spivak Task Force, consistent with the reforms we made last year for more accountable Crown corporations in Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

**MR. A. BROWN:** Thank you. My question is to the same Minister.

Did the Minister instruct the Premier's aide to release these figures, or was Mr. Balagus acting on his own volition without instruction?

**HON. G. DOER:** Well, Madam Speaker, one day the government (sic) wants open government. The next day, when the media asks for some information, they condemn us.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please.

Could the honourable member wait till he's recognized?

**HON. G. DOER:** Okay. I'm anxious, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Crown Investments.

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

One day we get asked for information, and the next day we get accused of withholding information. Madam Speaker, I think it's very important that the holding company information of the actual losses - and there were some - the actual surpluses - and there were some - are made public.

Madam Speaker, most of our Crown corporations are intended to break even because we want to keep the rates the lowest in Canada. For example, if the Manitoba Telephone System was to charge the same as Bell Canada, Madam Speaker, we would make \$50 million or \$60 million a year for the last 10 years. But the purpose of public corporations is to provide low rates, to provide employment in Manitoba, to provide an economic base in this province, and to provide services to Manitobans.

We believe, Madam Speaker, there have been some problems with the Crown corporations, and we took action with Flyer Industries. We're looking at action in turning around Manfor, Madam Speaker, but the majority of our Crown corporations are having good jobs with low rates in this province.

**MPIC - net loss**

**MR. A. BROWN:** My question is to the same Minister.

What is the net loss of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation? Is it the \$69 million as reported by Mr. Balagus? Why was this information not forwarded to the Minister responsible, so that he could have answered the question when it was asked of him last week?

**HON. G. DOER:** Madam Speaker, the final numbers for a number of Crown corporations for the '87 year are projections. The figure for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation is not completed. The figure for the Manitoba Telephone System is at the auditors, and we expect to have a signed financial statement, I believe, early next week.

The figures again for Manitoba Data Services, the organization that produced an annual report at \$3.9 million in the '86-87 year, Madam Speaker, the projections are for \$1.1 million surplus this year, and that even includes a rebate of some \$2 million or \$3 million to the organizations, including Health, that are using the Manitoba Data Services.

Madam Speaker, there are some Crown corporations that need some work, and that's fairly obvious to all members in this House. We have said publicly that we have a great deal of work to do with our Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

Madam Speaker, we have also taken action where Crown corporations were a drain on this economy. Flyer Industries is one of them, Madam Speaker, and the

second action is, of course, the issue of Manfor which, since the days of CFI, has been a tremendous drag on the Manitoba economy. The Minister has turned that corporation around, and we're on the right side of the cycle to have an intelligent deal for Manitobans.

### **Crown corp'n losses - write-off**

**MR. A. BROWN:** I have a new question for the Minister, Madam Speaker.

Order-in-Council 1363 - and I have it right here - dated December 2, 1987, which was an Order-in-Council which Executive Council refused to release until the middle of January 1988, and this effectively writes off \$185 million in Crown agency losses; 172 million of that amount in Crown corporations. Now, it's small wonder that Manitobans have lost complete confidence in this government's management capabilities. Would the Minister indicate whether these losses will ever be reflected in Crown corporation financial statements?

**HON. G. DOER:** Madam Speaker, the member full knows that the losses that he's referring to in the Order-in-Council were discussed at committee, were discussed by the Provincial Auditor with the Minister of Finance. Madam Speaker, the Auditor has recommended for a number of years that the losses that started, some of them, back with the CFI days with the members opposite, the losses that are shown on the books of the province and will be indeed anticipated for recovery be accurately reflected on the books of this province, Madam Speaker.

It was the Auditor's recommendation, and I quote, Madam Speaker: "What we are doing is giving full recognition here for the movement towards a fuller accrual basis of accounting, which doesn't necessitate the actual expenditure of cash to be incurred before there is a recognition that expenses have been incurred."

So, Madam Speaker, those are not my words, those are the Auditor's words. Madam Speaker, for the first time ever in this House, when the Minister of Finance tables his Budget, there will be a provision for Crown corporation losses, as he has promised yesterday to the Finance critic.

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

**MR. C. MANNES:** Madam Speaker, I direct my question to the same Minister.

Given the comments that he has just made, maybe he can answer one question that the Minister of Finance has never been able to answer, Madam Speaker. Using the arguments that he did previous, Madam Speaker, that all the Crowns, including the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission, be considered as one, can this Minister explain why the revenues coming forth from the Liquor Control Commission are shown within the Estimates and why the losses, \$185 million written off, are not reflected in the Estimates of expenditure?

**HON. G. DOER:** Madam Speaker, this question was answered by the Provincial Auditor at committee, and the Minister of Finance was at committee, in terms of

the accounting procedures that he recommended, and the advice that the Minister of Finance followed in terms of having the methodology that was implemented this year on the recommendation of the Provincial Auditor.

**MR. C. MANNES:** Madam Speaker, given that I am fully aware as what's on the record, I again ask the Minister to explain his action as to how he could then possibly lump together, in the whole area of Crown financial activity, the results from the Liquor Control Commission with the losses with the other Crowns, using the same argument that he has.

**HON. G. DOER:** Madam Speaker, the question was asked in terms of the year-over-year operations of Manitoba Crown corporations under the holding company. The figures were given in terms of the many Crown corporations that are under the holding company that was passed in this House last year, in terms of those Crowns that had a surplus or profit situation.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, the Crown corporations that were at a net deficit situation, were also released. In fact, many of these reports have been released in this House and will be released, Madam Speaker, in the future. Madam Speaker, the Member for Morris questioned the Provincial Auditor and the Minister of Finance at committee, and asked why this was taking place. The Provincial Auditor replied that this is the more modern way of showing losses that have developed year-over-year for a number of years, primarily by the way, Madam Speaker, in Flyer Industries which we have sold, and the CFI-Manfor which is making a surplus this year.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The time for Oral Questions has expired.

### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

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

**HON. J. COWAN:** Madam Speaker, would you please call for Second Reading of Bill No. 2 and, following the debate on Bill No. 2, however long it takes, would you then, if there is time remaining, please call the government resolution standing in the name of the Premier.

### **SECOND READING**

#### **BILL NO. 2 - THE HEALTH SERVICES DEVELOPMENT TRUST FUND ACT**

**HON. W. PARASIUK** presented Bill No. 2, The Health Services Development Trust Fund Act; La Loi sur le Fonds fiduciaire en vue de l'amélioration des services de santé, for Second Reading. (Recommended by His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor.)

**MOTION presented.**

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

**HON. W. PARASIUK:** Madam Speaker, the introduction of this bill to establish the Health Services Development

Trust Fund is another milestone for Manitoba with respect to health care, and I am very proud to introduce it on behalf of the government for Second Reading in this Legislature.

Manitobans are justifiably proud of their health care system. It is one of the best and most comprehensive in the world.

The establishment of the Health Services Development Trust Fund is another first for Manitoba because, by establishing this fund through legislation, we are demonstrating an unequivocal commitment to meet the challenges of the health care needs in Manitoba well into the future.

Improving Manitoba's health care system is a major priority for this government, and we will be building upon a social democratic tradition of progressive leadership and innovation in health care here in Manitoba and in the rest of Canada.

No one could debate the fact that we would not have a Medicare system here in Canada as good as it is, as innovative as it is, the sacred treasure that we have in this country, without the pioneering efforts, vision, compassion and political will of Tommy Douglas and the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan and of Canada.

The New Democratic Party in the Province of Manitoba has carried on in that fine tradition. The Pawley Government and the previous Schreyer Government have led the way in developing the most comprehensive health services in Canada. We have developed a high-quality hospital and medical service system. We have established in a pioneering way the best Home Care Program in Canada, a program which supports thousands of Manitobans in their communities, Madam Speaker, and it's a model for North America.

It was Manitoba's Social Democratic Governments that introduced such programs as the Children's Dental Health program, Pharmacare, Insured Personal Care Homes, programs to meet the needs of the people regardless of their ability to pay. It was a New Democratic Party Government in Manitoba, Madam Speaker, that abolished the regressive Medicare premiums.

Madam Speaker, I find it really tragic that in this country we have a Liberal Government in Ontario that still has massive Medicare premiums levied on people. I find it tragic that in this country we have a Conservative Government in Alberta that still levies Medicare premiums on people, Madam Speaker. These are two of the wealthiest provinces in Canada, and yet they levy a tax on the poor and a tax on the rich in order for them to have medical services. — (Interjection) — I find that the Member for Morris is saying: doesn't that say something, as if somehow that is a mark of accomplishment. Madam Speaker, we on this side of the House reject that approach entirely. We do not believe that one taxes the poor and drives them in the poor house in order for them to have health.

The whole philosophical basis of Medicare says that you should have accessibility regardless of your ability to pay. We on this side believe that 100 percent, even if those people on the other side don't, Madam Speaker. I think that's interesting room for debate that'll develop over the course of the next few months with respect to this whole issue and what directions people should be going into with respect to health care.

Our government's commitment to health care is also shown by a quick look at the statistics. Manitobans spent \$1,616 per capita in 1985 on health care compared to wealthy Ontario at \$1,602; Saskatchewan at \$1,523; and an overall Canadian average of \$1,568.00. To put it in another way, we spend more than 9.5 percent of our gross domestic product, as a province, on health care, a full percentage point above the Canadian average.

Madam Speaker, this government puts its money where its mouth is with respect to health care. It is our intention to maintain Manitoba's health care system as the best and most comprehensive in the country.

No Conservative Government would maintain this commitment. During the last election, the Mulroney Conservatives spoke a great deal about health care and what they called "that sacred trust." The reality is that the Mulroney Government has cut back on health care funding to the point where Ottawa shares only 40 percent of the cost of providing health care in Manitoba. What a tragic regression there's been by the Federal Government in this respect. When Medicare was brought in by a federal Liberal Government in 1967, ultimately implemented in 1969, it did so following the courageous NDP example in Saskatchewan, and the Federal Government told all the provinces that they would cost-share Medicare basically on a 50-50 basis, and that was the basis on which they sold a universal, accessible, portable program of Medicare right across the country of Canada.

Madam Speaker, within a few short years after that, the Trudeau Liberal Government welched on that deal, and they started moving that proportion of funding down. We objected to that, because we said that this provides an opportunity for the Federal Government to move that share down and offload the costs on provinces and create problems with respect to universality, accessibility and portability for Medicare right across this country.

That rule was accentuated by the Trudeau Government in the 1980's, despite our objections and despite the fact that the Minister of Finance for Manitoba at the time provided very detailed information showing how they were cutting back on health care funding. Unfortunately, that was the situation that existed when Mulroney made a commitment in Nova Scotia that, if a Conservative Government was elected nationally, they would have a 50-50 cost-sharing on health care in this country. I believe it was the Crocodile Room of the Peter Pan Hotel in Nova Scotia, in New Glasgow, all documented, Madam Speaker. The future Prime Minister of this country went on television, lowered his voice and said: "Medicare is a sacred trust with me. Medicare is a sacred trust for the Government of Canada."

Madam Speaker, today we find ourselves in a situation where the Federal Government has said they will reduce expenditure increases on health care to two points below increases in the cost of living. So that accentuates and worsens the examples set by the Liberal Government that didn't have that same commitment as the New Democrats with respect to health care.

And we know where the Tories stand. They stand generally to the right of the Liberals. So if the Liberals were going to hurt Medicare, the Conservatives, who are Liberals in a hurry with respect to slashing the

social infrastructure of this country, put that program into high gear.

You know, these "Liberals in a hurry" who call themselves Mulroney Conservatives when it means slashing programs have indeed left the situation in Canada where we have only 40 percent of the funding coming from the Federal Government. Every province is feeling that type of pressure brought about by unilateral, disgraceful action on the part of a Federal Government that has turned its back on what we all believe is indeed a sacred trust. But only a few people, namely the New Democrats in this country, believe it sincerely and totally and keep that trust.

To the west of us, Conservative Governments in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, partly in response to the federal cutbacks in health care sharing and also because of their own philosophical disposition to also be "Liberals in a hurry" with respect to cutbacks in health care, have cut back services dramatically and dismantled entire programs. I find that they have gone almost out of their way patting themselves on the back, saying that somehow we will deal with health care pressures by slashing programs.

We know what that approach is, Madam Speaker, because we in Manitoba have vivid memories of the Lyon Government's assault, the Conservative assault from '77 to '81 on the provincial health care system and on the entire social infrastructure of this province. So the message is clear. The Conservatives cannot be trusted to preserve a health care system that is so highly valued by Canadians. The record of Conservative Governments, both federally and provincially, speaks for itself.

We have asked for transitional funding from the Federal Government with respect to new approaches in health care development. This is not something that we just raised recently. My predecessor, the Honourable Larry Desjardins, called for this type of a health resources fund back in November of 1986. He reiterated that call in the autumn of 1986 as well. I won't take this opportunity, Madam Speaker, I'll do that during the Budget Debate, but I will speak about the past contributions of my predecessor, the Honourable Larry Desjardins as Health Minister, and the fact that I believe that he is taking a very constructive and cooperative approach in his new position in a way that I think is visionary, despite the attempts to malign him by Conservatives opposite. I'll use another vehicle, Madam Speaker, to go into that in more depth.

But when I became Minister in the fall of '87, Madam Speaker, I looked at that proposal with respect to the Health Resources Development Fund, and I thought it made eminent sense, as Desjardins calls, for a health initiatives fund. So when I attended the Health Ministers' Conference in the fall of 1987, I made that proposal again. The provincial Health Ministers agreed that we needed transitional funding to move us into the new directions in health care to both improve our system and also to meet the new challenges that we are facing.

I am happy to report that not only do the Health Ministers right across the country believe that is important, but also the Finance Ministers from provinces right across this country believe that more federal funding is required to bring us back to 50-50. Also, they believe we need that transitional fund to help us build for a better future, so we are taking that step.

Tomorrow's Budget, Madam Speaker, I'm sure you will agree, will again illustrate our commitment to build upon the achievements of the past to make an even stronger health care system in Manitoba, one which is responsive to changing circumstances and to new needs and ideas. So it'll deal with the existing system, I think, in a very progressive, constructive way, and also make that commitment with respect to this transitional funding apparatus that we are establishing, one which I think will serve the people of Manitoba very well into the future.

As I said, all jurisdictions in Canada are facing very real challenges in the provision of high quality and accessible health care. I have spoken of these challenges numerous times, and a number of them were highlighted in the Throne Speech. The Manitoba Government's response to these challenges of new technologies and new diseases and the fact that we do have an aging population which provides challenges - challenges which we welcome, because we believe that one mark of a society is how well it treats its elderly - but our response to these challenges is one of leadership and direct action in a constructive way, not head-in-the-sand cutbacks.

This fund which I am introducing today is a significant element in our overall efforts to meet these challenges facing our health care system. We will be seeking improvements to the system. We want more balance between institutional care and community-based care and health promotion and preventative health services. The fund will be used for programs which meet this objective.

The health trust fund will be used to support specific initiatives. These initiatives will include support measures to improve the health status of Manitobans; prevention and promotion programs; incentives for more economical delivery of health care services by present deliverers; innovative demonstration projects on health care services; promotion of better access to quality care in mental health services, in rural and northern services, and in community health centre.

We will also be providing for educational and training activities which contribute to health service development in a changing world, and we will also be providing developmental funding to explore the feasibility of new ideas, Madam Speaker, which only reflects the fact that New Democrats want to be forward-looking when it comes to health care.

