

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, March 6, 1990.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table today the Annual Report of the Manitoba Development Corporation for the year 1988-89.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Third Quarterly Report for the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission, that period ending December 31, 1989.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of Honourable Members to the gallery, where we have from the Elwick Community School, we have thirty-seven Grades 4, 5 and 6 students. They are under the direction of Mr. Inderjit Claire. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema).

On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Manitoba Medical Association Arbitration

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) outburst yesterday was simply another example of how this Government chooses to deal with the problems of the day.

We saw it with foster parents. We saw it with child care workers. We saw it with social workers. Rather than to try and avert crisis by bargaining in good faith with professionals, the Premier prefers to push them and shove them to the breaking point by casting doubt on their motives, attacking their integrity and by having his Ministers call them liars, for no apparent reason other than to bolster what he regrettably sees as his image as Premier.

This confrontational style of Government has failed in the past, and unless the Premier shows a willingness to speak to all professionals in this province with good will, it will fail again.

My question is: the doctors are requesting arbitration, something this Government, when in Opposition, criticized the New Democratic Party for withdrawing; why has this Government changed its mind?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, when we were in Opposition we criticized the NDP for reneging on an agreement. They gave up one thing in favour of another and then they took away what had been given in response to that. The issue here is what the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) is doing in this Legislature. As much as though she wants to surround it in fine sounding tones, her real issue is that she wants to carry out the commitment that she made to the doctors back in 1988 in which she said directly that she would give them exactly what they wanted.

The fact of the matter is—here it is from the interview that she had on the CBC with reporter Brian Yasui, March 16, 1988. She says a Liberal Government would give the doctors what they want. Well, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that a Liberal Government would give the doctors what they want and give everybody else what they want and would raise taxes to all Manitobans, just as the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) said last week when she said she would have no option but to raise the taxes of everybody in this province.

* (1335)

Mr. Speaker, that is the difference between her approach and our approach. We have to take some responsibility in this issue. We have to take the responsibility in this issue to speak on behalf of the taxpayer. We are willing to be reasonable. We are willing to be fair. We are willing to sit down and discuss this as people ought to on a fair and reasonable basis, but we are not willing to give them anything they want.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, this province has within its Public Schools Act arbitration for the entire public school teaching profession whose salaries well outweigh the payments made to physicians in the Province of Manitoba. If the principle of arbitration is fair and reasonable in order to ensure access of our students to classrooms, why is it not then fair to assure access to patients to have health care in our province?

Mr. Filmon: I will repeat for the information of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) so that she will not be drawn into being just simply the mouthpiece for the medical profession and repeat the false statements which they have repeated. The fact of the matter is that nothing in our proposal restricts access to the health care system. Our proposal is a matter of limiting the increase in doctors' salaries year upon year. That is the whole issue with respect to the doctors. They do not want to have in any way, shape or form their ability to increase their income impaired by Government. That is not a reasonable suggestion.

The fact of the matter is that there are now six provincial Governments in this country that are putting

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in place some form of participation by the doctors in helping to control the increase in volume of use of the system, because that is all we are asking, is for the doctors to work with us to protect the health care system that all of us are committed to, and that is not unreasonable.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, but there is nothing in this Government's proposal to prevent a strike, and a strike will result in denial of services to the health care needs of the citizens of the Province of Manitoba.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order.

Medical Profession Recruitment

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Can the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), without the yapping of the Minister and the Member to my left, tell the House how he is going to solve the very real needs of hiring doctors in specialty areas in the Province of Manitoba when every physician in this nation knows of his Government's antagonistic attitude towards the medical profession?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Now we really see the lack of information and knowledge by the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), because that is the essence and the major part of the proposal that we made to the MMA. That is a fund of \$24 million over three years to provide increases to all of those specialists and in fact GPs. All of those areas of discipline of medicine that are below the national average over a period of three years would be brought up to the national average. That is so we can attract the medical practitioners that we need.

The MMA is not interested in improving the salaries of those people to help us to attract the doctors. They are only interested in achieving major increases in terms of their own incomes, as well as not having any limits to their ability to continue to bill in the system, Mr. Speaker. That is not reasonable to the people in Manitoba.

* (1340)

Bill No. 42 Minister's Position

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): I have a new question to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). Mr. Speaker, the Minister is very confused. I believe he does not quite know what he should do. Let me quote: I have not—we have not decided—we are not bringing the Bill forward, said the Minister yesterday.

On the one hand he has the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and his colleagues saying kill the Bill. Then on the other

hand he has the tenants saying, bring it forward. My question to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) is: who is he going to listen to, the hundreds and thousands of tenants in the Province of Manitoba or the pressure from his colleagues?

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Housing—(interjection)—Order, please.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the Member was not there for the interview. She would have heard what I said. However, that is another matter.

Mr. Speaker, we remain committed to this legislation. We have reviewed and consulted with many, many particular people. We are committed to the legislation, and we are committed to making it good, workable legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it is a major piece of legislation, bringing together her concern of the tenants and the landlords and addressing these concerns. My staff and this Minister have worked extensively to address these concerns of both the tenant and the landlord, to the Member across the way. They have approached us with a number of major concerns even in the last couple of months.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, in the recent weeks that we have discussed this Bill it has become very evident that during this already lengthy Session, dealing with 101 Bills that are forward, dealing with the delay of the other Party, we have therefore decided we will not take this Bill to committee at this present time. We will recess, and we will negotiate with those Parties over the recess period. This Minister has done that on a couple of other occasions in regard to—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Yesterday the Minister conceded outside this House that he was taking his directions from the landlords and the moneylenders, and today he gave an admission of that in the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba. Why is he unwilling to stand up for the tenants of the Province of Manitoba?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, first of all, what she says, the Opposition Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) is completely incorrect. I did not say that I was taking the basis of the landlords only. I have stressed time and time again that there are groups coming forward, other tenant groups that have come forward to this particular—letters from those groups, concerns from those groups, and we will address those to the best approach that we have. We will consult with them during the recess period and we will bring forward the final analysis of a good and possible Bill to bring forward to this House.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, 10 minutes with the tenants so far is not adequate. Can the Minister tell the House why he is denying the democratic process and giving all legislators in this province the opportunity to hear from the tenants and from the landlords and from his wonderful moneylenders in an open public and democratic fashion?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, all through this whole process since last October when we first filed this Bill we have met countless tenants' groups, landlords, moneylenders, the whole realm of people that have to be dealt with in this Bill. Up until this time there is a gap between all levels. To bring forward a Bill where you have not addressed all their concerns would be irresponsible at this time.

* (1345)

**Bill No. 42
Standing Committee Referral**

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): This Legislature, last December, passed this Bill. We had a debate and some weeks ago we suspected that the Government was in fact listening to one lobby group, not another lobby group, the tenants, but only listening to the one lobby group, the big developers and the owners of various rental accommodations. We asked a number of times whether this Bill would be brought forward and whether it would go to public hearings. We were assured it would. Now, Mr. Speaker, we get an answer from the Minister which indicates that the Government is not bringing it forward.

Can the Minister please inform Manitobans why this Bill will not go to public hearings after it has been passed in December and so that the inadequacies of the Bill can be dealt with by all segments in the public, in a public arena, not behind closed doors as the Minister is recommending today?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I guess the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) was not listening. We will be bringing this Bill back after consultation with all those groups and then we will have our public hearings, when we bring it back in the next Session.

**Bill No. 42
Standing Committee Referral**

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Doer: My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). The landlords' association president has described the Bill as not "fit for a dog."

My question to the Premier is, why after a year and a half or two years has this situation been allowed to develop, under his stewardship, and why do we have a situation where we were asked to and did provide passage to a Bill some two and a half months ago, and why have we not cleaned up some of the inadequacies of this Bill in a public session, consistent with the rules and traditions of this House, rather than have it go, have the press releases and the public relations and the front page stories and now have it

be held back when there is a little heat on the Government in terms of the landlords of this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, firstly I do not know what the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) is talking about, when he talks about a year and a half, two years. It was introduced in October, so the fact of the matter is that it has been a relatively short time frame. Considering the fact that when his Government, when the NDP was in Government, they brought forward legislation on a number of occasions that when it came to second reading or committee stage, and was found to have a requirement for many amendments, was withdrawn, fixed up and reintroduced in the next Session.

I remind him, for instance, of the farm lands ownership legislation for one, which when it was faced with having about 50 amendments, the Government said fine, we will take it back, redraft it, rework it and get it back in properly the next time. This is the procedure that is well established. I know that the Liberals have not had the experience and do not understand the process, but I surely would expect that the NDP would understand that process because they did it themselves on numerous occasions, Mr. Speaker, and we are just simply following through on that normal procedure.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) knows that many of the Bills that are found to be inadequate over time are done so through a public hearing process after passing second reading and after the public has spoken on the Bill. What we are concerned about here is the fact that the Government has had the public relations, had the front page stories, brought the Bill forward, asked for quick passage. We passed it in December, and we have been raising it for week after week after week. Yet the Government has said yes, we are going to bring it forward, yes, we are going to have the consultations. We are only fixing up a few amendments.

Why is the Premier denying Manitobans their right of a public hearing from all sides on this Bill, Mr. Speaker, rather than pulling it back and keeping it behind closed doors?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, yes, we will have the Bill and yes, we will have consultations and yes, we will bring it forward when some major flaws have been addressed and it has been able to be redrafted. We are committed to go through the whole process because it is mandatory under the rules of the House, of this Legislature that when any Bill is dealt with it not only goes through first and second reading in this Chamber, it goes to committee for full public hearing and consultation, and then it comes back for third reading: full, complete, open debate. That will be the process and that is the way in which it will be dealt with when it is reintroduced first thing next Session.

* (1350)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we have been raising this issue in January and February because we had heard that the landlords had gotten to the Government and they were only going to speak for one side or our society.

My question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is, will he now overrule his Minister again and this time have that Bill before public hearings and second reading so that we can deal with the flaws that the Premier has talked about in an open public forum so all issues are on the table in a public way rather than just the one-sided advice and information the Government is getting from the landlords and developers of this province?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, when we bring in legislation that requires amendment, what we get from the Liberals and the New Democrats is criticism that says oh, they brought in this Bill and it needed all these amendments, it was not a competent Bill. That is what they say. They said that about drunk driving legislation. They said that about the assessment reform legislation. Now we are doing it the way they have advocated our doing it, which is to fix up the flaws and introduce it with corrections. Now they are trying to tell us to do it a different way. I am getting tired of the inconsistency of the Liberals and the NDP. They cannot make up their minds.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Decentralization Frontier School Division

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): The concept of decentralization has merit, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mrs. Yeo: However, logic and consultation with all those people involved must prevail when a decision to relocate a particular department occurs. Can the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) tell the House what plans he has in place for relocating the Frontier School Division?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I am glad to hear that on one hand the Liberals do support decentralization finally. On the other hand, they are really not sure. I can tell the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) that when the decentralization aspect is announced, it will be announced in a full form where it will be public and where it will be done in an appropriate fashion.

Mrs. Yeo: To the same Minister, Mr. Speaker, will this Minister give the assurance that the school division headquarters of this particular school division will be maintained in the area in which the students live, and that is in the Eastman and the northeast regions of our province?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, it appears as though the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) would like now to be involved in where we should locate certain areas. That is just not the case. I can say to the House that when the decentralization decision is made, it will be

announced in an appropriate fashion. The employees of the various departments will certainly be consulted within an appropriate fashion.

Mrs. Yeo: Will this Minister speak to the Tory candidate from Dauphin and try and get him to keep his mouth shut so that he will not be spreading the allegation that the Frontier School Division is going to be relocated in Dauphin, in the west side of the province where no students from this particular school division attend?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Minister.

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I have to indicate, in all honesty, I do not know of any candidate in the Dauphin area at the present time. I have not heard of any such rumour. It has not come to my office. If the Member would like to identify the person and come to me personally, I will certainly discuss it with him.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Bill No. 42 Passage

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province and this Government has shafted hundreds of thousands of tenants in this province by the answer that he gave today. The First Minister said today in his answer that Bill 42 will come up in the next Session, thereby admitting that he is planning on proroguing this Session, thereby killing Bill 42.

Will the Premier stand up now and retract his answer and deliver to the tenants of this province and the landlords the much needed legislation that they have been waiting for far too long?

* (1355)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, you know, I am amused at hearing this kind of statement from the Liberal Member, who on the one hand, when the Liberals meet with tenants' groups, they say that they are going to agree to boycott the committee if this Bill does not proceed with; they tell them that. Then when they meet with landlords' groups, they say that they are going to agree with the Tories not to have this Bill proceeded with in the current Session. Then, Mr. Speaker, they—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Inkster, on a point of order.

Mr. Lamoureux: My point of order first, Mr. Speaker, is—

Mr. Speaker: What is your point of order?

Mr. Lamoureux: —when the Speaker says Order, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is supposed to sit down, first of all. The point of order is that there is no agreement and there has never been any agreement by the Liberal—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Filmon: I suggest that maybe he speak to his colleague from Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) and his colleague from Osborne (Mr. Alcock), Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable First Minister.