This fund reflects the consensus as well of discussions that I've had with health care providers and users since becoming Minister. I have been told that we must change our system in a planned way, entailing consultation, collaboration and coordination with providers and users and, further, that the province must take the lead as the catalyst to ensure that this takes place.

We have also been told that transitional funding is critical in any attempt to innovatively change the system with a view to making it better. We have listened, we have done our homework, and we are active. The Health Services Development Fund is a non-lapsing pool of money which will be a clear focus for change and innovation over the long run for all people involved and interested in health care.

As a non-lapsing fund, it allows for a measured sensible approach with respect to planning for access

to these funds for new innovative programs without being concerned that somehow that money may run out in that fiscal year and there would be uncertainty as to whether there would be the money available in the future. So this is an efficient way of allocating it with respect to a focused approach. We believe it makes sense. We believe that the people in Manitoba will agree that it makes sense.

Let me emphasize that our commitment, both to changing the system and our desire to continue to provide what I believe to be the most comprehensive and finest health care system in Canada, is balanced. We have to achieve both at the same time, and I believe that is possible. I believe it is possible by ensuring that we provide sufficient for our existing system while providing strategically-placed money, strategically-oriented money, to steer this health care system in such a way that we improve it, gain more efficiencies and meet the new challenges that we have to face.

This legislation enshrines our belief that, through cooperative planning with the use of this special financial commitment, it'll be possible to provide both better and more cost-effective health care involving all of the people in this process. We want to take this opportunity to invite the various people who are committed to health care in this province: the doctors, the nurses, the workers, the institutions, the community groups, the universities, all of them, to work together with us in that collaborative way to build that better future. I know of no invitation similar in the entire country in this respect.

I hope, furthermore, that our example provides some stimulus to the Federal Government to do some thinking about what it has done in abdicating its fair responsibility for its share of the health care system, and that it twigs its imagination to look to the future to meet our needs. It's not bashing the feds here; it's an invitation to them; it's an invitation for them to participate with us. That's not bashing. This is the olive branch; it's an invitation. It's not a matter only of money. It's a matter of thought, sincerity, concern, and the interesting thing - and I hear some people on the other side saying all you're doing is asking for more money. All we're asking for is a fair share. Fifty-fifty is a fair share. To me, 50-50 is 50-50; for the Conservatives on the other side of the House, 50-50 means 60-40. That's Conservative arithmetic, 40 percent Conservative dollars equals a 50 percent commitment. There are no mathematicians anywhere in the world apart from Conservative mathematicians who will say that 40 percent somehow equates to a 50-50 fair share commitment. That's all we're asking for.

The irony is that, as we debate health care in the future - and I'm saying we need that extrashare because we have been robbed in my estimation of some \$125 million per year by the Federal Government with respect to health care and education. The Finance Ministers from across the country documented that they have lost \$8.5 billion in terms of federal cutbacks with respect to their fair share for health and education financing, not a New Democratic paper, but rather one that was put together by all the Finance Ministers representing Liberal Governments, Conservative Governments and the New Democratic Party Government, pointing out that the Federal Government has cut back that much.

I find it ironic that people on the other side who have said that their only solution to health care development

in this province is more money, because you will hear them over the course of the next few months getting up asking for more, more, more, somehow say that it is wrong for me to ask for a 50-50 fair share.

I've heard the Member for Virden say that it is important that we deliver the health care money in an efficient way. I agree with him on that. I hope that, as we move to attain more efficiency, he will put aside vested interests and say, yes, let's move to achieve that greater efficiency because the extra money that is saved can in fact be used to meet the new challenges facing the health care system. I invite his participation in that approach as well. I look forward to suggestions that he might make in a constructive way in that respect. I think it's important that we all participate in this process in a constructive way. I believe that is the only way that we will achieve the type of consensus, that we will reinforce the vision for our future that I think we all have, and that is that we have a health care system that is excellent and also flexible enough to meet future needs. That is the approach that we want to take.

We believe that this health trust fund provides a focus, not the only one, but a focus to allow people to think creatively, to put forward the suggestions like the Member for Virden suggests should be coming forward from different people. We look forward to that approach over the course of the future.

This legislation enshrines our belief that, through cooperative planning, we can in fact have a better system. I've been impressed by the response of the people whom I have met in the five months or so that I have been Health Minister with respect to this issue.

They recognize that health care does have pressures. They recognize that there have been federal cutbacks in funding. They recognize that we have new challenges to meet. What they're prepared to do is work together in a collaborative consultative way to try and meet these challenges in the most effective way. I'm not sure whether that would have been possible 10 or 15 years ago. I think that there was a bit of a fief mentality with respect to health care where people were more interested in their own particular entities than they were in the overall whole.

Now they're saying it's important to develop those overviews to see how the pieces fit together before specific investments or actions are taken. They have said that it's important to do that type of planning leading to implementation, not a research type of approach but planned implementation. They want to be part of that process, and they say the province must take the lead in ensuring that those activities take place in the near future. I hope that, over the course of the next month or so, we'll be announcing more of this because this relates to the overall health thrust that we have said in our Throne Speech we will be emphasizing.

I believe that the people of Manitoba, the providers of health care, will in fact get through some of the sensationalized stories that come forward from time to time with respect to health care and I expect will continue because, when someone is on a waiting list, there is a dramatization and people focus on one particular person, as opposed to, say, a whole community that might have unsafe water. It's not as dramatic dealing with a whole community that has

unsafe water as it is with one person who might be on a waiting list, waiting for a type of organ transplant. I can appreciate that there are the emotions involved in that type of situation. We'll try and deal with the emotional issues. We'll try and deal with them in a fair way.

At the same time, we hope it will establish this collaborative process to make the system better. As I said, I've been impressed by the response that I've received from people in the health care field. I hope to work with them in a cooperative way. I've invited all of them to participate in this process and there will be times as well when we are negotiating for fees or wages or grants where sometimes the negotiating rhetoric would leave one the impression that somehow this collaborative process isn't proceeding. But I would ask people to bear with that, because that's part of the negotiating process, because I believe that the overwhelming commitment on the part of all people that I've dealt with to date with respect to health care is one of working together, asking the province to provide the leadership, saying that they want to work in a cooperative collaborative way with us.

So, Madam Speaker, our record is clear. It is one of leadership, trust with respect to Medicare and commitment. Manitoba is now embarking on a path of plan-managed change to our health care system and once again, Madam Speaker, as we have in the past, Manitoba will lead the way in Canada with respect to health care.

Madam Speaker, the establishment of the Health Services Development Trust Fund is a crucial step in this broad-based strategy for change. I believe that together, as Manitobans, we can build a system which will serve us well into the next century. As a result, Madam Speaker, I ask for all people in this Legislature to support this particular bill.

Thank you very much.

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

**MRS. B. MITCHELSON:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise today, Madam Speaker, to speak on Second Reading on Bill 2, the Health Services Development Trust Fund that has just been introduced for Second Reading by the Honourable Minister of Health. Madam Speaker, I have some question as to whether the people of Manitoba really do trust in this NDP Government in respect to this "trust fund" that is being set up. You know, I feel that the people of Manitoba know that this is a desperate government, grasping at straws to attempt to convince the people of Manitoba that they are actually going to do something for a change, instead of just talking about it.

The health budget in Manitoba, the \$1.3 billion, Madam Speaker, is out of control and this NDP Government just cannot get its priorities straight and cannot make the choices that the people of Manitoba want and need to provide health care that they feel that they should have.

Madam Speaker, the Minister of Health talks repeatedly about Manitoba and Canada having the best health care system in the world. I agree, Madam Speaker, that all people can access health care in this

province and in this country, but I have said before that's exactly where the system breaks down. It's one thing to access the system, and it's another to receive the care that is delivered by that system.

Madam Speaker, I have to question what's happened in the Province of Manitoba over the last few years, when we've got a government that has cut back hospital beds and reduced services and forced people to travel out of Manitoba for badly needed diagnostic services and tests that aren't provided here. You tell me that that's a great, wonderful health care system. It's a two-tiered system, Madam Speaker, a system for those who can't afford it to remain here and receive substandard care, and a system that allows those who can afford to, to travel out of province, to travel down to the States to get the care that they so desperately need.

Madam Speaker, the Minister of Health talks about Medicare premiums in other provinces, and I have to ask whether there isn't some . . .

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Employment Services.

**HON. L. EVANS:** I have been listening carefully to the remarks of the Member for River East, and I have still not heard her address the principle in the bill that's before the Legislature. We are talking about a particular bill with a particular object. It is my understanding, according to the Rules of the House, that the principles embedded in the bill are to be debated and discussed and not a wide-ranging review of other matters that are extraneous perhaps to the intent of this particular bill.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The honourable member, on the same point of order.

**MRS. B. MITCHELSON:** Yes, on the point of order, Madam Speaker, I believe when I first began to speak I spoke in response to the Development Trust Fund that this government has set up, Bill 2, and I am continuing to address that issue.

**SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

### SPEAKER'S RULING

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please, order please.

On Second Readings, initially in the House the rules of relevancy have been very broadly interpreted and, while sometimes they do get very far-ranging off on totally other topics, it's my opinion that the honourable member was speaking about health care issues and, consequently, was within the bounds of relevancy for a Second Reading Debate.

The Honourable Member for River East.

**MRS. B. MITCHELSON:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The Minister of Health, in his discussion today on Bill 2 indicated that there were Medicare premiums in other provinces, and he was just absolutely appalled at the tax levy on the poor.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, C. Santos, in the Chair.)

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to say that just in the last week here, within the City of Winnipeg, this

government, by its lack of funding for ambulance service in the city and in our province, has forced the City of Winnipeg to increase their ambulance fees, which I must say is a tax on the poor.

Those who can afford it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have Blue Cross or extra insurance coverage that will allow them to have that service paid for, but it's the poor and those who can least afford it, who don't have extra coverage, who are forced to pay and forced to accept the added burden and the added cost.

So I can say that this government right here shows lack of consideration, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for those poor in our province who can least afford to pay that extra levy or extra tax.

**HON. G. DOER:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** On a point of order, the Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs on a point of order.

**HON. G. DOER:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, the Member for River East is giving us the gang-of-19 line on ambulance grants and forgets to mention the \$19.3 million for other social services in Winnipeg. I think that's important for the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** A dispute over matters of — (inaudible) — is not a point of order.

**MRS. B. MITCHELSON:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's unfortunate that the present government is so very sensitive about their lack of funding to the City of Winnipeg that they have to get up on a point of order that really sort of deflects away from the issue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Health, in his speech a few moments ago, stated that the Province of Manitoba spends 9.5 percent of its GNP on health care. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, obviously isn't enough or it doesn't have its priorities straightened out when it has to cut back on hospital beds and cut back on services and tests that are so badly needed by the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to - let me find it here - tell you a little bit about what this government promised back in 1981, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They said, "health care, not cutbacks." Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was back in 1981. They talked about care, not cutbacks. That was —(Interjection)— Yes. They thought that the Conservatives previously had cut and slashed and hacked, and they were going to do absolutely none of that.

Let me just quote what they said back in 1981. "Manitoba New Democrats are proud of the work they have done in making health care available to all Manitobans. Programs such as free Medicare, Pharmacare, and non-profit nursing homes were pioneered by the New Democrats. Our health care system has been allowed to deteriorate over the last four years. The Lyon Government has cut back health care budgets. The grants to hospitals have been regularly below the inflation rate. Community clinics have been cut and services in remote areas have not been expanded."

Health care is too important to be short-changed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's what they were saying. It's too important to be short-changed. We will restore the health care system. That's what they said. Preventative medicine would be a priority.

Dental care would be extended to cover all Manitoba children from kindergarten to Grade 12. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe there's still a program in rural Manitoba, but I have yet to see a program in Brandon or in Winnipeg for children under 12, a dental care program. This is 1981, seven years ago, and what have they done? How have they enhanced it?

"We desperately need personal care homes, and these will be built by an NDP Government." Well, I'll tell you, there are more people waiting for nursing home placement now than there were back in 1981.

The Minister of Health also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, talked about the Federal Government in great detail, and criticized their lack of funding or their decreased funding. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my opinion or from what I can understand, and maybe the Minister of Health could tell me some time, the Federal Government committed to 50 percent cost-sharing of insured services. They didn't commit to 50 percent funding of programs that are provided by this NDP Government by lack of prioritization, programs mismanaged, poor prioritization of health care dollars.

Well, the Minister of Health is talking about ambulance. Is the Minister of Health funding 50 percent of the ambulance services to the City of Winnipeg? Is he? I'd like him to answer that question for me some time. I'd like him to answer that question some time.

He says that we have to have a 50-50 cooperation type of program. I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was someone, just off the subject for a minute, but someone who spoke to me at one time when I mentioned, in a marriage relationship, if each side gave 50 percent, it would be a very workable relationship. This very old wise man said to me: "No, it doesn't work that way. If each side gives 60 percent, you will have a workable relationship." We have a government here today that whines and cries and complains and moans and groans about the other partner in this relationship, and then expects more in return.

I say to this Minister of Health, if he would give 60 percent, give some credit to the Federal Government for the programs and for the things that they do there, he might get a bit more cooperation from that government. Try hard to make it work. You're not working cooperatively with the Federal Government, you're not working cooperatively with the City of Winnipeg, and you cry and complain and moan. I say to you, try hard to attempt to get along and cooperate and communicate and see if you might get some better results.

The Federal Government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is not going to fund 50 percent of a department of continuing care that is financially out of control. It is not going to do that. When we have a government that makes poor decisions and mismanages the health care dollars in this Province of Manitoba, we cannot expect the Federal Government to come forward and fund 50 percent of that mismanagement. They will fund 50 percent of the insured services that they are required to fund.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister talks about cooperation, communication, consultation with all of

those members within the health care field. He says they're going to have a better relationship as a result of setting up this trust fund, and they're all going to work together cooperatively, and they're going to be so happy to work with this government. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, back in 1983, there was an initiative by this government to set up a Health Services Review Committee to review the health situation in this province and to provide recommendations for future direction.

These were some of the things that this review committee was going to do: to identify major cost areas and explore consolidation; to look for alternatives in patient care services; to review current bed allocation and utilization; and to review criteria of hospital admissions in both urban and rural hospitals.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is back in 1983. We studied and we reviewed and we consulted and we cooperated and everybody came forward with their recommendations from various different departments and groups and organizations throughout the province, and we now are in 1988. Okay? Here we are in 1988. How much money was spent studying and reviewing and deciding which direction we should take and which direction we should be going in health care? What actually was done with all the years of consulting and communicating and cooperating? What really do the people in these health groups or organizations in Manitoba feel that this government has done with all of their recommendations?

They have done very little, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and now they're talking about consulting and cooperating and communicating again. Are we going to do more studies? Are we going to spend more money consulting with them and letting them feel that they're making a major contribution to the health care system, and then are you just going to throw out everything they've said, and not do anything, not take action on any of their recommendations?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of Manitoba know and the people working in the health community in our province know what needs to be done. What they want is a government that is going to take some action and do something, to do something about the mess that we have here in this province.

Well, the Minister of Health asks what I might do. I'll just go back to Health Estimates for a minute last year, when I was discussing with the then Minister of Health, trying to decide where his priorities were and what his priorities were, and trying to get him to explain to me his department as far as health reform and health research. Okay? Research and planning and health reform were in two separate departments with two separate heads.

I said to the then Minister last year, and I'll quote: "When we're talking about research and planning, it seems to me that the research and planning stage is the first stage of what might work in health reform. First of all, you research and you plan, and then you develop your reform or your plan of action according to the observations that have been made during research and planning. Would it not stand to reason," and he had the department split, "would it not make more sense to combine research and planning in health reform into one area and, if you've got to hire the staff and have them working, have them working along together in the same department, the same director,

so you have the coordination, the communication to move from one phase into another?"

And do you know what the Minister responded to me? We should have hired you a year ago. Well, so I'm telling you I have made some positive suggestions to the Minister of Health in the past and I hope to continue to make those types of suggestions and recommendations. — (Interjection) —

I'm glad to hear that the Minister does welcome those suggestions, and maybe he'll take some of the suggestions to heart and implement some programs in the near future that have been talked about and talked about for years under NDP administration and really have had nothing done.

You know, the people of Manitoba really are not happy with this NDP Government, and not happy with the direction they are taking in health care. They believe that this government plans and organizes its health care to partisan politics, not to what's practical or acceptable or needed. They find this government has trouble making decisions. I think that the people of Manitoba, instead of having more study and more organizations, more funds, more bureaucracies set up would like this government to take some action for a change, to do something constructive to provide for health care here in the Province of Manitoba.

It's fine for the government members to sit there and laugh, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but the people of Manitoba aren't laughing. No, they're not. They're extremely concerned. Not just the Conservatives on this side of the House, but the people of Manitoba, Mr. Deputy Speaker, perceive that we have a government with a health care budget that's out of control, a government that spends out of control, cannot get its priorities straightened out, and they can't make decisions and they can't make choices. We've seen that in many aspects of government, and health care is just another one of those.

Let me just tell you what the people of Manitoba are saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The people of Manitoba know exactly what they want, and I hope that this government can help them in some small way to receive what they should be receiving.

They want prompt elective surgery here in the province. They want to be able to get needed surgery. They want to have a bed available when that surgery is required. By cutting back on acute care beds, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they are not going to receive those kinds of services. They want to be able to get prompt emergency surgery too, and they don't want to have to wait in emergency wards in hospitals for that type of care. And I will tell you, by cutting back on acute care beds and services, they are not going to receive that care.

They don't want partisan politics influencing health care decisions, because health care goes beyond partisan politics. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we on this side of the House care, very much so, for the health care of the people of Manitoba. The Minister talked earlier about the CAT scan that was opened in Brandon and the CAT scan that is opened at the St. Boniface Hospital. Do you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we in the Province of Manitoba are just now getting caught up with other provinces with the number of CAT scans that are available to service the people of Manitoba.

Where other provinces are going on to bigger and better equipment already, we're in a catch-up phase.

We've had to use the majority of our resources just to catch up because of a government that didn't plan and prioritize and organize properly so that we would have the same services as other provinces had. Now that we have caught up, we're behind again already, because there's a new machine that can do faster, better diagnoses that we do not have that other provinces are already putting in place.

The people of Manitoba want psychiatric services for the mentally ill, the psychiatrically ill, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have a situation here in the province where our top psychiatrists are leaving. They have no confidence in this government and the system here, and they're leaving to go on to bigger and better things, better opportunities elsewhere. The Minister says: "If they don't like it here, they can go." Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope that he's going to take into consideration that we are soon going to be out of all of our highly qualified medical professionals unless he accepts a different attitude and gives some encouragement for them to stay here in the province.

We have problems with our cancer treatment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have people who are waiting six to eight weeks for radiotherapy in this province. We have machines that are outdated. I have yet to get the answers on whether this government has ever provided a capital sinking fund so that, when those machines become outdated, there's provision for them to be replaced. I don't believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I'm sure the Minister last year would have come back with a prompt answer had he had a positive answer, so there's lack of planning again by this NDP Government.

We're cutting back on ophthalmology beds, hospital beds, and I know that they've implemented an out-patient surgery, and I really commend a program that can cut down on having people admitted to hospital for procedures that can be done on an out-patient basis. I agree with that wholeheartedly. But those people who need ophthalmology surgery who are elderly and are disabled are not the people who are going to be able to go in one day and back out the same day, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So we have a situation where, because the beds have been cut back, those people who are having difficulty seeing, who need attention, need corrective surgery, are waiting for longer periods of time to get that surgery.

As a result - they're the elderly, they're somewhat incapacitated - they're either confined to their home and their quality of life has decreased, or they might go out and, because they weren't able to get that surgery and able to see, walk down a flight of steps or out onto an icy street and slip and fall and break a hip and end up in the hospital, costing more to the system as a result, not less. We have a complication of cutbacks in ophthalmology care for our elderly. Either way, whether they have to stay inside and wait because they can't see to get out and have their quality of life decreased or whether they break a hip and end up in traction or with a hip replacement, their quality of life is decreased. So these are things that I think the Minister of Health has to look at and consider greatly when he's making decisions on where to spend and where to prioritize and what to do for the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that the Minister maybe could have implemented or introduced some initiatives in respect to doing some routine testing

in the Province of Manitoba. I've introduced a resolution and will be speaking on that later on in the Session, and I'm going to actively pursue through the Minister my reasoning and my justification, my rationalization for testing.

When we can test and discover and find out how many people and who are carrying the deadly AIDS virus, it will add to our knowledge and our factual information and our research as to know where to target our education and where to target prevention and promotion when it comes to caring for AIDS. I'm sure the Minister will agree with me that it's something that is not going to go away. The numbers are increasing. The people of Manitoba don't need to have health tax dollars spent needlessly on treating AIDS patients if we can prevent the disease from spreading further. So I think the Minister's going to have to look at that very carefully, and maybe make some recommendations as to where we should be going. I know I certainly will.

The Minister probably has a few questions to answer when it comes to specific initiatives by this trust fund. Is there going to be some duplication of services? We already have people within the Department of Health and departments within the Health Department that should be able to quite adequately plan and prioritize and implement health change and health reform. I believe that this new trust fund that has been set up is just going to provide for duplication of specific services that can already be provided. Are we going to have the Department of Research and Planning and the Department of Health Promotion and Health Prevention within the department, and then are we going to have another bureaucracy or group of people that are going to try to implement these programs? I think these are questions that need to be answered.

I've already mentioned that the Minister has said that he's looking forward to consultation, cooperation, communication with the various groups and organizations within the health care field, and I'm wanting to know whether he is serious at this time about using the recommendations and using the input that is provided to him by these groups that are knowledgeable in making plans and providing specific programs that are supposed to benefit the people of Manitoba.

As I say, the Ministers of Health under this NDP Government, in the past, have invited various people many different times to come forward and to give their opinions. A lot of them have put a lot of time and effort into providing information that they feel would be of benefit to this government to help provide a better standard of health care in this province. To date, Mr. Deputy Speaker, very little of that information has been used by this government to improve health care.

What I am saying is: Is this bill just smoke and mirrors again? Is this government just giving lip service to attempting to improve the situation and doing absolutely nothing just because their image is so poor in the Province of Manitoba? The people of Manitoba are not going to be fooled any longer by a government that professes to care and professes to have the best medical program, the best Medicare system, in the whole world when often the services that are provided are substandard and not available to those who need it most.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there are going to have to be some questions answered, and soon, by

the Minister of Health, not only of us in Opposition but on behalf of the people of Manitoba who have come to expect better than what they are receiving from a government who has mismanaged and wasted our tax dollars in many areas. I'm sure that there are some questions in the minds of our constituents and the people of Manitoba as to how well they are managing and how well they are prioritizing our health care dollars. I am going to wait with anticipation for the Minister to see what he is going to do with this trust fund.

Thank you.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for River Heights.

**MRS. S. CARSTAIRS:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

When I received this bill yesterday, I had to question if this government really believed that anyone in this province would ever take them seriously again. This is the biggest bit of fluff in legislation that I have seen in my three years as a member of this Assembly. It is intellectually dishonest because it purports to do things which it does not do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't know why that should come as a surprise, because the same Minister who introduced this bill was the same individual who introduced the heritage trust fund bill on Limestone - the heritage trust fund that now is never going to materialize and was never going to in the minds of people on this side of the House in any case. Now, instead of having a fund, we are going to have a \$40 million deficit in the first few years of its operation.

If we take this particular bit of legislation, then we must assume that, if you can't do something positive, then you put on the agenda a meaningless document, hoping that the public will believe you, believe that you are really and truly doing something when everybody knows that you're not. We get talk, talk, talk and legislation, but we get absolutely no action.

We will, if we listen to this bill, spend more money on staff and more money on bookkeeping for audits to be conducted, but we will tragically get no money spent on the servicing of the health needs of the people of this province. What is so very difficult to understand is that, if you look at last year's Estimates of the Health Department, every single initiative that is mentioned in this bill is covered in those Estimates.

Why are we spending some \$536,000 on policy and research if we don't do anything with it? I mean, I thought that they were researching, that they were conducting policy initiatives. If they are not conducting it, then obviously we have a saving to watch for in the Minister's Estimates of some \$0.5 million. If we are not already spending some money in community health services, in programs and operations, then we have a \$79 million cut that we can obviously see in this Minister's budget. If we are not spending any money already in mental health services, then we can have, it looks like, an additional \$40 million saving.

But we won't have those savings because those monies are being spent. They are being spent on service in this province to our citizens, but part of each component of those expenditures surely must be, how can you spend those monies more efficiently. How can you provide more economies?

There are so many areas, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where we need to have action and we need to have action now in the health care field. We don't need another pretty piece of paper; we need a service.

Let's take an example of some of those services that we require. In this city alone, there are 400 people lying in acute beds who require geriatric service in a personal care home, 400 of them who are getting inappropriate care because this government will not take the initiative to give them appropriate care. We have people who unfortunately have been placed in personal care homes and now, because they have been institutionalized, cannot be removed, who should not have been put there.

We have to ask what kind of intermediary programs are we putting into place in this province so that an individual can move from living on their own to living with some modicum of care to finally, and hopefully, never having to go to the personal care home. Why don't we have an initiative like that announced by the Minister of Health today?

Several days ago, I asked him about a home care appeal board. He says there is one. Well, it's a farce, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You ask - if you have a difficulty with home care - for an appeal to be heard by the individual who's delivering the home care service. That is not an appeal. An appeal is made to an independent body, a body who is not involved in the delivery of the care. It cost nothing, but we don't have it in Manitoba. We have heard, for at least five years in this province of a need for community health clinics, a need well-documented, a need that we all recognize. Why did we not get a ministerial statement announcing that yesterday instead of this bit of nothing that we got delivered on our desks? Why do we not hear about the reduction of testing, because there is an overabuse of testing in this province, and we know that and it is, too, well-documented.

The doctors at St. Boniface got together and decided that they, themselves, will put into place an educational program to reduce the use of ECG's. They reduced that testing required in that hospital by 41 percent. How does this government deal with the doctors of this province? Well, at every opportunity, it blames them for every single ill of the Medicare system. Yet we know that given a choice between the doctors of this province and the politicians on the government side, every Manitoban would choose the doctors.

When we look in terms of the necessity of coordination of services by the Health Ministry, we watched with sadness last summer the announcement of the closure of psychiatric beds at St. Boniface, immediately followed by the announcement of closure of psychiatric beds at the Victoria General, and realized there had been absolutely no coordination with the Ministry of Health. That's the kind of initiative we want to hear in this House, not the establishment of a trust fund which will do nothing but provide more difficulties in auditing the Department of Health.

We know that there has been a proliferation of walk-in clinics, a proliferation that is questionable in terms of the medical treatment that it provides, questionable in terms of double and triple billing because people who attend walk-in clinics are then told to go and make contact with their physician of choice. We heard the previous Minister of Health tell us, over and over again,

something had to be done to control that proliferation. Why did we hear nothing in that way yesterday instead of this ball of fluff?

In the area of mental health, we have known since 1972 that we are operating in a model that is the most expensive in North America. We also know that we are operating with a model which is not effective in terms of its treatment of the mentally ill and the post-mentally ill, but we have heard nothing in terms of changes in that direction.

What we need from this government is some forward thinking, some positive movement, some action - not immobilization. No more looking at, no more studying, no more investigating, no more rationalization, we need action - a-c-t-i-o-n - action. That means you move from one position to another position, and this piece of legislation has nothing in it that will promote, encourage or enhance action.

I don't understand how a government that talks about caring can introduce a piece of legislation which has no caring in it. It has no caring in it because, if you care, you don't sit around and talk about it, you do something. One has to question how did this little bill, because that's all it is, very little, how did it ever come about? Well, it certainly didn't come about from the doctors or the nurses or the paramedics or the delivery of community services for the mentally handicapped or the mentally ill. It certainly didn't come about from home care workers. It obviously came about at a caucus meeting of the government party all sitting around and saying, my goodness, we have to do something, the people are upset about health care.

So what we will do is we will present a bill, Bill No. 2. We will present a bill that says nothing, does nothing, but sounds wonderful. Well, we don't need anything else that's sounds wonderful. We need something that is wonderful. We need a health care system that is responsive to the needs, that is cost-effective, that delivers services when it is required that they be delivered. We need a health care system that is compassionate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do not need this bill to add to other bills which sit on the statute books and create nothing. We need a bill that creates momentum. We need initiatives that cause changes in our health care system, and this bill falls in all criteria abominably.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Morris.

**MR. C. MANNES:** Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I rise to speak on Bill No. 2, The Health Services Development Trust Fund Act. My comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will not be overly long, but I think there are some important matters that should be put on the record.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I, in experiencing life like I have over the last number of years - I won't quantify the number - have come to become very suspicious of people who use the word, best, longest, rightest, most, those types of superlatives, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If one hearkens back to the introductory comments of the Minister of Health, and if one wanted to do a count,

which I think somebody will once the printed version of his speech comes out, I'm sure they would come across that word . . .

**A MEMBER:** How many times?

**MR. C. MANNES:** . . . at least 10 times. He said this about Manitoba's health care system. He said it was the best system in the world. He said it was the most comprehensive, that we have the best home care and the best model within that area, and he went on and on and on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, human nature being what it is, it's usually the case of somebody, some individual, some group, when they claim they've got the best, that quite frankly it causes people on the receiving side of that information to stand up and say, I wonder if we really do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have relatives and friends throughout this whole country, as indeed I'm sure that most of us do, and thank goodness we have the freedom of mobility in this country where we can go and talk to those friends and relatives and that we can discuss certain issues and matters, not only within family but within provincial, within national jurisdiction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've had the occasion to address the topic of health care in various provinces throughout this land. You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what strikes me on occasion after occasion is that nobody who I talk to when we are talking about health care, when people from other provinces are talking about health care, will say that the health care within their province, indeed within their state, is not anything but the best.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as soon as I have the Minister of Health rise and say that we are the best in this and that and the next thing, I become suspicious. Quite frankly, in my own mind, I don't know whether we do have the best. I'm not saying we don't, but I don't honestly believe that anybody has the right to say they have the best within the health care. I don't believe you can quantify it. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have the Member for West Kildonan saying, of course we can.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I make the assertion that I did because you can move into areas which are much more objective, much easier to gauge, measure, such as areas of taxation and you can't make the comparisons there. It's almost impossible to do, to compare rates of taxations is between provinces and between states.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was on that basis that I say to the Minister of Health and indeed to the government, I don't accept your statement that we have the best health care system in the land and indeed in the world, using the words of the Minister of Health.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, five years ago, when I was a new member of this Chamber, I would be here and I would take a bill like this and I'd say, well this is a pretty good bill. How can anybody in their right mind have problems objecting to the purposes of a fund? The purposes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from A to H include activities that contribute to the development of prevention and promotion programs in the health care field, and so on and so forth to the last item, saying generally to support measures aimed at improving the health status of Manitobans.