Mr. Filmon: We have said up front that we want this legislation to pass. We want it to pass in a form that will provide the protection for tenants that they require and will provide for the opportunities for landlords to provide the accommodation for those people, that we have a fair and balanced piece of legislation and that we do so in a reasonable way that is agreed to by the vast majority of people who are in the residential tenancies field. That in our judgment is the way to go.

We are going to have a Bill that is a Bill that as close as we can make it is right for the needs of the province, is a consensus Bill, and that is what we are going to work on.

Bill No. 42 Consultations

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, seeing that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) will not retract his previous answer, I will ask the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). We are interested in knowing when the Minister of Housing did his consulting with the tenants and landlord organization. I would have hoped that he would have been doing it during the drafting of the legislation, after the legislation was introduced.

My question to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme): did the Minister of Housing know what he was getting into or not, and if he did know what he was getting into, why is he not proceeding with the Bill?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, during the drafting of the legislation and after it was proposed and tabled in October, groups came forward, tenants, landlords, moneylenders, with all their

concerns. As I mentioned earlier, we will bring back the legislation when those groups and those concerns are answered. We will negotiate with them and we will bring back that Bill at the next Session.

Withdrawal

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, there are a large number of points in this Bill and what it is going to be doing that will benefit both landlords and tenants. The Government has no excuse to attempt at killing their legislation. This is Government legislation, and the Opposition has said—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is there a question here, please? Is there a question?

Mr. Lamoureux: My question is—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Question, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: My question is: if the Government has any faith in this Bill, why do they not bring it forward? If they are not bringing it forward, why do they not do the honourable thing and withdraw it if they do not believe in it?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, for the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), I guess he did not get the message that we gave earlier in this Question Period. We believe in this consultation approach. We will continue with this approach. We remain committed to this approach. We remain committed to this Bill, and will bring it back forward after we have handled all the concerns of these particular groups.

* (1400)

Bill No. 42 Consultations

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): The Premier (Mr. Filmon) has obviously left his Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) high and dry with what was announced today. In turn, the Minister of Housing has left tenants high and dry throughout the province by denying them the protection that Bill No. 42, The Residential Tenancies Act, would provide to them.

Mr. Speaker, they cannot hide behind the phony excuse of consultation. It is not consultation that is lacking—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. The Honourable Member for Churchill.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, it is not consultation that is lacking, it is courage that is missing, given that the Minister of Housing has caved in to the landlords and the mortgage lenders, as well as his own right-wing Cabinet colleagues. In doing so, he has failed tenants throughout this province.

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I regret having to ask the Minister to do this because I have high personal regard for him as an individual, but he has failed in his ministerial responsibility to protect tenants. Will the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) do the right thing now and resign as Minister of Housing?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, it is because of that Member and his Government who, for six and a half years, did not consult, did not deal with those tenants, did not deal with those landlords and did not deal with those moneylenders. I have been very, very clear today. I have said that I will consult with all parties concerned. I will bring in legislation as a result of handling their concerns at the next Session.

Housing Minister Resignation Request

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) can attempt, as he does so often, to blame everyone but himself, but he has the responsibility, as Minister of Housing, to protect the interests not only of his landlord and mortgage lender and banking friends but he has a responsibility to protect tenants. He has failed in that responsibility. I would ask -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member was just about to put his question. The Honourable Member for Churchill.

Mr. Cowan: My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Seeing that he wants to answer from his seat we will give him the opportunity to do so from his feet. Will he ask the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) to resign so that his Government can restore at least some of the confidence of tenants in the Government that has failed them miserably to date? Will he ask that Minister of Housing to resign, put someone in his place who has more clout and more courage?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, if there is any lack of protection for any elements of the residential tenancies community, it is because of six and a half years of NDP administration in which the proper protection, if it is not there, was not put in by the NDP. The fact of the matter is we are committed to bring in The Residential Tenancies Act. After we consult and correct the deficiencies that are in the Act that we presently have before us, after we have done that, we will immediately reintroduce it and we will have it passed in a way, in a form that is acceptable, that is reasonable and that provides the protection for tenants throughout the province.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, this is the Minister and the Party that has fought against rent controls to defend the interests of their landlord friends, and it is now the Party that is fighting against their own legislation to defend the interests of their landlord and mortgage lenders and banking friends. I would ask the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) if he will not now—and I repeat the question to him, because I think he has to

have an opportunity to do the right thing—will he not now do the honourable thing, step outside of that portfolio, ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to relieve him so that if he believes in this legislation he can fight for it outside of Cabinet and if he does not believe in it, he will have done the honourable thing by resigning because of his failure to bring it forward.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the Honourable Member that his question is repeating in substance a question which was previously asked and is therefore out of order. The Honourable Member, kindly rephrase his question.

Mr. Cowan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will rephrase that question and welcome the opportunity to do so, because I think there needs to be a fair amount of clarification on this. I know it must be hard for the landlords to tell the difference between the Liberals and the Conservatives behind closed doors.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has had his opportunity to ask his question. He is finding difficulty in framing a question and perhaps does not know how, has only one thing on his mind, so that perhaps somebody else should be recognized to ask a question, or at the very least the Honourable Member should be asked to get on with a question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised, I would like to remind the Honourable Government House Leader that I have just indicated to the Member for Churchill to rephrase his question, which he will kindly do now, please.

Bill No. 42 Consultations

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I need no lecture from the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) on how to conduct business in this House.

I ask the First Minister: will the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) be prepared to meet with his Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme), with tenant groups directly today, face to face, to explain to them why it is his Government does not have the courage to proceed with this legislation and why they are failing to defend the interests of tenants by caving in to their landlord, mortgage lending and banking friends?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I have indicated that we will give plenty of time and opportunity for all the various groups who are concerned about this Act to ensure that they have adequate input to all of the changes that should be made in order to ensure that this legislation is a good piece of legislation, a piece of legislation that all of us can be proud of and have confidence in.

Bank of Canada Rate Impact Small Business

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). With some 75 percent of small businesses and most of our farming community using lines of credit, when the interest rates go up on Thursday, these communities pay for it immediately.

My question to the Minister is: will the Minister of Finance outline his Government's concrete actions to assist small businesses and rural Manitobans who have felt the high interest rate policy of the federal Tory Government each and every Friday for the last two years? What are those concrete actions that your Government is proposing to assist them?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious matter. It is one that this Government has, since it has come into office, made representation to the only two people, the only two individuals, probably in the land that do have some impact on interest rates. They are the Governor of the Bank of Canada and also the Minister of Finance, Mr. Wilson. We have appealed to them on several occasions in writing, several more occasions verbally, to bring some sanity to interest rates within this land.

Certainly Manitoba and its economy is experiencing some difficulty as a result of the very high interest rates in place. There is no doubt that if they were not at the level that they are today, that the economic growth in this province would be even greater than the national average than is the case today.