How can anybody object to those objects within the bill? Mr. Deputy Speaker, I cannot quarrel with the objects. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is five years later and what we've seen over and over again, what this government does when its in trouble, when there's a perceived and a real problem in the community as they rush into this Chamber and they give something a fine heading, in this case the Health Services Development Trust Fund, and they try to sell it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm not going to go into the litany of the many bills that have come forward other than to mention basically two. The first one was something that was going to be called The Family Farm Protection Act. I'm not going to dwell on that. I'm just going to mention it. That was supposedly done, in my view, to spell out to all Manitobans that the Government of the Day had the solution to the problems attacking the Family Farm.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the former Minister of Agriculture says nobody said that. He's right. He never said it. But he purposely left the perception out in the community that's what this bill would do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's more of an important bill in the past that this one parallels to a very large degree. It's something that was given to us as Manitobans four years ago. It was called the Jobs Fund. Mr. Deputy Speaker, remember what happened. We had this problem with unemployment rates. So what happened was the Government of the Day said, uh huh, we are directing, in our view, significant amounts of money through the public service in creation of employment and we're not receiving our political due. So what we should do is pull part of it away from the various departments, supplement it with additional borrowings, bring in an act, put up some new signage and let the people believe that they're doing something. That was the logic behind the Jobs Fund.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is an awful lot different in this bill? The objects are fine, they're noble, but the object is nothing but to deceive. To use the former words of the Member for Churchill on one of the bills that we brought forward, "It's a sham; it's a practice of chicanery; it's nothing but a shell game." I dare say that, if you compared the wording in this bill to the one that came forward years ago under the Jobs Fund, you would not see a great divergence in that wording.

Remember what happened from that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We had the Provincial Auditor still today saying that this government has not properly disclosed to Manitobans, through the elected Opposition members, how it is they plan to spend the funds under the Jobs Fund. Mr. Deputy Speaker, do you read what's in this bill, full, full discretionary powers to the Minister to determine how the money that will flow into this trust fund will ultimately be spent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is not the essence of the parliamentary system that we are here to support. It's incumbent upon the members opposite on the Treasury Bench to tell all Manitobans, during the Estimates process, how it is they are expected to spend this money. Nowhere in this bill are we told how it is that the expenditures in support of these very fine objectives will be presented to members within this House. Mr. Deputy Speaker, again the whole area of ministerial discretion comes forward here again allowing the Minister of Health to direct the funds any way possible.

Again, let's reflect back to the Jobs Fund. What is the latest community - is it Community Assets Program?

**A MEMBER:** Community Places Program.

**MR. C. MANNES:** Community Places Program, Mr. Deputy Speaker. How many of the associations within our communities, indeed within your constituency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, made application under that program? And yet nobody knows the criteria, nobody knows the basis under which they are either rejected or accepted. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's strictly at the discretion of the Minister or of some committee of Cabinet.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the parliamentary system can't work that way, and yet the government brings in this bill under the guise of trying to convince Manitobans that they're going to improve the health care system by somehow creating a fund.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, where are the funds going to come forward for this trust fund? It says in the bill that the Minister of Finance, from time to time, will direct funds out of Consolidated Revenue. Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just like occurred on the Jobs Fund, he's going to take it out of the existing health area and direct it into something which has a higher profile.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's going to be an opportunity, by the wording in the bill, that there will be outside money that'll flow in to the extent that that is needed, to the extent that this bill is needed to accommodate that flow - then I'd have to support it. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to my best understanding, this bill isn't required to do that. There are plenty of trusts of government whereby the Minister of Finance can accept outside money and direct as the Government of the Day sees fit. This bill isn't needed to do that. If it is, I have to support it. I have to say that. If this bill is needed to accept outside money to keep it away from all those greedy Ministers who want to push it somewhere else and protect it in the name of health, then I can support it but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know it's not needed for that purpose.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know why it is needed? Because if you're going to put green signage up that's going to say the Jobs Fund, if you're going to put up another colour of signage that's going to say, all of a sudden, the jobs here or this building here is provided under the powers granted under the Health Services Development Trust Fund, Wilson Parasiuk, Minister, then to do that, you have to have The Trust Fund Act. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's what we're talking about in this bill, nothing more and nothing less.

I had to copy down and rebut a few of the comments made by the Minister of Health in his preamble. He said: "Isn't it a shame that the two wealthiest provinces in Canada have health premiums?" Across the way, I said: "Doesn't that say something?" And the Member for St. James said, "Sick, what a sick comment!" Mr. Deputy Speaker, I made that statement under some understanding. I just didn't hurl it across the floor as an empty statement.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, why are those provinces the two wealthiest in Canada? Certainly not simply because we have an NDP Government in Manitoba. That obviously has some bearing, but why is it that those provinces are the two wealthiest? Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm not

going to go into the long list of reasons that I have, but I will say to you that the system that we have in place today, whether it's the best or not - and maybe it is - would be wonderful and every member on this side would applaud it and, to a large degree, does applaud it if it were paid for.

What we have in place today - and if the NDP were half honest, they would tell Manitobans this - what we have in place today is a system that, although it may be high and we will say it's eroding quickly, really is false because it hasn't been paid for. It hasn't come close to being paid for in many respects. And yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have Ministers opposite who attack those provinces, who are saying to their citizens, we want to give you high health care service too, but at least we want to pay for it today so that the citizens who are consuming those health services tomorrow will be able to pay for them on their own and will not also have to pay for those consumed previously.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's the only statement I'm trying to make, and yet the Minister of Health comes in here and he says, isn't it a shame the two wealthiest provinces in this country still have health premiums? He went on further to say that we spend \$5,616 per capita, on average, on the health care system. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm sorry I didn't get all the numbers down quickly, but it seemed to me he said that the Canadian average was \$1,568.00. We were some \$50 per capita above the Canadian average. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it's on that basis, that for every million population we spend \$50 million more, that the Minister of Health can stand in his place and say that we have the best system; if that's the basis, \$50 per capita, then indeed this political debate that's going to swirl around the whole health care is going to be one that's going to cause great confusion in the minds of Manitobans.

Because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if what the members opposite are saying, the more money you throw at it, the greater opportunity, therefore you have to call it best or better. To use those superlatives, that is a sick attitude.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member for West Kildonan said I said it. I never used those figures. I gleaned those figures from the presentation given by the Minister of Health. Nowhere, I didn't have them. They were foreign to me. I wasn't aware of them. I accept them. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, yes, there are many things. I don't pretend, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to know everything like the former Minister of Finance. I never have.

**A MEMBER:** He knows everything.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** He knows it all. He thinks he knows it all.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm not going to rush to the defense of Prime Minister Mulroney and his sacred trust statement. It won't stand here. Certainly the Prime Minister himself knows what he meant when he made the statement and knows what was in place at that time and the members opposite do also. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Health in his remarks referred to the Session that we have for legislators whereby the drawback under Established Programs' Financing and

the impact that was going to have on the province was within the area of health and post-secondary education. He drew mention of that particular Session that we had.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know what struck me the most that day was when you talked to the NDP, or you talked to the groups who are organized within the community to go on the attack of the Federal Government for supposedly renegeing on what it was they thought they could provide to the provinces, had the economy produced at the level it was assumed to. What struck me the most through all these discussions - and I've been seen them all - is the word "needs." The word "needs," Mr. Deputy Speaker, is set out there far removed from reality. It's as if, because somebody has an identifiable need, it is something therefore that has to be 50 percent funded.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that logic cannot be sold by the NDP, because people know that we have needs far beyond the capacity of any government to provide. And yet, Mr. Deputy Speaker, read all of the commentary that usually comes forward from the NDP within the area of health, within the area of all community services, and you'll hear the word "needs" without the slightest tie into the reality of how we as a people are prepared to produce and to be taxed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister also said that Western Canadian provinces have cut programs to save money. Mr. Deputy Speaker, other than Manitoba, that may be true. I don't know whether it's true or not, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but this is still a free country. One would assume, if that were the case, that there would be line-ups in our institutions, in our health institutions, by people from outside of Manitoba who are now being denied that service, that program, by their own provinces. Where is it, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I see no sign of it. Where is it? Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it doesn't exist.

And then the Minister of Health - and this is, of course, what's at issue here, Mr. Deputy Speaker - he says, the message is clear. Progressive Conservatives cannot be trusted to maintain health care services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what the NDP does, when they're down low in the polls, they go back to their high card. Of course, the high card is you get out on the streets, you get out on every platform possible and you tell the people the big lie. The big lie is, of course, the Conservatives are going to cut pensions. The big lie is the Conservatives are going to shut down the senior citizen homes and, of course, the big lie is the Conservatives are going to cut social programs. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know what? The big lie is beginning to lose very quickly the grab it has on Manitobans.

The Minister goes on to say that the Provincial Government has been robbed by the Federal Government to the tune of \$120 million a year under transferring. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's not true. That's a great fallacy.

Before I complete my comments on this bill and, as you know, I don't often rise on health issues to speak, but let me say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one can see exactly what the NDP are trying to perpetrate on Manitobans by the introduction of this particular bill. It's nothing more than a cheap attempt, the cost of the paper that it's written on, to buy favour with Manitobans. Nothing more.

Well, the Minister in charge of the Workers Compensation Board chuckles at me, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But as my colleague, the MLA for River East, says, until the Minister clearly points out the source of new funding in a manner and which the Cabinet and the Government of the Day is going to direct funding, and on the basis and the criteria by which outside groups are going to be able to tap into that fund, I dare say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this bill, and this act to be I suppose, is nothing more than an attempt to buy favour.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, again for the record, I have no quarrel with the object and the purposes of the bill, but indeed to bring it forward in this fashion, particularly after the attempts on so many occasions to use nothing but hollow legislation to give support to the perception that they are doing something, I have great trouble at this point in time wanting to support it.

Thank you.

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. M. DOLIN:** You know, I appreciate the privilege given to me by the Member for Virden and the Member for Brandon West, you know, in not being a fourth-generation Canadian, to allow me the privilege to speak in this House, representing my constituents and the people of this province. I know they consider that somewhat offensive to this august body, except I intend to continue to speak for people despite the fact that I've only been here 23 years and in spite of the fact that I am what they would refer to as a new immigrant, one who is not worthy to stand up in this House because I'm not fourth or sixth generation or augustly Canadian born. I'm sorry for that. I apologize for that, but I am proud of this country. I am proud of the programs in this country. I'm also proud of the health care system.

I would like to make a comment, particularly about this bill, which I think is what was missing from what I have heard in the previous speech. This bill is designed to provide for initiatives to come to government to be able to innovate in the health system. The difference, as the Member for River Heights points out, she asked the question, why, when you have departmental research staff who can provide initiatives, why not let them provide the initiatives? Well, one of the reasons, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the reasons I'm sure everybody in this House understands is that you are asking for input and initiatives from the community. You do not let departmental staff or politicians innovate or instigate that. You allow the communities to take some action on their own.

I am particularly appalled by the front bench Member for Morris who, if there were a Conservative Government in this province, would most likely be the Minister of Finance, self-proclaimed financial expert, self-proclaimed researcher, and a man who understands the finances and the implications of the financial relationship between the health care system and the finances and deficit debt of this province.

Let me remind the Member for Morris what he said, and why they are not the government of this province, and why the people of this province will continue to reject them. He said, "Mr. Deputy Speaker," and I'm

quoting him as verbatim as I can, "we cannot quantify health care services in Manitoba. We in Manitoba cannot stand up here and prove and say that we have the best health care system in Canada." When I asked him, he said: "There is no way of doing it."

Well, I would suggest to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for his edification, there are many ways of doing it. One of the ways is the number of people receiving services when they require them. For example, prior to Medicare in this country, we know that 37 percent of Canadians had no access to health care services if they could not afford it. We know how many Americans now have access to services. That's one way of quantifying it.

Another way of quantifying it very simply is: How many services are available to people that they have to pay for and how many services are not? That's another way of quantifying it. How many people in this province get service compared to how many people in the State of Mississippi? One can make comparisons and one can quantify.

I have always been reasonably impressed by the intelligence and the perspicacity of the Member for Morris, and in this case I am appalled. You know, I am really shocked that he would stand up in this House and suggest that he does not understand how we in Manitoba can justify the excellence of our health care system, because we can. We can do it in many ways. We can justify it by the number of programs. We have a Pharmacare program that is universal, which is not available in other provinces. We can justify the excellence and the superiority of our health care system by that alone. We can look at our home care system.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair.)

I don't want to get into details with the Member for Morris. I just want to express my shock at the Member for Morris saying that he is incapable of judging and quantifying the excellence of the Manitoba health care system.

I would suggest that the people of this province, when they judge the ability of those people opposite to govern, this province will look at this front bench and say, here's a man who can not even define and figure out why our health care system is better or worse in relation to other health care systems, because he doesn't know what criteria to use. Madam Speaker, I am truly shocked. I am not only shocked, I am very disappointed. I have had a great deal of respect for that member and his ability to make that kind of determination.

I would also like to do something which I have not heard done yet from anybody in the Opposition, and that's to deal with what the bill is all about. What the bill is about is to support measures to improve the health status of Manitobans. It is to provide more money for prevention and promotional programs to make Manitobans healthier and keep them healthy. It is to support community health care, a program which has been promoted and moved by this government since 1971, since the report under the then Minister, Rene Toupin, came out, which is a goal that we are working toward.

Recently, in the Province of Ontario under a Conservative Government headed by Larry Grossman, one Dr. Mustard did a very substantial report on

community health care in Ontario, saying this is an intrinsic and necessary part of the health care delivery system, an intrinsic and necessary part. Larry Grossman, who at that time was the Minister of Health, stood up in the Province of Ontario and said, this will be policy. I am somewhat disappointed that they were thoroughly defeated because I thought Grossman was on the right track, as we in this bill are on the right track, as our Minister of Health is on the right track, as members opposite are on the wrong track.

I would remind people - and the Member for Morris once again talked about "the big lie," what we will tell people during a campaign, and the definition of the big lie, according to the Member for Morris, is the truth. It's telling people what historically took place in the Province of Manitoba during those dark, dim and Neanderthal ages between 1977 and 1981, when Sterling Lyon and his black cohorts ran this province into the ground.

Let me remind members opposite about the great "bedsheet incident." Yes, as a matter of fact, the Member for Brandon West, I should remind him, who was probably not here then, who was probably a clerk in Ottawa or some place, seems to forget about what was happening during the hospital cutbacks in the era of acute protracted restraint. I will remind him by reciting a poem which was very popular during that time: "Its acute, protracted restraint will cause many people to faint, while bloated fat Tories sit 'round with no worries and make R.B. Bennett a saint." I remind people of that little piece of doggerel because that little piece of doggerel is what people in this province were talking about in 1977 to '81.

The fact is, my wife at the time - and it was brought up in this Legislature - was in the hospital for a back operation, and they would only change the sheets two days out of seven a week. What they did is, they turned the sheets from top to bottom. Now, she complained and I called the then Minister of Health, Bud Sherman. He stood up in this Chamber when questioned by the then Leader of the Opposition, the New Democrat, who happened to be named Ed Schreyer who went on to bigger and better things, and he asked about that.

Bud Sherman at that time said, this is the cry of a hysterical woman. Well, I would suggest — (Interjection) — That's right, the Member for Brandon West says. I would suggest the Member for Brandon West should have been here in the province to suffer with the rest of us during that horrible age.

**A MEMBER:** Lakeside.

**MR. M. DOLIN:** Oh, sorry. Excuse me, my apologies. It was the Member for Lakeside who said that, and who was here and should know better. I apologize to the Member for Brandon West. The Member for Lakeside was here and should know better.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please.

The Honourable Member for Lakeside, on a point of order.

**MR. H. ENNS:** The Member for Kildonan knows, or ought to know, that when describing that horrible period of acute, protracted restraint, we built more personal

care homes in those four years than the Pawley Government did in the next six years.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please.

A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

**MR. M. DOLIN:** Madam Speaker has once again corrected the Member for Lakeside, whose wisdom I sometimes respect, whose playing fast and loose with the facts as he has just done, I do not respect.

I would like to point out for the edification of the Member for Brandon West and other members what happened then. The Nurses' Association of the Province of Manitoba called Mr. Sherman and told him that what was going on in hospitals about changing bed sheets was the absolute truth and Mr. Sherman, to his credit, called my wife at the time and begged her apologies and did apologize in writing to her and by telephone. The fact is that is what was going on. They weren't even changing bed sheets.

What this bill intends to do . . .

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

**MRS. B. MITCHELSON:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker.

I was working in the health care system at that time, and I will tell you that the member is not giving credit to the nurses in the Province of Manitoba when he said that they did not change the bed sheets.

**SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please, order please. Order please.

When I call the honourable members to order, I expect them to come to order and not keep on shouting.

The honourable member does not have a point of order. For the information of all members, to stand up and have a disagreement or an argument over the facts is not a point of order.

The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. M. DOLIN:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

If perhaps I could hear myself in this Chamber, if members opposite would stop being so shrill and perhaps being pinched by the truth, perhaps we could get on with discussing Bill No. 2 and the reason for Bill No. 2.

One of the things that both the Member for Morris and the Member for River Heights pointed out is they think it's a good bill but they don't trust us. They don't trust us to actually do something. As the Member for River Heights said, Madam Speaker, this is fluff. I forget what the specific term the Member for Morris used. A hollow legislation was the term the Member for Morris used. Madam Speaker, I would suggest to you that, without the teeth in this bill, they would be absolutely correct.

However, the fact is tomorrow is the Budget. There is an old expression that I have heard and I'm sure members in this House have heard - even the Member for Brandon West who talks and never listens may have heard this - putting your money where your mouth is.

If there is money allocated to provide funds for these community initiatives in the health care field, then this bill will be effective and successful. If not, it will not be. I would suggest that members who have made that their major opposition to the bill, when they see the Budget tomorrow, if the money is available for this bill, then I would certainly expect their support.

I would expect their support to develop community health care. There has been no community health care developed outside of the City of Winnipeg. Recently, since '77, if I remember correctly, we have Hamiota, we have Lac du Bonnet, we have nothing in Thompson, we have nothing in Brandon. There are great opportunities for those communities to involve themselves in providing community health care. This fund will allow them to do so, will allow them to initiate such a program, rather than having bureaucrats or politicians do it.

This will allow indeed the kind of thing the Member for River Heights discussed about, which he probably doesn't read the newspapers, talk about the controlling costs in the area of tests.

I remember it was only two or three weeks ago that the Minister of Health announced it was a program out of existing funds in the health care budget to do that kind monitoring. Well the fact is that monitoring is being done. This program and this fund will allow further initiatives in that area to make sure that the people of this province, Madam Speaker, only get necessary tests, not tests because somebody is pushing for them to get tests because they've gone to some clinic which happens to have a lab in the clinic which happens to be another way of providing some additional funds, so making sure that tests done are necessary.

I also understand that we have the full cooperation of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in this. Now we will have the fund and the money to be able to do this kind of thing, Madam Speaker.

Also, education - the Member for River East talks about AIDS. AIDS is probably one of the most serious threats to the community health in this society, in North America and in many places in the world. The fact that one of the things that this government has initiated is probably one of the first and most public AIDS education programs in the country. We certainly have not seen an equivalent program coming out of the Federal Government in this country, as you have seen in the United States coming out of the Surgeon General's Office. I would point out that this program, this fund, will allow for more AIDS education, treatment and research in this area funded and initiated by the community that's affected, either the health care community, the nursing community, those people who feel themselves threatened by AIDS.

We have developed programs, Madam Speaker, that are marvellous for the rest of the country. The New Democrats in Saskatchewan under T.C. Douglas, under Allen Blakeney have initiated what we now say and can quantify, contrary to the opinions of the Member for Brandon West, what we can now say is the best health care program probably in the world - the British, who have a nationalized health care system where all doctors on the national health system are on salary, or the Americans who have a free-market, free-enterprise health care system. We have developed a balance which is satisfactory to the consumer, which is satisfactory

to the producer, which is satisfactory to the people and satisfactory to the government. We have, quantifiably, the most accessible, the most responsive and the most universal health care system in the world to the best of my knowledge.

Maybe I should qualify that by saying the Northern Hemisphere, English-speaking world. I understand there are some very good programs in Australia and New Zealand; I understand there are some very good programs in Holland, Belgium and the Benelux countries, Germany also. I know that as far as comparing ourselves with our friends to the south, we have a far superior system. As far as comparing ourselves with the mother country, we have a far superior system.

But we do not believe in resting on our laurels and we do not believe in saying, well we have the best in the world, ergo we will sit down and just let the system deteriorate because we know, as a government, that you don't move forward unless you run. As a matter of fact, you don't even keep what you've got - you've got to run hard to stay in the same place. We intend, through this legislation, to run a little harder. We intend to allow the community to look at the system, to say yes, it's the best system in Canada, maybe the best system in a substantial portion of the world, but it can be better.

We, as a government, and we, as politicians, and the bureaucrats who work for us are not the only ones who have the definitive answers on how to improve the system. What we are establishing with this fund is a way of having the community involve itself in doing this. I think this is an excellent bill.

I also agree with what the Member for River Heights said and what the Member for Morris said that, if there is no money, it is fluff. I will suggest to members opposite what they will see in the Budget tomorrow is they will see the money to make this a reality. Not only will they see the money to make this a reality but I think what should happen then, if they are not totally hypocritical about this and if they do believe in improvement in the health care system, then they will come on board and, when Bill No. 2 comes up for continued debate on Second and Third Reading, they will support it.

Because I see no reason, from what they have said, aside from the fact that the Member for Morris, much to my shock and chagrin, does not know how to quantify a health care system and to decide whether one health care system is better than another. He can only count dollars, as he, himself, pointed out. I am boggled by that, Madam Speaker, absolutely boggled.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** It doesn't take much to boggle you.

**MR. M. DOLIN:** Well, the Member for Emerson suggested that it doesn't take much to boggle me. No, you know, to be perfectly honest, the Member for Morris is somebody who I thought understood how a government functions and how to judge the value of programs in a government department, particularly one the size of the health care department. The fact is that he stands here in this Assembly and admits, Madam Speaker, that he doesn't know how to do that, and then he will go to the people of this province and say

he wants to govern, and he wants to be a front bencher in the government. But he doesn't know how to make a judgment on whether the health care system is good or bad. That's appalling! That's absolutely appalling!

What I would suspect is that his fears will be assuaged. He will see the money made available. He will see that this is no fraud. He will see that this will allow community involvement, which is what has been talked about on the other side, and initiatives from the community not only to support the bill. I would expect his cooperation. I would expect the Member for River Heights' cooperation, even the Member from River East who has an understanding of what the problems of the profession are. I would hope from people in her profession, which are the nurses of this province, there would be many initiatives because they know the patients best, that there would be many initiatives coming from the nurses of this province on how to improve hospital care, how to improve care in the community for the elderly. Because I believe that nurses in many cases know a lot better than doctors. I do not believe doctors are the only gatekeepers to the system, Madam Speaker.

So I would like to express at this point my appreciation to the Minister of Health for bringing this bill forward, for allowing communities and the people of Manitoba to involve themselves in the future of the health care system.

I would also like to thank the Minister for having thought out this fund carefully enough not only to allow government money to go in, but one of the things is to allow private money to go in where people can share in the initiatives of the government and of the people of the province and of the groups such as nurses and community health centres in developing new initiatives which will make our system, which is presently the best health care system in Canada, the best health care system that could be in Canada.

We always feel that our reach should exceed our grasp, but we will go for it. This is assistance to help us go for what will be the most superior health care system and the most community-involved health care system in Canada. We have that now. We are going to make it better. I urge members opposite to cooperate in this venture, because I think they will be very pleased with the results.

Madam Speaker, I thank you.

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

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

In keeping with the remarks from the Member for Brandon East earlier on, I will speak directly to this bill, Madam Speaker. I've read through this bill. This bill is as phoney as a three-dollar bill. This bill is nothing but a publicity gimmick dreamed up by their communicators and public relations people. It's a hoax, once again, on the people of Manitoba, Madam Speaker. There is not one thing that the government couldn't do that it now has the power to do that it could do without this bill. You have the power to do everything that's in this bill as a department.

Madam Speaker, this government has used this method on too many occasions now. This Minister

created the so-called heritage fund. The previous Attorney-General created the Aid to Victims of Crime. What has happened? Nothing, Madam Speaker. There's nothing in the heritage fund, and this is just a hoax to respond to the image problem that this government is having in the health care field.

Madam Speaker, the members opposite, regretfully, have attempted to refer to the previous Progressive Conservative Government. When you look back at that government, that government did not close one bed, Madam Speaker. That government opened beds. It built the Seven Oaks Hospital. It never closed one bed. Nothing occurred under the Progressive Conservatives such as has occurred under this government with health care rapidly deteriorating.

We have a Health Minister who stood up in this House and said he wanted to consult, he wanted to cooperate, and together we could improve the system. Madam Speaker, why are the Manitoba Medical Association running a \$500,000 ad campaign about deteriorating health care under this government and this Minister? Why has he told doctors, if you don't like what I say, leave. Get out. That's the kind of consultative cooperative attitude that we've seen with people in the health care system, Madam Speaker, and they introduce this act.

Well, Madam Speaker, let me tell you and this House the facts, what my constituents are telling me about their concerns over the health care system. One constituent said, "As a health care worker, I've seen many instances of people having to wait many months for surgery, for examples, like brain tumours. Also, many people with flare-ups from chronic diseases, example, MS, must wait before being hospitalized and complications occur such as bed sores."

Madam Speaker, another constituent has told me that her mother and two other people she knows needed by-pass surgery. The mother was only treated after two arteries were almost closed and one artery blocked completely. We had to rush her into emergency before she was finally treated. It seems one has to be on death's door before one can get adequate treatment.

Another constituent, Madam Speaker, has told me recently, "My mother, a 76-year-old woman, waited four months for a CAT scan after a stroke." Other constituents are extremely concerned over the lack of CAT scan treatments and their availability. Another constituent told me that her sister was left on a stretcher in the hall of Seven Oaks for a long period of time.

Another constituent has told me, Madam Speaker, that both his mother and his mother-in-law have been put in the hospital, and he and his wife attend on a regular basis. Madam Speaker, they're unable to feed themselves and they're not being fed adequately. He's concerned that, in fact, their condition is worsening in the hospital as a result of the care they're receiving.

Madam Speaker, another constituent has told me that a friend of his recently had to wait four months for heart by-pass surgery. Another constituent has told me that her 87-year-old mother waited many months in severe pain waiting for a hospital bed so that she could have a hip replacement. Another constituent expressed concern over the delays in elective surgery in emergency treatment which have created emotional stress and can lead to further medical complications. Another constituent had to go to Minot for a test not

available here. Another constituent has told me that a neighbour suffered a sudden collapsed lung, disabling her from going to work. That occurred a short time ago, but she's not been admitted into hospital because of the bed shortage.

Another constituent has told me about low nursing staff in hospitals and especially in nursing homes. It makes it difficult to give quality health care. Another constituent has been waiting for elective surgery since last month. Another constituent's wife has had a cancerous tumour, but can't get into a bed in Winnipeg to have it extracted. Another constituent is concerned about the delay in CAT scan testing and the shortage of nurses.

Madam Speaker, another constituent is concerned that cutbacks have severely affected prompt cardiac cases and surgery and put lives in jeopardy. Another constituent, Madam Speaker, has told me about heart patients having to wait two to three months for angiograms at the St. Boniface Hospital, and for bypass surgery, up to six months waiting, subjecting some patients to fatal heart attacks. Another constituent has indicated that, just a few weeks ago, a cancer patient had to go to Vancouver for treatment that is not available in Manitoba. Another constituent is concerned about her husband who had to wait three months for CAT scan treatment last fall. Another constituent is concerned about surgery for cancer, had to wait two-and-a-half months for a surgery room.

So, Madam Speaker, you know if these kinds of instances and complaints had occurred when we were government, this party, the NDP party, can you imagine the petitions that they would have organized, the demonstrations that they would have organized? They did it over two pieces of bacon, Madam Speaker, they did it over two pieces of bacon rather than three. They have the gall, having been in power for six years, to have overseen a health care system that has deteriorated to this extent, Madam Speaker.

What's happening now, Madam Speaker? Let's look at Manitoba, Madam Speaker, let's look at Manitoba because they have been in charge of this deteriorating health system. Madam Speaker, they've been in charge of this deteriorating health system since 1981. It is deplorable, Madam Speaker. You know, when they say the Conservatives would cut back, I can't believe that, Madam Speaker. The survey that I've conducted and my other colleagues on this side have conducted have indicated that all of our constituents - I certainly speak for mine, I'll just speak for mine. Let the others speak for themselves, but I'm sure they are just the same. They are all concerned over the health care system and any deterioration, Madam Speaker.

Many, even though they're concerned, they haven't been subjected to it yet because they haven't yet required medical service, or of a friend or family. But those who have, have expressed serious, serious concern, Madam Speaker. I think everyone in this Legislature, I speak on this side, everyone on this side of the House does not want to see the kind of deteriorations that are occurring.

Madam Speaker, this bill is not going to improve it. What this government is trying to say though is this bill is going to improve everything, Madam Speaker. There's nothing that they can't do in the department without this bill, Madam Speaker. It is just a publicity,

a gimmick, a game, something dreamed up by the communicators and their public relations people. I have great difficulty in supporting a bill of this kind when it is just fluff, Madam Speaker. I hope the system is improved because I think it has to be improved. But a Health Minister who tells the doctors to leave if they don't listen to him, if they don't agree with him, Madam Speaker, isn't going to get the kind of cooperation that is needed from the people in the medical field. I say to this government, you had better do something about it because the people out there are extremely concerned about the system. I don't think they have the confidence that this government can bring about the changes that are required to improve the system, Madam Speaker.

I simply want to make that point that once again as the P.R. people for this government have in the past dreamed up these image-making pieces of legislation, that's exactly what they're trying to do here once again, Madam Speaker. This bill isn't worth a hoot, and it'll be the actual performance of this government that will be put to the test.

Madam Speaker, those are the few brief remarks I wanted to make about this bill.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Business Development and Tourism.