Business Start Program Start-up

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): Mr. Speaker, we all understand that many factors are used to determine the rate of interest paid by a borrower. My follow-up question to the same Minister is: given that a loan guarantee program would provide greater security for small business loans, why is this Government's much heralded Business Start Program, announced some 10 months ago, of loan guarantees still not off the ground when it could have assisted many small businesses and people who are getting into business in paying lower interest rates? Why is that program still not off the ground after 10 long months?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, the Member is quite right. It was announced in the throne speech and has yet to be announced. It is anticipated after a result of a rather long process of negotiation with respect to the delivery of the program in the community. The intent is to have the program delivered throughout Manitoba in every community where there is a financial institution, to bring all of those financial institutions together to get a common agreement, and to get the ability to put that program out into the community in place has taken some time, longer than I had anticipated, quite frankly, but nonetheless that process is all but complete.

* (1410)

Mr. Minenko: Mr. Speaker, with a program already existing in Ontario, I am very disappointed, indeed outraged, that it has taken 10 months for this Government to put something equivalent in place.

Vision Capital Fund Start-up

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): My supplementary question to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is with respect to a Bill that he introduced earlier in this Session, in that access to venture capital is another means of ensuring that businesses are not tied to ever-increasing interest rates. My question to the Minister of Finance is: what is the status of the Vision Capital Fund passed last December as part of Bill 34? How many businesses have received support from this fund?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, again the Bill was passed in December to allow for the funding of that Vision Capital Fund. We are in the final throes of an agreement with the fund and with its managers, and expect to have that completed in a matter of days.

Economic Growth Farming Industry

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Government for their delivering finally on the hard work that we have been doing on the Frontier School Division for Dauphin. Persistence pays off. It is not always which Party you are with.

I want to ask, Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Premier of Saskatchewan yesterday said that the world has declared economic war on Saskatchewan, and in view of the fact that he did not identify that the real culprit was his own support for policies like free trade, rail rationalization and high interest rates, Crown corporation cutbacks, deregulation, federal ill-conceived policies, will this Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) now indicate to this House whether he will withdraw his support for those federal policies that are contributing to economic ruin in this province, just as they have in Saskatchewan?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the agricultural community has faced some difficult challenges through the '80s, with high interest rates, low commodity prices, drought and international trade wars.

Some 1,800 delegates were in Ottawa in December to discuss all these issues as to where we are at and where we need to go in the 1990s. There is a very strong, aggressive movement toward the various task forces that are in place in a variety of issue areas, numbering about nine that are presently ongoing. They are looking at all the issues and the way we can address our ability to maximize our opportunities in the industry within the country and outside of the country. The farm community supports it very strongly.

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

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COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Gimli.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs for the Tuesday evening session be amended as follows: Ducharme for Connery; Gilleshammer for Cummings; and Ernst for Pankratz.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you call the business as it is set out in today's Order Paper?

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 19, The Ground Water and Water Well Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les eaux souterraines et les puits.

Bill No. 35, The Wildlife Amendment Act, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune, were each read a third time and passed.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 99— THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 1989

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill No. 99, The Appropriation Act, 1989; Loi de 1989 portant affectation de crédits, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) who has two minutes remaining. Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Is there leave? No leave? No leave. Is there leave?

An Honourable Member: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: There is leave? Agreed.

SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 100—THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT, 1989

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance) presented Bill No. 100, The Supplementary Appropriation Act, 1989; Loi de 1989 portant affectation supplémentaire de crédits, for second reading, to be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, before I commence any talking about Bill No. 100, I wish to

first thank you for the beautiful pins that you have given us. On behalf of all my colleagues, thank you.

Mr. Speaker: You are welcome.

Mr. Mandrake: It certainly brings me great pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to put a few comments on record with regard to Bill No. 100. This Bill, the Appropriation Bill, is appreciated. One thing that I would like to address is the Department of Highways and Transportation. Just in the paper today we were told that the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) is again not sure when he is going to implement the safety shields, or he said within the next couple of months or so, something to that effect. He was asked to come up with a design, which apparently they have, and I am very happy that they are taking this positive stand.

My only question about the shields is, if I am correct as reported in the paper, that the manufacturer might have to go out of the province. If my memory serves me right, there is a manufacturer in this province that has produced those shields when the previous Government, the NDP Government, was in power. It used a Lexan product for protection. Why are we constantly sending things down south or east? It seems to me that we are bound to inject more into the economy of Ontario than here in Manitoba.

* (1420)

Going back into the driver licences, he did the same thing there. Instead of trying to encourage somebody here from Manitoba to undertake that venture, some small entrepreneur that would probably be more than happy to do it, no, he went down to Ontario, and of course should have given it to NBS. He has done it. The Bill is going to be going into committee, and we will be discussing it there to greater lengths.

What I would like to also put on record is this Government's ability, or inability I should say, of really working for Manitoba. The Minister is on record as saying, I support the Port of Churchill; I will be negotiating some formal contract with the federal Government to promote the Port of Churchill.

Mr. Speaker, he has, as of February 28, 1989, compiled a Churchill Enhancement Initiatives which totalled approximately, well, in fact they totalled 50. He has yet to advise this House whether or not he has taken the initiative on at least one of the initiatives. That is the kind of person we have as the Minister of Transport (Mr. Albert Driedger). What initiatives has he taken on any of these programs that he has mentioned and provided to us? It seems to me that this Minister talks from both sides of the mouth. When he is out in the public he is in complete support of the Port of Churchill. When he is here or he is talking to his federal counterpart, his federal cousin, he caves in to all and everything that they want to say.

I do not quite understand the logic of this Government. I do not understand where they are going. I do not think even the people of Manitoba understand where they are going because they do not know themselves where they are going.

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The Government has spent money, they have—and I will give you an example, Precise-to-Form Castings. I think they loaned them something like \$600,000.00. The company has now been closed. That is \$600,000 that they did not have an accounting for. They just gave it to them. Now the people of Manitoba have to go back in their pockets and give that money to this Government that they gave to Precise-to-Form Castings.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that they call themselves good managers. Well, if that is an example of good managers, I would hate to see poor managers. Managers, everybody will tell you, are people who are conscious, who are very, very aware of what you are doing. Giving money to a company that goes into receivership before they even open up their doors is hardly being good managers. I would be the first person to say—I am more than willing—to a small company that is wanting to start up, if they need some start-up money, we will give it to them, by all means, but there has to be accountability for that money, accountability that if you want X number of dollars, we will give it to you, but first of all we want to see that you are going to be financially viable.

If you are going to hire people, we are going to come back in a year's time and do an audit on your operation to make sure that if you told us you are going to employ an additional 5, 20 people, make sure that you do exactly that. This idea of giving a blank cheque and having no accountability is certainly not good management.