**HON. A. MACKLING:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I've listened with concern about the remarks that I've heard from opposite. I know the Honourable Member for River East indicated some concerns about health care. We are all concerned about health care in this province and in this country, but she hasn't indicated how she stands in respect to this bill.

I heard the Honourable Member for River Heights indicate concerns about health care but no indication how she stands in respect to this bill. I gather, I guess, by interpretation of what she said that she's opposed to it. I assume that's the case for the Member for River East as well, and the Honourable Member for Morris and the Honourable Member for St. Norbert. I can't understand politicians being afraid to see new initiatives carried on by government to try and develop systems that are even better than we have now.

Now, that's the thrust of this legislation, Madam Speaker. Honourable members will recall our former colleague, the Member for St. Boniface, Mr. Desjardins, talking about the continued escalation of health costs not only in this province but throughout this country, and the concern that we all had to share in how we were going to deal with a system where costs were escalating far beyond, in his words, "the capacity of society to deal with that escalation."

As he pointed out, Madam Speaker, and as our current Minister of Health has pointed out, we have to examine ways in which we can change the focus within society of treatment of sickness to promotion of health. What we have to do, Madam Speaker, is continue to provide the care that is necessary when people are ill.

But what we have to do is place the greater focus on the protection and the promotion of health. That's where society has to do far more. — (Interjection) — Madam Speaker, I hear the Honourable Member for Emerson say "stupid." I've heard the remarks from opposite and they are stupid, because they fail to

recognize that our society is faced with a challenge. We are faced with larger numbers of people living to a greater age, and we welcome that and appreciate that. We also know that medical science through its initiatives, the new technologies, are able to sustain life much longer and more certainly than they were in the past. So that is a benefit.

But we must find ways in which we can continue to provide the efficiency and the superb health care that is possible through all these initiatives and still be able to have sufficient money to afford all of the other range of services that are necessary in society.

What we decry, Madam Speaker, is that faced with that reality - and that's a reality that we haven't just discovered on our own. That's a reality, as the Honourable Minister of Health has pointed out, that was agreed upon by Ministers of Health throughout this country, that more had to be spent in respect to health care. There had to be a capacity to utilize our resources in a more efficient way to sustain health programs in this country. But what we found is a government in Ottawa that apparently has a plan to develop a greater level of a field throughout North America and, presumably, they want to see our health system go down to the same level as that in the United States.

We heard the Honourable Leader of the Opposition praising the kind of system that they have in Orange County, California. That's what the plan of this government in Ottawa is, to starve out the system. They've been carrying on the former federal Liberal Government plan. Cap the system, starve the system and then the system will break down and we'll have that same terrible kind of health care that they have in the United States.

Honourable members know, every one of them knows, of constituents who have gone south in the United States on a holiday, taken ill, been forced to use the health services there, and they know the kind of financial catastrophe that involves. How can the Honourable Member for Morris say that we haven't got a much better system? Surely, he knows of constituents who have suffered under the kind of regime they've been faced with when they've had unfortunate illness south of the border.

Madam Speaker, under this bill, under this program, we are hopeful that we will be able to initiate programs - yes, community-based - where there will be a coming together of a range of services, where nurses will be able to provide more services. Why should there be such exclusivity in respect to the delivering of some services? All members know in this House that there are many times when the services that are provided by a doctor could have been provided by a nurse in substitution. These things cost money.

**A MEMBER:** More cutbacks coming, eh?

**HON. A. MACKLING:** The Honourable Member for Emerson again is chirping from his seat about cutbacks.

Honourable members opposite, throughout the debate in Health Estimates every year, have been calling for more spending, more CAT scans, more spending on hospitals, and yet they have the audacity and gall, Madam Speaker, to talk that the Budget is too high.

We should have cut our Estiamtes more and reduced our deficit. They can't have it both ways.

Surely, if they are for quality health care, they should be standing up and praising the Minister of Health for introducing this legislation. By virtue of this legislation, as my colleagues have pointed out, for the first time citizens in this province, who have had the benefit of perhaps the best health care in the world, will be able to bequeath to society funds from their estate to further the initiatives for health reform in this province. What nobler bequest could be made by anyone who has had the benefit of our first-class health system? This legislation will provide for that.

Madam Speaker, this legislation will facilitate the coming together of new technology, new ideas, so that we can continue the efforts of social democrats in this country to make a better health care system.

Honourable members opposite sneer when we talk about social democrats pioneering the way. They know, Madam Speaker, that it was under a New Democratic Party Government that we abolished poll taxes, health taxes in this province. It was abomination, Madam Speaker, that old age pensioners were being charged the same health care poll tax premium as the affluent people in other parts of this province, people who were earning hundreds of thousands of dollars per year. That's the kind of system that a Conservative Government in this province was perpetuating. Under a New Democratic Party Government leadership, our health care program has been transformed to one where everyone has accessibility.

I heard the Honourable Member for St. Norbert trying to read into the record a litany of delay and frustration on the part of his constituents. Let us go back in history somewhat, Madam Speaker, and let me tell the honourable member that my mother tells of the times when she needed surgery and she couldn't afford surgery so she had to wait, not a few days, not a few months, but years. That's the kind of system that old Conservative and Liberal Governments perpetuated in this country.

It took courage and leadership on the part of social democrats, democratic socialists like Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd, to stand up to the pressure of the medical association in Saskatchewan and bring on a comprehensive hospital and medical system not only in Saskatchewan but ultimately throughout Canada, a system that now is being jeopardized by ideological people like the Member for Emerson and his friend, Mr. Mulroney, in Ottawa who are determined to starve the system and frustrate a program that has no equal throughout North America, Madam Speaker.

Honourable members continue to sneer and chirp from their seats. It was a New Democratic Government in this province that introduced home care, a program designed to facilitate people so that they could stay in their own homes and enjoy their lives more fully and enjoyably in their own surroundings. That was a New Democratic Party Government initiative, a basic health initiative because that, Madam Speaker, ensures that those in need of service can enjoy those services at much less cost than if they had to be institutionalized. That is sound programming, that's effective spending, and that's enhancing the quality of life for individuals in this province, and honourable members continue to decry that kind of initiative. It's that pioneering, that

reform, that ability to look beyond an existing system that's involved in this bill.

Honourable members, apparently, are so hidebound by tradition that they're not prepared to consider new initiatives, talking about bold, talking about being courageous as they talk about in respect to that phoney trade deal. They have no energy; they have no confidence in the future. We have that kind of confidence. We believe that people in communities can provide ideas about programs and more efficient and reasonable ways to provide services, and this bill will facilitate that kind of community initiative, Madam Speaker.

Just the other day, I heard on the Peter Gzowski program the story of a new initiative in respect to health care. It's new for Canada. It may be very new for Canada and very old in some other parts of the world, and that involved the care of children who are born premature - "preemies," I guess they're called. In some parts of the world, they've developed a system where there is a greater bonding of that premature child with the mother earlier, safer, and apparently much healthier at much reduced cost to society. Now surely, we should be looking at some of those ways that those systems which have existed in other parts of the world could be applicable here.

Madam Speaker, in many parts of the world, children are delivered by laypersons, health care workers who are not doctors. Many societies enjoy a much more effective and much fuller health system employing great numbers of people in the delivery of the health system. In this country, in our society, we have tended to make the doctors the focus of the health system. It's time that everyone in society took responsibility for their own health. I applaud the Honourable Minister of Health in Ottawa for standing up to the tobacco lobbies in respect to the anti-smoking legislation and anti-advertising legislation which he has developed and proceeded with in Ottawa.

**A MEMBER:** Don't overdo it, Al.

**HON. A. MACKLING:** Well, I won't overdo it. I won't overdo it.

But, Madam Speaker, it is prevention that is important. We as individuals have to spend more money and more effort in educating society as to how we prevent disease, how we live more reasonably, how we use food more nutritionally, so that we are not subject to that brainwashing, that incessant brainwashing of the commercial interests who want us to either smoke ourselves to death or drink ourselves to death, or any of the other things that are supposed to be so great for us. We should be living without the dependency on chemicals that is so dominant in food.

The Honourable Member for Emerson smiles. He knows if he goes into a supermarket and buys any prepared food that he will find a great list of chemicals in those foods. We have to develop in our society an understanding for the need for wholesome food without them being laden with so many chemicals.

Madam Speaker, we have to develop in our society a more holistic approach to the delivery of health care, so that, when the individual who is ill comes for help, they will have a multidisciplinary response to their

concern and there will be a more reasonable, more caring, loving treatment given by society to their illness.

Madam Speaker, there are so many reasons why honourable members should be enthusiastic about this bill, because it will give an opportunity for society to re-examine the traditional health care system and provide constructive criticism. I would think all honourable members would want to be involved in a constructive way, in analyzing our health care system and making constructive suggestions in respect to it.

Madam Speaker, there is so much positive to be said about our health care system today, but obviously there must be more done and honourable members have an opportunity to stand up and support the initiative. Sure, they can say, well, put your emphasis more here or there in respect to health reform, but are they going to be hidebound and sit back and say, no, we are not prepared to see any change? No, no.- (Interjection)-

Well, honourable members say, why can't you do it now? They know that, from their seats, they've been saying don't close any hospital beds, spend more on CAT scans, spend more here, spend more there, and we have to do that, we have to continue to spend. Where then are we going to get the money? Set aside, to look at alternative ways in which we reform the system and that's exactly what we are doing here, so that this is not part of the ongoing health care program. It is separate and apart to provide community identification of ways in which we can improve our health delivery system. I ask the honourable members to think about that challenge and not be completely negative about anything that's put on the table.

As my honourable colleague from Kildonan has said, if this is an empty gesture, if there is no money, if there is no commitment, then they can judge us, but have some faith and await the commitment of money into this program and then, if you will, challenge it. But I can't understand you, standing up and arguing against the principles of this bill.

Madam Speaker, I hope that in the days ahead the Honourable Member for St. Norbert and all those others who have spoken will reconsider what they have said in respect to this bill and when it comes time, at Third Reading at least, we'll stand up and support this bill.

Thank you.

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

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Norbert, that the debate be adjourned.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Is it the will of the House to call it five o'clock?

The hour being five o'clock then, on the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert

Order please, order please. I thought we had agreement to call it five o'clock, which I did. Now I'm calling the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert, Resolution No. 2.

## RES. NO. 2 - PROCLAMATION OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

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

**MR. G. MERCIER:** Madam Speaker, I move seconded by the Member for Emerson, that

WHEREAS the NDP Government proposed the Freedom of Information Act in 1982; and

WHEREAS the NDP Government circulated a draft act in May, 1983; and

WHEREAS The Freedom of Information Act was passed unanimously by the Legislature in July, 1985; and

WHEREAS the then Attorney General stated on July 2, 1985, that "I wouldn't anticipate proclamation within the next matter of weeks, I would think that it's more likely to be a matter of a few months . . ."; and

WHEREAS the NDP Government has still not proclaimed the act; and

WHEREAS the NDP Government has, among other matters refused public inquiries into MTX Telecom Services incorporated, operations in Saudi Arabia, the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation losses and withheld polls relating to the proposed inter-City Gas purchase; and

WHEREAS the NDP Government, using its 116 "communicators" has manipulated information to the public; and

WHEREAS the NDP Government has squandered millions of dollars without properly accounting for same,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislature demand the NDP Government to proclaim The Freedom of Information Act immediately.

**MOTION presented.**

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

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

Some of us, Madam Speaker, will remember the words of the then Attorney-General back in, I think it was the spring of 1982 after the Throne Speech, promised a Freedom of Information Act, when he stood up and promised to open up the dark pools of government secrecy to public scrutiny. Madam Speaker, a fresh, eager Attorney-General looked at this matter, I suppose, in law school for a number of years and he was going to bring this in. He persuaded the government to include it in the Throne Speech in 1982, the then NDP Government's first Throne Speech after the election in 1981. They diligently then proceeded, Madam Speaker, to circulate a draft act amongst all government departments in May of 1983.

Then finally in 1985, that promise from 1982 that they were going to pass a Freedom of Information Act, at least brought to the Legislature a Freedom of Information Act for consideration, and it was debated in this House, it was unanimously supported in the House and in the committee.

The interesting thing, Madam Speaker, was that there were numerous public representations made on the bill, people anxious to see such a bill brought into being in Manitoba, as exists in many other jurisdictions in this country and in the United States. The Attorney-General said, "Well, if we're going to bring this bill in, the bill then provided for that a response to a request for information had to be provided within 14 days." The Attorney-General said at that time, because people will be new to the bill, we should provide a little more time to the departments and people responsible for providing the information, and we should make that 30 days rather than 14. Of course, along with that suggestion, he said we will review how this act is working in three year's time.

So we agreed to that amendment, Madam Speaker, which appeared to be quite reasonable at the time. And I asked him when we were in committee, "When will the bill be proclaimed, Mr. Attorney-General?" He said, "It won't be within a matter of weeks, but it will be a matter of within a few months." That would be the fall of 1985, almost two and-a-half years ago, Madam Speaker. Still, this government has not proclaimed this act.

Madam Speaker, what is interesting to note is that, in early January of this year, the Premier of this province praised the federal Access to Information Act because he got what he thought was some helpful information on the CF-18 contract. What has the government's answer been? I was absolutely astounded last week during question period when I asked the Minister of Culture and Recreation when this act would be passed, and she gave no answer, no promise of proclamation whatsoever, and went on with the standard answer that we've received from the government, that the records are in such poor shape that we can't proclaim the act. And they try to blame the Conservative Government from 1977 to 1981 for this terrible shape of the records.

Madam Speaker, in the last 19 years, the NDP have been in government for 15 out of those 19 years. If record-keeping is a problem, you can't blame a party that's been in government for only 4 out of those 19 years for this state. (Interjection) Well, the Minister of Energy says, yes, you can. You know, we've come to expect that kind of response in the Minister of Energy's answers, Madam Speaker. We simply can't accept that as an answer or a valid reason for deferring continuously the proclamation of The Freedom of Information Act, Madam Speaker, especially when we made special provision in the act for any problems that might be associated with finding records when we agreed to the amendment that allowed up to 30 days rather than 14 days for information officers to provide the answers that were requested. So I am astounded, Madam Speaker, at the position that this government has taken as relatively lately as last week by the Minister to the request that The Freedom of Information Act be proclaimed.

It's not an act, Madam Speaker, that frankly, I don't expect would be used that much by members of the House. It's an act that will be used by the public and will be used by the media, Madam Speaker. Some people seem to have the impression that it's just the Opposition members who are affected by the lack of proclamation of this act. It's not. It's the public, in general, who are affected.

Now, Madam Speaker, one has to be very suspicious about the real reasons why this government has not proclaimed it. When we look at a government that has some 116 communicators whose sole job is to release information in a public way in an attempt to improve the image of the government, and we recall them - and the Member for Pembina, particularly, will recall the material he received after a press conference by the Minister of Health last fall and the comments that were made by the press people or the public relations people about how things should be handled better to improve the image of the government in that whole health field and particularly with respect to the numerous announcements the government has made on closing hospital beds.

I suppose, Madam Speaker, the proclamation of The Freedom of Information Act where there would be - and I won't say it's unrestricted access to government information because it's not - it is restricted and there will be numerous pieces of information that will be exempt which many people would like to have access to, but there will be at least some information that has to be made public.

But the question has to be asked as to whether that fits in with the plans of the 116 communicators and public relations people of this government to have members of the Opposition or members of the public or members of the media obtaining access to certain information which this government would dearly like to withhold.