Mr. Speaker, it just does not end there. There are other avenues in which the Government has failed, and dramatically. They are going from day to day in a complete maze. Today is a good example, whereby our Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) and my Honourable Member from Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) questioned this Government on Bill No. 42. What do they say? They are going to withdraw it. How can you be good managers? What possessed you to even introduce a Bill that required all that many amendments? They call themselves good managers. Good managers do not do things like that. Now if I was to try to do that while I was in the services, I would have been court-martialed. You just cannot manage people in the manner in which this Government is doing. It is unbelievable.

I wish that they probably would go back in time and just come up with legislation that will stand the test of time. The only way you do that is by consultation and listening to people, regardless of who that person is. In all the times that I have been out in my constituency and other constituencies I have learned one very important fact, listen to the people, because you do learn when you listen, but when you have your mouth flapping you never, ever, ever learn one thing.

An Honourable Member: Why do you not sit down and learn something?

Mr. Mandrake: The comments that are coming from across the way are not even worth addressing. Mr. Speaker, I have been certainly amazed at how this Government continues to be very unaggressive. They

do not want to be forceful when it comes to some type of planning for the people of Manitoba with their federal counterparts. They have virtually no clout with them whatsoever. They have no clout whatsoever.

The Highways Department has gone from one disaster to another, and all because of one reason, this uncapable Minister. This Minister, ever since he hired a new communications officer, his profile certainly has come up a bit. This communications officer of course now protects him and makes sure that he does not do the same thing as he did in Gladstone. It is amazing what a communications officer can do to your profile. The Member went to Gladstone and shook hands with the people there. I am not going to refer to who they were, but he knows who they were. Since then his profile certainly went down. He hired himself a communications officer, and now he does all the talking for him. Maybe so, maybe that is the way to go, I do not know.

(Mr. William Chornopyski, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

We on this side of the House are very, very patiently waiting to see what action this Minister is going to take when the ERDA is terminated on March 31. There is some residual money left in there for this year, so I am going to be patiently waiting to find out what other kind of agreement he is going to be able to arrange with the federal Tory Minister on behalf of Churchill. If my predictions are going to be correct, I bet you it is going to be a big fat goose egg. This man, this Minister, has about as much ability to work on behalf of the people of Manitoba as I do not know who. He is just not capable.

* (1430)

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Manness: A point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance, on a point of order.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I apologize to the Member opposite. I hear an awful lot of character assassination, but I do not hear much dwelling on the import of Bill 100. I am wondering if the Member can be brought to it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I thank the Honourable Minister of Finance.

I would ask the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) to stay relevant to the Bill, and the Bill is Bill 100.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Transcona, on the same point of order.

Mr. Kozak: I would suggest to the Chair that comments related to the quality of management provided by this

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Government are directly related to the interim appropriation Bill under consideration. I believe, furthermore that you might perhaps consider that the tone of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) is a moderate one, intended in an intelligent way to address the quality of management that is relevant to this Bill.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I thank the Honourable Member for Transcona. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia has the floor.

Mr. Mandrake: The Member says that I should - (interjection)- Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Members would be kind enough to stop chirping, I will continue on with my dissertation regarding Bill 100, The Appropriation Act.

The Member from the Government side says, recess. Well, we will not recess. We will continue on.-(interjection)-

If the Minister of Transport (Mr. Albert Driedger) would be so kind, from his seat, to just be quiet, I will continue and put some things to the record.

We are in dire straits here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This Government was unable, or is incapable, of negotiating any kind of formal type of agreements with their federal Tories, none whatsoever. Now, what is going to happen is that we are going to have, probably, a budget that is going to be a lean and mean budget.

The Minister of Finance—I think if my memory serves me right—said, as recorded in the press, that now he is going to have to go and dip into the fiscal stabilization fund to prop up the monies that they have lost from the federal Government. What would have happened if they did not have that \$200 million? It would be hard to say what they would have done. Maybe they would have done the same thing that the previous Minister of Finance, Mr. Kostyra, did—raise taxes.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are going to be very patiently waiting for the next budget as it comes in; the next budget as what is going to happen in the Highways Department; the next budget, what is going to happen in Health, Community Services, other departments; how badly they are going to be slashed. This Minister of Transport (Mr. Albert Driedger), we will see whether or not he has been that forceful Minister that he told us he was going to be when he goes in to secure monies for the capital projects on Highways and Transportation.

We are going to see; only time will tell. Last year all the Highways Department ever received was \$6 million, and that is hardly sufficient for our highways, in our province, because they are now being beaten, and they are being used by bigger trucks—

An Honourable Member: Where should we get the money there, Ed?

Mr. Mandrake: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says, where would we get that money? I offered you a suggestion. You taxed the people in your last budget on one cent gas tax, one cent. I offered you a suggestion to take that one cent and dedicate it—we will see whether or not \$14 million is going to be in that budget.

An Honourable Member: We took \$8 million this year and dedicated it to highway construction, and you voted against that, Ed.

Mr. Mandrake: Mr. Deputy Speaker, he says \$8 million. You know, Schedule 4, please, last year in 1989, it was \$219 million. This year it is \$225 million. Now mathematics, that is \$6 million; so where does he come off telling me \$8 million? Do not fudge the figures. You are fudging them.

An Honourable Member: Look on the construction side.

Mr. Mandrake: That is construction, do not be so naive.-(interjection)- Sure, because you went and took the money from Churchill. Oh, come on, wake up. Six million dollars, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so who is he going to try and kid that he put in \$8 million, and the whole adjusted vote last year to the one this year, \$6 million, that is it.

* (1440)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Albert Driedger) has had an opportunity to fight for Manitoba on VIA Rail and he failed miserably on that. The Minister had an opportunity to proceed with the Port of Churchill and I strongly believe that he is going to fail in that endeavour, because there are no monies left in the ERDA Agreements. There are no agreements on the horizon for that project. Now what are those people going to do along that bay line if that line is abandoned? What are they going to do? How are they going to transport their foodstuffs along that line? I do not know, so it is with great amazement that I see how this Minister has seen to botch this department to the point of sheer disaster, of sheer disaster.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the rail lines in our country were built by our forefathers with blood, sweat and tears, and under this Minister we are going to probably lose them. We are going to probably lose them because he is not going to be able to fight with his Tory cousin in Ottawa. A Tory is a Tory. A Tory is a Tory, so do not -(interjection)- A Tory is a Tory.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the photo ID cards are another example of how this Minister is gouging the Manitoba motoring public. The photo ID is not going to be implemented until '91 and '92, but yet we are paying for it this coming April. Why should we be paying \$4 extra this year? Pay it when you go for it. If like for example I am on an even year, mine will not be done until 1992 so why is it that I have to pay it as of this year? Now their argument of course is, well, we are starting it up. Good, you want to start it up, you pay for it. You pay for it. Get it out of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

This Minister is about as articulate as I do not know, because he just does not have any ability to be a good manager, none whatsoever.