Now we know that this is a government, Madam Speaker, that will withhold information. The former Minister responsible for MPIC proved that prior to the last election. The Minister of Finance proved that during the last election campaign when he withheld the Third Quarterly Financial Report, Madam Speaker. This government knows that because they changed the year-end of Manfor before the last election so that the \$30 million loss didn't come out, as didn't the losses of MPIC or the \$58 million increase at that time in the estimate of the deficit of the province for that fiscal year that was contained in the Third Quarterly Financial Report.

So, Madam Speaker, when we look at the history of this government, one can see now the reasons why this act has not been proclaimed and what the strategy is. I'm fearful, Madam Speaker, that this government will continue that type of approach and will not proclaim this act, because they want to control the information that goes out to the public. They don't want somebody to have access to it and be able to get reports upon request. They want to be able to release it, if at all, on their own timing, under their own circumstances, under their own conditions, Madam Speaker.

Look at the request this past week to the Minister responsible for MPIC on a simple contract. He sat there yesterday and stonewalled the Leader of the Opposition, and finally the Member for Brandon East stood up and indicated that Mr. Silver was still retained as chairman of Manitoba Data Services after the Leader of the Opposition had asked the Minister responsible for MPIC that question three or four times in different ways.

Have the polls, relating to ICG acquisition, been released, as they were promised last July by the then Minister and the then Premier? No, they haven't been, Madam Speaker.

I have in my desk an Order for Return that was made in the early spring of 1986, where I asked for a list of all polls and public opinion surveys commissioned by the Province of Manitoba, its departments, Crown corporations, and agencies for the period November 29, 1981 to March 18, 1986, the cost of such polls and public opinion surveys, copies of such polls and public opinion surveys, and the results thereof. The government has not complied with that Order for Return, although they accepted it some two years later.

Madam Speaker, it's interesting, on this particular subject, to note that when they were in Opposition from 1977 to 1981, they were adamantly opposed, particularly the Member for St. Johns, Mr. Cherniack, adamantly opposed to the use of public expenditures for polling purposes. We agreed, and we didn't have any. We didn't use the public's money for polling. Has there been that much polling go on during this period of time, November 29, 1981 to March 18, 1986, that the government couldn't, over a two-year period of time, put that information together and give us that information?

Madam Speaker, they're not going to give us this information. I could stand here and say today, with a great deal of assurance, that this government will refuse to give us this information before the next election. Madam Speaker, they won't give us this information, and I don't think this government will proclaim The Freedom of Information Act, despite all of the great promises and positions that they have taken, because they want to control and manipulate the information that goes to the public of this province, and anything goes in protecting their partisan political interests. I say, frankly, that's why this kind of legislation is needed, no matter who is in power.

Madam Speaker, I think we're clearly on the record that, if this government doesn't proclaim this information prior to the next election, then after the next election when we form government we will proclaim this piece of legislation immediately, and it may become difficult to deal with. I think it would tend to make any government of any political stripe much more honest and would genuinely serve the public interest, because we've seen what's happened when a government is going down in the polls rapidly, are in extreme difficulty with the electorate, are fighting off an election at all costs. They're not going to give the public the information that the public deserves to have.

Madam Speaker, I've said before, if it weren't so serious, it would be comical when one reviews the public statements that the former Attorney-General has made, the promises that they've made in the Throne Speech, the actual passing of the legislation and now the weak excuses of the Minister responsible for this act. They're bound to cast further suspicion on the honour and the integrity of this government, and they're bound to cause many Manitobans to believe that this government is only interested in power, is not interested in providing appropriate and proper information to members of the public of this province. Madam Speaker, we can only hope, through this debate, because it is the only avenue we have, that we can persuade this government to proclaim this act into effect immediately.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation.

**HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I am pleased to have this opportunity, Madam Speaker, to be able to address the critical issue of freedom of information and to put on record this government's position and the facts of the matter, because I am afraid that the Member for St. Norbert has not presented the facts and, in fact, has presented to this Chamber an irresponsible position, an irresponsible resolution.

Madam Speaker, the Member for St. Norbert concluded his remarks by suggesting that, if members opposite were the Government of the Day or if they become the Government of the Day, they would immediately implement The Freedom of Information Act. Madam Speaker, I intend to present in the next few minutes the facts of the matter and to demonstrate why that is such an irresponsible position.

If we are talking about responsible behaviour, Madam Speaker, then I suggest we ask the question: What happened when members opposite were in government between 1977 and 1981? Madam Speaker, I ask members of this House was any attempt made by members opposite when they were in government, even though I grant you it was for a very short period of time, to address the issue of freedom of information? Were there any proposals considered for legislation? Was there any interest, any commitment to moving in this direction? Madam Speaker, I think the facts speak for themselves and, in fact, the record speaks for itself, the record of members opposite.

Let us not forget a fact that was mentioned during the last Session. When members opposite were defeated in 1981, the records of the Ministers in that government were not forthcoming, Madam Speaker, to the Archives. In fact, let it be known that there were but two or three former Ministers from that government who submitted any records to the Archives. There have been - and the Member for Lakeside will recall this incident and this situation - in fact, Madam Speaker, records found outside, shredded outside Ministers' offices. There were records found in green garbage bags on the legislative grounds. Madam Speaker, it was when this government took office in 1981 that serious action on this matter, serious attention to freedom of information was finally given.

Let me start by presenting the facts. If members opposite are so interested in freedom of information, they will want to hear the facts and pay close attention. Let us start with the fact that it was this government, Madam Speaker, this NDP Government, that made the commitment to the people of Manitoba to introduce freedom-of-information legislation. Madam Speaker, it was this government that introduced such legislation, and it was this government that saw the legislation through the various stages of the legislative process to the passage in July of 1985 and, I'm pleased to say, with the unanimous support of all members in this Chamber.

In introducing this legislation, the government then, this government, made clear its commitment to certain principles which are the cornerstones in democratic societies. Madam Speaker, the act, as it was passed by this government, provided Manitobans with one of the most advanced pieces of legislation across the country. Madam Speaker, that Freedom of Information

Act drew high praise for the manner in which it struck a reasonable balance between the important principle of public access, the important balance between public access and the competing principles such as the right to personal privacy and confidentiality.

Madam Speaker, this government remains committed to this legislation, both in the spirit of its intent and in the spirit of its implementation. This legislation, Madam Speaker, is fundamentally about democracy, about informed citizenry and about equitable access, principles firmly rooted in this government's actions.

Madam Speaker, in speaking to the resolution today, I want to again reiterate my government's commitment to the freedom-of-information legislation and its proclamation because, contrary to what members opposite have stated both inside the House as we have just heard from the Member for St. Norbert and outside the House and contrary to what the media have reported, this act is far from gathering dust on a shelf in the library of the Manitoba Legislature.

Since the passage of the legislation, about two-and-a-half years ago - a mere two-and-a-half years ago - preparation for the proclamation of this legislation has been a top priority. I want to tell through you, Madam Speaker, to members in this Chamber that, as Minister responsible for the implementation of this act, I can assure the House that there has been steady progress, steady progress in the identification, the description and the scheduling of the record system. That has all been accelerated. In addition, we have made incredible progress in ensuring that all members of this House, all civil servants and the public are growing in their understanding of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, the members opposite have made a lot of irresponsible statements about timing of the proclamation of this legislation. Let me say to them through you, Madam Speaker, that timing of this legislation of the proclamation of this legislation relates inextricably to the scale and complexity of readying the government's record systems. That readiness has its own history in the province that is unique. It's unique both to other provincial or federal jurisdictions and it is unique in this particular moment in time in the information age where the public as well as the private sectors are faced with the management of vast amounts of information in a variety of media.

Let me mention, Madam Speaker, issues relating to the government's record system. Since it is not this government's intention to proclaim this legislation without sufficient or efficient information management practices in place, to do otherwise, Madam Speaker, would be totally irresponsible. In other words, Madam Speaker, the management of records and information is not only critical to proclamation, but it is essential to the effective administration of The Freedom of Information Act.

This point, Madam Speaker, was reinforced only last year in the Federal Government system where, after three years of freedom of information and after over 40 years of a Records Management Program in place in the Government of Canada, the one component put above all others by a federal Treasury Board Review was the need - the need I stress - for quality records and information management.

Perhaps some history of the state of Manitoba Government records might help put this in perspective

for members opposite and help them understand the monumental task which has been faced by staff, the staff who are being stretched to the limit since this legislation received Royal Assent. Madam Speaker, just over two decades ago, a report on the state of records management in the government noted that such essential features as record scheduling, record storage, filing procedures and equipment, as well as microfilming, were, and I quote: "treated wastefully, haphazardly, and inefficiently."

The report pointed out, Madam Speaker, that well over 200,000 cubic feet of records were occupying more than 125,000 square feet of office space, attics, basements, sub-basements, firetraps and rat holes. The fragmented and chaotic records management conditions characterized in that report led to The Legislative Library Act in 1966-67. A component of that act was the establishment of the Provincial Documents Committee, which was charged with approving record schedules.

During the Seventies, however, despite reports and recommendations throughout that period, and reports that pointed to the increasing urgency of the need to deal with many serious and mounting information management deficiencies, records management provisions, I regret to say were not acted upon in any methodical fashion.

Finally, in 1981, the Provincial Archivist prepared a photo essay - and members opposite should recall this, those who were in government in that short period of time - which provided the following description: "Matters have continued to deteriorate and the dimensions of the problem to explode with regard to records control and retrieval, wasteful storage, and often appalling and haphazard conditions, prolonged and unnecessary retention of duplicate records, defective filing and classification systems, lack of security, in many cases, even for the most sensitive records."

This report, Madam Speaker, estimated that 500,000 cubic feet of paper records had accumulated in Winnipeg alone and were largely being mismanaged. Since that time, Madam Speaker, significant resource increases and facility improvements have been allocated to the Archives to address the accumulated backlogs created in previous years and to assist departments and agencies in approving their current record-keeping systems.

Still the proliferation of material to be recorded and stored continues to be staggering. Last year, Madam Speaker, Archives estimated that the Manitoba Government annually produces upward of six shelf miles of paper records. To put that in more graphic terms, that means every year this government alone produces paper that would stretch from here to as high as the flying altitude of a 747. — (Interjection) — I'm wondering if members opposite are listening to the facts being presented to them, so that they will understand the requirements that are necessary before proclamation can take place.

Madam Speaker, The Freedom of Information Act's proclamation goes beyond this government's will to be open. This act must deal with the realities of records management and, once implemented - and the Member for Lakeside will want to answer these questions: How do we know what information is there? How do we

decide what is stored and what is destroyed? How do we find the information? This act, Madam Speaker, as most members will know, requires the production of information within a 30-day time period. Our intention is that departments will be as prepared as possible to meet this requirement.

I'd like to point out, Madam Speaker, that the Federal Government has had a Records Management Program in place for over four decades; Ontario for two decades. Manitoba only began this systematic management of records in the last decade. I believe that we have come a long way in a relatively short period of time. Madam Speaker, can you tell me how much time I might have left?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** One minute.

**HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS:** One minute?

Madam Speaker, let me reiterate that we are working with great haste to meet the requirements of The Freedom of Information Act, particularly an access guide which, as members know, is called for in the legislation and requires a tremendous amount of work and effort on the part of all staff throughout all government departments and agencies.

That work is proceeding, Madam Speaker, and on schedule. Let me also indicate to members opposite that we are not attempting to hold up proclamation of this legislation in order to put in place a Cadillac model. We are making no promises that the access guide will be totally complete, that all records will be scheduled, that every tiny detail will be looked after.

We are putting in place a moderate system, a system that will meet the minimum requirements of the freedom-of-information legislation, so that we may commit it to the principles and the spirit of this legislation that we are all committed to.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

**MR. J. McCRAE:** I learn a little more every day about how incredibly naive I am, Madam Speaker, because you know I thought for sure the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation would be on her feet as soon as she could get there after the Member for St. Norbert spoke, on her feet to tell us that the plan of her colleagues was to support the resolution put down on the Order Paper by the Honourable Member for St. Norbert. Either that, or that she was announcing that she was unable or unwilling to carry out the thrust of The Freedom of Information Act through its proclamation and announcing her resignation as a member of the caucus opposite, because those are the only two courses available to the Minister in charge. Either put up, or shut up and resign basically is where we're at.

Madam Speaker, the Minister spent whatever her time was, 15 minutes or so, telling us about how committed she and her government are to freedom-of-information legislation. Yet in 1985, the previous Minister in charge told us that legislation would be proclaimed if not within weeks, within a matter of months. I find this two-and-a-half years later just a little

bit difficult to swallow. You'll have to forgive me if I find it difficult to believe this but, parliamentary rules being as they are, Madam Speaker, as the Honourable Member for Niakwa once said: "I believe the Minister, nobody else in the province believes the Minister, Madam, but I do because the Parliamentary Rules say I have to."

She spent 15 minutes telling us about how committed she and her government are to freedom of information and the proclamation of the act. She didn't deal at all with the promise made by the Member for Fort Rouge, made some two-and-a-half years ago. I say, shame on this government. It obviously has a lot to hide.

Sitting in this Chamber now, Madam Speaker, reminds me of the dying days of the Trudeau era in Canada. I remember well the way the House of Commons operated in the dying days, and how paranoiac the government of that day in Ottawa was, how absolutely frightened they were, of allowing any information to be divulged to anyone, be it the media or politicians or members of the public. It wasn't that much longer before that government was defeated in the worst defeat in history. I predict that will be happening in this province, Madam Speaker, as well.

Freedom of information is something that the Conservatives of those days in Ottawa, just as we are now, pushed for. We wanted access to more information. We wanted the media to have access to information, and the people to have access to information. Now, if the information had been available, Madam Speaker, I have no doubt the Trudeau era would have ended much sooner than it did, and that is the case that we have in Manitoba today.

Now I recognize, as the Honourable Member for St. Norbert told us, that it would only be very shortly before an election that this government would be proclaiming freedom-of-information legislation in this province so that any information obtained couldn't be obtained until after the election so that, on the off-chance they might win an election, they would have to deal with that mess at that time.

But then I recognize very much that any future government living under freedom-of-information will have to be forthcoming with that information, and there is something about information that brings about some honesty in government. That is basically what we are trying to wring out of honourable members opposite. We know very well why they are so reluctant to make the record of their performance available to the people of this province.

**A MEMBER:** They have so much to hide.

**MR. J. McCRAE:** They have so much to hide. Sure, there is no question the Federal Conservatives pushed for this type of legislation, got it, and are suffering for it over one issue or another. I say that's good in a democratic society - so be it. If the facts are there, let the facts be known. There are occasions when any government living under such a regime will suffer from the fact that information is made available. But we are in a trusteeship mode here, Madam Speaker. We are here by virtue of the public trust and the trust placed in us so that, if we should slip up, then those facts should be made known and we should suffer for it if that's what we deserve.

Madam Speaker, I'm on my feet today primarily, I think, because I have a person living in my area who is not a member of the media and not a politician, but is one who spent more time in jail than he might have, had freedom-of-information laws been proclaimed in this province. The fact is the parole authorities were acting on information made available by the Provincial Government in making their decision on whether this individual should be paroled.

Well, the individual wasn't given the early parole he was applying for but, on looking at some of the information made available by the Manitoba Government, I saw an awful lot of information blacked out, this information made available to my constituent or that person who lives in my area. The Parole Board was able to have that information, but my contact wasn't and I think that somehow is totally unfair. If there was information being used there, then this person should have been able to be given an opportunity to respond to whatever it was.