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Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Mr. McCrae: I wonder if the Honourable Member would accept a question.

Mr. Mandrake: After my time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would be more than happy to do it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia has the floor.

Mr. Mandrake: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I have asked one of my constituents to provide me with the Headingley strategy as proposed by the Department of Urban Affairs. I was startled as to how this Minister is going to propose his by-pass in Headingley. All the vehicular traffic is going to go into the corridor of Portage and the by-pass.

Again, I am bringing the issue of that by-pass specifically because he had allowed a developer to buy two parcels of land which is only 80 feet away from that by-pass. That by-pass is going to get, according to his department's projected vehicular traffic on Highway 75, to the tune of 30 percent over the next 10 years. If we increase that same vehicular traffic in that intersection, that will mean a greater possibility of accidents. That vehicular traffic is of course going to be tractor-trailers.

Where are they going to come up with that kind of money to provide security for that department or that area? They are not. Money is scarce, extremely scarce.

An Honourable Member: They still have their \$200 million slush fund though. They can spend that in the next election.

Mr. Mandrake: The Member, either from Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) or the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) says, spend, spend, spend. I would like to inform them of one very important factor. Yes, there is time to spend, but there is time to put money away for a rainy day.

If I was to operate my personal finances on spending money over and above what I earn, I would not be here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The same thing goes here. They are in a very tight financial position right now, because the federal Government has cut back on the funds that this Government is contemplating on getting. To be fair, only one thing is going to have to happen. There is going to have to be cutbacks in the various departments.

We have seen them in Health to the tune of I think \$28 million. We have seen cutbacks in Urban Affairs, whereby I do not think one infill home—the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) would kindly provide me—not one infill home was built. It is very, very difficult to be a Tory in Manitoba when you have a Tory in Ottawa.

They came down in February with a foul budget. This is going to hurt Manitoba not just this year but in years to come. What is going to happen next year? What is going to happen 10 years from now if we have, and God forbid if we do have, another Tory Government here in Manitoba? We are going to be in deep, dark trouble.

An Honourable Member: You are starting to believe your own rhetoric, and that is dangerous.

* (1450)

Mr. Mandrake: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says I am starting to believe my own rhetoric. That is not rhetoric. All I do is just watch what the front benchers have been doing lately. I listened to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) during Question Period and how he constantly says the Liberals this and the Liberals that. Well, I only hope that maybe he would take a minute of his precious time and turn on that boob-tube and watch Question Period and what he looks like to the public when he goes through his dissertations and answers, well, I should not say answers, hypothetical answers, and what he looks like to the public, because it is simply amazing. The decorum of this House has deteriorated under this Government. It has deteriorated to a great extent.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Mandrake: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is amazing, it is completely amazing how this Government, when they were in Opposition, condemned the previous administration on all facets of Government. Now they are in power, what happens? They say, well, when we were in Opposition you could promise all kinds of things. It comes back to haunt you. Your words come back to haunt you.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

In Manitoba, April 30, 1987, then when they were in Opposition, they said Manitoba prides itself in being a transportation central. It is central all right, going east and out to Edmonton. We are losing everything here. Alltrans closed up shop. What did this Minister do? Did he offer them any assistance?

An Honourable Member: More money.

Mr. Mandrake: No, no, I am sorry, you better retract that. All you have to do is talk to them. No money, I think I have made myself perfectly clear when it comes to giving people money, very clear. That is right. I have made myself perfectly clear when it comes to giving people money.

An Honourable Member: I took the payroll tax off immediately on coming in.

Mr. Mandrake: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) from his seat says, I took the payroll tax off. Well, can I ask the Minister when is he going to take the 2 percent

tax on net income, when are they going to remove that, whereby the average low-income citizen can at least have a few extra dollars in his pocket? When is he going to take that off?

An Honourable Member: Do you have to go 40 minutes, Ed?

Mr. Mandrake: The Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) from his seat in his usual fashion, arrogance personified, are you going to have to go a full 40 minutes? Well, Mr. Minister, I am a MLA just like you, and I am given that privilege in this House to speak for 40 minutes, so please. I am given that privilege in this House to speak for 40 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I, in this House, am amazed at how this Minister has ruled his department. He will pay the price in the next election. With that, I thank you very much, and I will let someone else carry on the debate.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Transcona.

Mr. Kozak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have not expected to stand so soon after my very lengthy remarks just yesterday afternoon in this House. However, given the fact that Bill 100, The Supplementary Appropriation Act, 1989 is before us for consideration at the present time, I would like to take this opportunity to elucidate some of the remarks that I made yesterday for the benefit of this Government—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Kozak: —as they strive to produce a budget plan for the fiscal year we are now entering. This input on my part has become something of a tradition for me. I have extended it as a courtesy on each of the last two occasions prior to provincial budgets, and I feel that my input has not been totally ignored by Members on the Government side. I certainly feel that this exercise has value and I will continue to do my part to provide advice in good conscience.

I somewhat regret today, Mr. Speaker, that for the first time I find myself speaking immediately following my worthy colleague, the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake). The Honourable Member for Assiniboia is well known in this House for the serious research that he puts into the debate he brings before this House. He is well known for the exhaustive examination of the Highways Estimates that he provided to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger). I know that the Minister of Highways is deeply grateful to the Member for Assiniboia for the seriousness with which the Highways Estimates of this province were treated this year. For those reasons I find the Member for Assiniboia a particularly hard act to follow, a very worthy Member, I will certainly try to rise to the standard that he brings to this House.

* (1500)

Having made my introductory remarks, Mr. Speaker, I repeat that I am today addressing remarks specifically

directed to Bill No. 100, The Supplementary Appropriation Act, 1989, and the main thrust of my remarks will be to provide suggestions related to the spending plan of this Government. I would suggest, however, that I do have a further objective in mind. I believe that my remarks serve a dual purpose in that theoretical consideration of the fiscal policy of this Government is relevant not only to Bill No. 100, The Supplementary Appropriation Act, 1989, but indeed to the budget formulation process which I know this Government is now entering.

I was offered a challenge yesterday by the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), and I quote his words, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to serve notice that because he has promised on three occasions that he was going to show us the way to reduce taxes, reduce the deficit and increase expenditures, I am now waiting for him to show me that magic formula in this speech. The Minister of Finance was chiding me to a certain degree in those remarks, but there is in fact an obligation that continues to be incumbent upon me to explain the relationship of my remarks, often repeated in this House, relative to countercyclical economic policy, to the change in the economic circumstances of the province that we have been entering for the last nine months.

When I first began to urge this Government to take actions consistent with countercyclical economic policies, this province was at the tail end of boom times, provincial revenues were buoyant, jobs were not in short supply. Economic growth can be counted on despite the interruption that we suffered due to a tragic drought in 1988, and less severe drought conditions in 1989.

In fact I feel a duty to place my remarks related to appropriate provincial policy in the light of the fact that we are now entering a cyclical downturn. My advice of two years ago, which I repeated for some time in this House, that the province should give great priority to using the boom and its revenues to achieve streamlining in government services so that we could reduce the provincial deficit and produce surpluses that we could use in the impending downturn, is no longer of great relevance, I must admit. We have in fact now entered a downturn without many substantial structural changes that leave us well equipped to handle the impending downturn.

I say, with some regret, Mr. Speaker, that because of the legacy of debt shamefully left to this House by the third Party in their years in office, and because this debt was not come to grips with rapidly by the present Government when there was still an economic boom in place to cushion the negative impact, we now face a situation where we will be entering an economic downturn with a deficit somewhere between \$300 million and \$500 million.

In short, Mr. Speaker, despite a seven-year economic boom, we have in this province made very little progress. I lay the bulk of the blame where it belongs—

An Honourable Member: On the socialists.

Mr. Kozak: On the socialists, as my friend from Niakwa (Mr. Herold Driedger) says. The third Party, that ran up

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shocking debts and burdened this province with \$11 billion in accumulated debt in the years of prosperity when this debt could have been reduced. If this debt had been reduced, we could today be stimulating the economy as we enter recessionary times. We would have a financial cushion that would make us possible to undertake stimulative activity. With sadness I inform all of my colleagues, of all three Parties, that this province is not in a financial condition to deliver countercyclical economic policy in the way that one would ideally envision.

The objective of such policy is to accumulate savings, to reduce debt in times when the economy is buoyant so that we could increase expenditures and even deliver tax cuts at a time when the economy was entering a cyclical downturn. We do not have that freedom. I wish the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) to understand that I do not hold him to any slavish following of the precepts of countercyclical economic policy. I do not expect him to introduce a budget in the particular recessionary times we are now entering that increases spending, delivers tax cuts and still has a deficit within manageable range.

The third Party in this House deprived us of the opportunity to take this action that would have been to the benefit of the citizenry of Manitoba. I hope the electorate of this province do not soon forget the fiscal bind in which the third Party left us. I also suggest that the present Government bears a small measure of responsibility at the very least for not being aggressive in streamlining Government operations in the two years that they had to accomplish same. They had a window of opportunity. In all conscience I can say they did not use it to any large extent.

So, Mr. Speaker, where does that leave me in terms of the suggestions I have for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and his colleagues? Fortunately, I have some good news to deliver. I delivered some of that good news in very sketchy form yesterday in my remarks on Bill 99. Specifically, I pointed out that the debt born by this province is not as severe as the federal debt that is approaching crisis proportions if it is not already past crisis proportions.

This province does not have a per capita indebtedness of \$15,000 for every man, woman and child as is the case at the federal level. Furthermore, in fact, our debt per man, woman and child is in the \$10,000 range which is slightly more modest but does offer a glimmer of hope. Also, this province benefits in a way that the federal Government does not benefit from the fact that approximately one-half of our indebtedness is self-sustaining. Manitoba Hydro accounts for a very substantial portion of the indirect indebtedness of this province, for example, and all of that indebtedness is self-sustaining.

This Government—and the Minister of Finance should be aware of this, I am sure he is—is not in the fiscal straight jacket in which the federal Government finds itself. Therefore, although we are entering a period of economic contraction with very little preparation certainly on the part of the former New Democratic Government, but to an extent on the part of the present Conservative Government, we are not in a fiscal bind

that leaves us totally without freedom of action. In fact, we do have some freedom of action.

I suggest that we are not obliged to slash Government programs in such a way that not only would disadvantage our citizenry, but also would intensify the recession conditions in this province. We are not obliged to raise taxes that would, once again, disadvantage our citizenry and accelerate the recessionary conditions in this province. We have a certain amount of freedom to undertake a few stimulative measures.

* (1510)

The Government and I periodically talk about the possibility of tax cuts. I will not address that possibility today, although I do suggest that there are certain areas in which stimulation of the economy through tax cuts could take place. Certainly any question of spending increases on a substantial scale by this Government are however not a viable option at this point.

The areas that I would like to bring up as being of particular interest to me are areas related to our potential to stave off recessionary conditions in this province by promoting investment and new enterprise that will have the effect of creating jobs in this province. I would like to suggest that our opportunity to bail ourselves out of a very difficult situation comes from the least likely place according to our thinking of just a few years ago. It comes from eastern Europe.

Already, Mr. Speaker, we find a situation where the economies of western Europe are beginning to boom as a result of the need for restructuring of east European economies to accommodate the new willingness to entertain capitalism in those countries. Manitoba is far away from eastern Europe, but even if we simply sit on our hands, we can benefit from the fact that base metals produced by this province, nickel, copper, zinc are already rising on the London Metal Exchange in reaction to the likelihood that considerable capital investment in east Europe will be required.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba does not have to sit on the sidelines. We have a substantial opportunity to create jobs in this province through exports to eastern Europe that will have the effect not only of creating jobs here but of providing needed capital and other forms of equipment and technology and training within eastern Europe. That can be to the profit of Manitoba.

Second, a number of firms, and we all recognize this, in western Europe have superior contacts to our own in Manitoba that permit them more easily to penetrate eastern Europe. We have a significant opportunity to facilitate as a Government joint ventures between Manitoba companies and western European companies that have superior contacts in eastern Europe but do not have enough resources and productive capacity to promote their opportunities to the fullest. In short, there is substantial and perhaps massive potential for job creation in this province even as we now labour from the beginning of recessionary times through the establishment of joint ventures between Manitoba companies and European companies that would lead to a boost in Manitoba production and a boost in Manitoba exports. These factors through the 1990s will

exist on such a massive scale that they can pull us from recession to boom. I hope this Government takes advantage of those opportunities. The Liberal Government that I envisage for this province will certainly take advantage of those opportunities.—(interjection)— Thank you, Harold.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity, because of the fact that we are still blessed with some room to carry out stimulative fiscal policy. I suggest that opportunity knocks but once. We have some room to develop a culture of investment in this province, among our own citizenry.

There has been much talk on the Government benches about a vision capital fund, which would serve as a co-ordinator for the development of new ventures in this province. However, in reaction to the substantive and intelligently worked out questions of the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) in Question Period earlier this afternoon, I wonder if this Government is prepared to move expeditiously to promote the development of venture capital and entrepreneurial spirit among Manitobans, an entrepreneurial spirit, I might add, that has been somewhat lacking in the past.