It does lead now, in the case of this person, to a fair amount of fear as to what his future is going to be and he certainly feels intimidated. It's a very discomfiting feeling to know that some people have information about you and you don't know what it is, especially when you have had difficulties with the law. Those things, once you've served your time and paid your price, you should be able to walk with your head high, but this person is unable to because of the actions of the government opposite.

I spoke, Madam Speaker, about trust in my contribution to the Throne Speech Debate. I think the fact that the government is sitting on freedom-of-information legislation all this time speaks volumes and it speaks a lot louder than a lot of other things could about how far honourable members opposite can be trusted in their stewardship of the finances and the future of our province.

I'm not satisfied, for instance, about the information made available to me, Madam Speaker, when I asked questions in this place about the Manitoba Labour Education Centre. We looked for the kinds of details that would give us a better understanding of the operation of some of these organizations. After all, I say we are entitled to that information because these organizations are funded publicly. Whether that's appropriate or not is certainly for another day, and I've made some points about that, but I really would feel better about pursuing matters and feel more confident about the arguments that I make if it was possible for me to be furnished with information which I claim to be entitled to.

I remember the Perkins affair at Brandon University and how it was like pulling rooster's teeth or hen's teeth, whichever you prefer, Madam Speaker, to get information out of the then Minister of Education regarding the unceremonious firing of Dr. Perkins and the way he was treated by the Board of Governors of Brandon University at that time.

Getting information was very, very difficult. We had to take it out a little at a time and we had to be very clever in the way we addressed our questions because Ministers were not very responsive and treated us as if we weren't entitled to know certain information which, as it turned out, we finally got enough information to draw some conclusions. But I still wonder if we know

everything there was to know about that. In that case, you will recall that the Minister of Education at that time, the Member for Flin Flon, was very much supportive of hiding information from the public. I say that is totally inappropriate.

It comes to my mind the situation with the Honourable Member for Thompson and the use of space that he is entitled to, apparently - office space up in Thompson that other honourable members of this Chamber are not entitled to have. It bothers me that my Premier and your Premier, Madam, treat me and others in this Chamber as second-class members of the Legislative Assembly while the honourable member sits smiling as a "Class A" MLA. That is very upsetting.

The information made available to me was inadequate. I wrote a letter to the Premier asking questions about the use that the Honourable Member for Thompson was making at the provincial building in Thompson, asking questions about the use that he's making of government paid staff, telephone service, how many square feet he's using, furniture, all those kinds of things. The Minister's answer dealt with none of the specifics of my request for information, but gave a vague answer which is supposed to keep me, I presume, quiet for the rest of my life about this issue.

We're reminded that the honourable member is a legislative assistant to the Honourable Member for Brandon East. In addition to the abuse of that position of other legislative assistants in this place, we have that as an excuse for the Member for Thompson to occupy office space at the expense of the Government of Manitoba. Madam Speaker, we have constituency allowances which are supposed to be used for these things.

I asked about the Member for Lac du Bonnet. Did he at that time have office space at the provincial building in Beausejour? The answer was no. Well, maybe he does now, knowing that is available to him free of charge and that he has left to him his total constituency allowance, Madam, available to him to be used to keep in better contact with his constituents.

So we have a rank discrimination here on that situation with those two honourable members or that one Honourable Member for Thompson, who is able to make better use of his constituency allowance than I am. So the Premier denies, I suppose, that we have "Class A" or "Class B" MLAs, but it's obvious that's what we have.

The fact is I want to know about that. Maybe freedom of information can help me get that information, Madam Speaker, because as a taxpayer I'm entitled to it. And my constituents are very upset about this, because I can't provide the service that he can by virtue of the fact that he's got his hands in the provincial till.

So, Madam Speaker, the fact that this government relies more on manipulation of information and propagandists and so-called apple polishers, more than they do on using freedom of information and allowing the sun to shine on information in this province, that is pretty reprehensible and it speaks loudly about what the future of this government is. It's not a very long one, and it'll be pretty bleak once they find themselves on the other side of the House.

We need to know about opinion polls paid for by the taxpayers. We need to know the true cost and how it's made up, the cost of the gas company adventure, the

one that honourable members opposite were trying to impose on Manitobans - the Member for Thompson telling his constituents: Oh, I'm working with the Minister of Energy to bring gas service to Thompson. Well, isn't that just dandy, Madam Speaker! But we need to know how the money was spent on that adventure so that it won't happen again. Let this government come clean. It's hiding too much.

I remind you of some of the comments of the Honourable Member for St. Vital about letting the sun shine in and letting the people know, and the Member for Burrows as well. If those members mean what they're saying, let them vote for this resolution and let the sun shine in this province.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Attorney-General.

**HON. V. SCHROEDER:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise to speak against the resolution, Madam Speaker. It's nothing but a pile of grandstanding. One looks at this bunch opposite and the only thing that comes to mind is, "Hypocrisy, thy name is Tory."

Where were they, when they were in office, when the Member for Minnedosa or the Member for Lakeside or the Member for Pembina and so on were in office, where were they on freedom of information? What did they do with their books when they were kicked out of office, the first government in our history to have been kicked out after one term? What did they do? They burned the books. They chopped, they mutilated, they burned the books. We came to empty offices. They didn't have the courage to leave the books which were not theirs. They were the books of the people of Manitoba; they were the books of the taxpayer; they were the books of society. They tore them up; they mutilated them; they burned them. They must have spent days, evenings, weekends, Sundays, getting rid of those books between November 17, 1981 and December 1, 1981. Then they come in here and tell us about how they would never, never, ever, ever keep a secret from anyone. What hypocrisy!

When they were in office, they were on this side and there was a report of Hydro. They talked about shredding. They didn't like a Hydro report, so what did they do? They shredded the whole report, thousands of reports costing thousands of dollars somewhere in their office in the basement. They must have had Ollie North down here in those days. They could have been the biggest confetti manufacturers in North America. They could have taken advantage of every marriage with all the shredding that went on.

They come into this House today and tell us, who have presented this legislation and are working at implementation, that they're not happy. Maybe they're not happy; maybe we should be moving faster; maybe we should be spending more resources on it.

We are spending resources on this issue in every single department of government to try to prepare for the implementation of the act. We're trying to comply. There is a lot of work which we're doing. Just as an example, there's a requirement in the act that an access guide be prepared. That guide would provide basic information and assist the applicant to more closely identify the area within which information is to be sought. It would provide information about government

programs, government services, government records. It will be available in every department, every board, every commission, and in every Crown agency.- (Interjection)- The Member for Brandon West seems to be somewhat berserk this afternoon, chirping away from his desk as usual, talking about the Labour Education Centre and expecting that, when this act comes into effect, he will have his slimy paws on the activities of that centre. Well, he will not. He will not, no more than he will get his nose into the churches and businesses and farming activities of this province because of this bill.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Order please.

The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

**MR. J. McCRAE:** Madam Speaker, I know the Attorney-General's having a bad day, but I wonder if you wouldn't instruct him to watch his language.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** To watch his language?

**SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS:** Oh, oh!

**MADAM SPEAKER:** I, of course, suggest that all honourable members use only parliamentary language.

**HON. V. SCHROEDER:** Certainly. If the member is offended, I will withdraw, but I will not withdraw the anger I feel at a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, an elected member of the Legislature, who thinks that he has some kind of a right, because maybe the Government of Manitoba has provided a couple of thousand dollars in a Careerstart job for an agency of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, that he therefore has the right to determine the curriculum, therefore has the right to determine what is happening inside the Manitoba Labour Education Centre. If he's talking about the other money, that money has been clearly accounted for, is accounted for in the books of the province, has been from the day it was presented, and we were proud to do it.

There is not one penny that went to that organization which we did not account for and, in fact, we were proud to account for it. We stood up in the House and said, yes, we've done this, because we want to provide more education for working people in Manitoba. We did not hide that; we stood up and we shouted it from the rooftops. We were proud of it, and he uses that as an example of freedom of information. What nonsense!

When his group was in office, when they were in office and we had activity going on, we were wanting to know what kind of deals were being cooked.

I'll refer to potash. The leases are obtained in the same way as gravel leases are obtained, sand leases are obtained, other mineral resource leases. They are all on file at Natural Resources over in St. James. I have often gone over there, as a lawyer, to determine what kind of a lease was in effect for a gravel company or whatever, to determine when there were expiries, to determine what areas might be available and so on. I went down there, as a member of the Legislative Assembly - not in the private interest, in the public interest - to examine the same lease which had been

filed. There was no law allowing the government to withhold that information. It was identical to every piece of land right around it. Sterling Lyon and the Tory Government said, "No." They instructed their Deputy Minister to refuse that kind of information, which was statutorily required to be provided.

That is the kind of government we had for a four-year period, and they're coming in here now and lecturing us, while we are working on implementing freedom of information.

Madam Speaker, I have indicated that there is work going on, that this has included the assignment of access officers who'll have to advise on applications, access coordinators to supervise processing of applications, production of records in dealing with applicants, preparation of procedure manuals and tracking mechanisms in all departments to ensure appropriate responses to applications for information, training of staff. Staff training is particularly important, not just to ensure that records keeping systems are effective, but also to ensure that civil servants are aware of the spirit and intent of the Act. It is a complicated thing because we have on the one hand the business of government, which should be open to the people; on the other hand, the interests of private individuals which should not. There are difficult things that are going to come as a result of this act, and we should not kid ourselves about that.

One example is in Ontario where they're a little ahead of us on this. In the past, the Land Titles Offices in Ontario were open institutions in terms of information. Anybody could walk in and say I want to know who owns 100 Main Street, what kind of caveats there are against that property, what kind of mortgage, and so on. They could even find the Transfer of Land which would show the value at which that piece of land was purchased.

In Ontario, under the Freedom of Information Act, that is no longer available. I'm sure that will change. I'm sure that members didn't intend to shut down those because of the concern for the rights of the private individual. I make the point that there are these conflicts constantly.

The farmer borrows money from MACC. A tourist camp operator works out a loan or a grant or whatever from a provincial organization or a provincial federal organization, or a provincial federal and private organization, or a provincial and private. And we have examples of all of those in the province. At what stage is it public? At what stage is it private? Those things have to be worked out.

I believe that if we are to be criticized - and obviously, we're what, two-and-a-half years, or three years, from the time when we said we were going to institute the legislation, we should be criticized for having been overoptimistic in the beginning as to when we would be able to put forward a package which would not inconvenience and treat unfairly Manitobans.

It's just not an automatic thing to say, if we had freedom of information, I should be able to get all the information on the background on an individual. I'm not sure that you should be able to. I'm not sure that we have the right to say out in public or to anyone what the record of an individual is, other than of course what has happened in a court proceeding. But items that go beyond that, items that assess, I'm not sure

are appropriate in the hands of people other than the person assessed and, even in that case, we have had problems with that when we deal with Workers Compensation.

So the issues are complicated. It's not some easy kind of a thing where you can just stand up and attack and think that you're all the good guys. Everybody of that side is the good guys, and these people are so terrible on this side. They're trying to hide information and manipulate information.

When the book burner from Pembina over there, when he left office, what did he do with his books? Books, every single page, every single piece of ink, every single clip and staple paid for by the taxpayers of Manitoba, and what did he do with it? He burned it. He burned it, and he has the gall now to stand with this group that is criticizing the NDP for not having moved as fast as we would all agree.

How much time do I have, Madam Speaker?

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister has two minutes remaining.

**HON. V. SCHROEDER:** Ah, very good.

**MR. D. ORCHARD:** Haven't you got any more lies, you bald-faced liar?

**HON. V. SCHROEDER:** You're such a sweetheart, Donny.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** Would the Honourable Member for Pembina please retract the comment that he just made? I have warned the honourable member several times about using the word "lie" in this House and accusing another member of lying. Would he please retract his statement that the Attorney-General is a bald-faced liar?

**MR. D. ORCHARD:** Madam Speaker, I withdraw the statement that the Attorney-General is a bald-faced liar. He is simply a stranger to the truth.

**HON. V. SCHROEDER:** Madam Speaker, we're accustomed to that sort of nonsense from the Member for Pembina.

Three Cabinet Ministers in the Lyon Government, three of them, had the courage, the guts, three people in the Lyon Government had the guts to pass on their records to the new government, three out of some twenty Ministers, three of them. The Member for Pembina was not one of them - not on your life - not the Member for Pembina, not the Member for Lakeside, who I'm sure will give a stirring speech on this topic.

These people come to the Legislature here and tell us how terrible we are, when we're not immediately acting in answer to their questions. I'm sure that the Member for Pembina will tell us what he did with the confetti he made between November 17 and December 1, 1981. His constituents would want to know that he didn't make a profit on the sale of all that stuff.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**MADAM SPEAKER:** The honourable member's time has expired.

The hour being six o'clock, the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10:00 a.m. tomorrow. (Friday)

**(English translation of Mr. D. Rocan's speech in Volume XXXVI No. 9, page 240, Tuesday, February 23, 1988)**

Mr. Deputy Speaker, is this one of the major reasons for which the former Minister of Health resigned from his position? Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all know Mr. Desjardins very well. I would like to add that he is perhaps the only Minister who had the support, confidence and respect of all the members on both sides of the House.

Should we really be surprised that he was unable to continue to work within a party which is showing such a serious lack of competence and honesty?

No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he could not allow himself to do that, and I respect him for having taken this decision.

Your party, Mr. Premier, can hardly allow itself not to replace Mr. Desjardins, because you have a great need for someone in your party who has, as Mr. Desjardins does, a kind of good common sense and a sense of honesty and frankness. You must act quickly, Mr. Premier, because your poor party is slipping more and more, and like the old warrior, is now being overcome by the very struggle that he undertook.

There is serious problem of a lack of confidence in your party. You must therefore take this opportunity to show Manitobans that you are sincere, by calling an election in Saint-Boniface immediately.

**(English translation of Mr. D. Rocan's speech in Volume XXXVI No. 9, page 241, Tuesday, February 23, 1988)**

Another example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this one in French, is the Premier's Golden Bridge. The NDP has never hidden the fact that it believes high government expenditures are essential to the implementation of a socialist program. Indeed the Government of Manitoba has just given a striking demonstration of this principle.

In Selkirk, Premier Pawley's home town, the government decided that it was necessary to build a second bridge over the Red River.

The best location as far as traffic and construction are concerned is near the present Lockport bridge to the south of the town. However, instead of that, political factors have influenced the choice of a location three miles further north.

The new bridge leads right into the middle of an agricultural area, far from the people it is intended to serve and far from access roads.

Currently, the only road going from Selkirk to this bridge is along the river and it does not have any guard rails. It will also be necessary to build access roads. In fact, a four-lane highway is planned to serve a two-lane bridge.

The location of this bridge also raises other interesting questions. As it is located to the north of an established dock, it will have to be built 70 feet in the air. The original location did not present this problem. The bridge will be 3,000 feet long, twice the length of the bridge planned for the original location. The government

is justifying the construction of this bridge with the need to accommodate the growth of Selkirk, a growth which is, however, barely measurable.

Lastly, to add to this list of socialist blunders, the Manitoba Government has just announced that a new

bridge will be built in Lockport at the location where the Premier's original bridge should have been built from the beginning. Mr. Pawley's bridge is in the image of his government. It is too costly, it is not in the right place and it's going nowhere.