We are proud of our achievements in this province. I do not feel that I am being denigrating of Manitobans if I suggest that we could have done more. We must immediately start to do more. This Government must take a lead role in ensuring that we do more in promoting venture capital and investment in this province.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) had a good idea last year, although it had certain flaws. He opened one savings and investment opportunity to Manitobans in the form of Manitoba Hydro Savings Bonds. This bond issue gave Manitobans an incentive to invest in the development of this province's greatest resource, our hydro resource.

However, the size of the issue, at \$300 million, was less than could have been contemplated by this Government. The term of the issue—it was a three-year term—was not long enough to make it firmly established as a permanent feature of our economic landscape and a permanent feature of investment portfolios of Manitobans. In addition, such a short term raised the cost of the issue substantially to this province and to the taxpayers of this province, because of the fact that the selling costs of the issue were amortized over an outrageously short term of three years rather than being spread over a more sensible period of seven to 10 years.

I urge the Minister of Finance, once again this year, to introduce a Hydro bond issue and to correct the flaws that I have just pointed out to him. In addition, I suggest to this Government, and particularly to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that investment in our province be promoted by dovetailing the idea that I have presented with regard to venture capital with a Manitoba stock savings plan, which would inevitably lead to the development of new ventures, a market for the stock of new ventures and perhaps to a revivification of the somewhat languishing Winnipeg Stock Exchange

and the emergence of a true stock market in this province, something that would provide liquidity to investors in Manitoba enterprises.

I hope the Minister of Finance regards these suggestions as constructive. I know that from his attentive demeanor the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) finds these comments worthy of consideration. I would expect that this Government might perhaps reflect some of these ideas in the budget to be presented this fall.

* (1520)

I would like to speak a bit longer, Mr. Speaker, on just one item. I would not want to overtax the patience of Honourable Members having just spoken at great length just yesterday afternoon on a similar topic. I would like to address some of the opportunities that are now germinating in eastern Europe. It is public knowledge, and I am sure Members of this Government, certainly Members of the federal Government, are aware that certain extremely major economic agreements have been signed of late by the Government of Canada and various jurisdictions in eastern Europe which understand that they need our co-operation in order to thrive and that understand the co-operation that we are prepared to extend depends on there being something in it for us in the form of exports and job creation in this country. They understand that. They understand that there must be an economic incentive for Manitobans and others to assist them with their economic restructuring.

I would like to put on the record a couple of opportunities that I have chosen from random that should be followed up by Manitobans. For example, in Poland, a Polish foreign trade office was recently established in the Polish city of Gdynia to accommodate a number of Polish firms seeking to purchase various Canadian goods or to enter into joint venture arrangements with Canadian companies. A number are also interested in investment by Canadian firms and in increasing trade.

Mr. Speaker, this particular office is seeking goods that manufacturers and other producers of this province and other suppliers in this province are amply qualified to provide. I would suggest that this form of opportunity be explored. Eastern Europe in general knows they need our help and they are willing to pay for that help. Manitobans need jobs and they need assistance in pulling ourselves from the brink of recession. We need contacts precisely such as this to accomplish our objectives as well as theirs.

In addition, also in recent times, the Governments of Canada and the USSR have signed certain protocols and treaties that provide opportunities that Canadians and Manitobans should take advantage of. Most Members of this House understand that there has been a trade relationship between Canada and eastern Europe extending over decades. We have usually sent them raw materials such as wheat, and they have usually sent us certain manufactured products and consumer products, but we have consistently run a trade surplus with the U.S.S.R. and other countries of eastern Europe.

In just the last six days of November, Mr. Speaker, fully 20 commercial agreements were signed between the Government of Canada and the Government of the U.S.S.R. Many of them relate to joint ventures which should be of particular interest to Manitobans. These agreements totalled more than \$1 billion in potential value. These deals cover a wide range of sectors, including tourism, agro-food, oil and gas, pulp and paper, and automobile production. This is a ballpark we should be in, and this is a ballpark that this Government should be educated in.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, at the same time we witnessed the signing of the Canada-U.S.S.R. Foreign Investment Protection Agreement which, providing reciprocal investment protection, is expected to encourage more Canadian firms to invest in and enter joint ventures with the U.S.S.R. and other countries of eastern Europe, and finally, stating a third example, we have at the same time witnessed the signing of the Canada-U.S.S.R. Agreement on Province-Republic Co-operation, an umbrella agreement under which individual Canadian provinces can establish co-operation agreements in economic, scientific, technical and cultural areas.

The opening of a Canadian Consulate in the Ukrainian city of Kiev should facilitate the agreements I have just noted in becoming agreements of meaningful significance from which Manitobans can profit, and I would suggest that just a bit of priority be established by persons in responsibility in this House to see that Canada benefits to the maximum from the massive opportunities developing in eastern Europe.

I would hazard the prediction, Mr. Speaker, that the export opportunities open to Canadians in the 1990s in eastern Europe will be one of the prime economic movers of the economy of the western world through the entire decade. I do not want Manitobans to lose out on the potential, I do not want us to sit on the sidelines, and I hope once again the Minister of Finance and others in the Government take my sincere comments to heart, and they know they are sincere comments.

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to overtax the patience of my friends, given the fact that I have made a 40-minute speech on a similar topic just yesterday. Could you indulge me with an indication of how much time I have remaining?

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. Kozak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address one final point. I believe it has occurred to Members of this Government, as a result of questioning presented in good faith at the Leader of the Opposition, that this Government and its agents are engendering fear in this province among a significant portion of the electorate.

I would suggest that a most unfortunate letter sent out recently as a fund raising letter to Conservative Party sympathizers in this province has created a level of fear related to a possible second-phase hidden

agenda that this Government should address immediately if more of the same, more taxes—Mr. Speaker, my microphone is no longer functioning.

I would suggest that this Government take steps that their integrity would require them to do to disassociate themselves from any letter implying a hidden agenda on their part that has created concern among honest, ordinary working people and others in this province. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, as certain suggest the damage has been done and this Government cannot disassociate themselves from a letter that went out at the authorization of the Conservative Party and that has created fear in this province.

* (1530)

As we still labour with the possibility of recession, talk of hidden agendas, talk of a second phase program, implications of hacking and slashing that will impact ordinary Manitobans are highly inappropriate. It may be impossible to back off from the unfortunate letter that was sent. Perhaps the Government will choose in its wisdom to simply hope that the passage of time will allow this talk of a hidden agenda—and a second phase involving cutting and slashing of indeterminate programs will over time disappear. That is a possibility, Mr. Speaker. I raise it because I am concerned that no Party should do this once, and I am absolutely adamant that no Party should make this mistake twice because it does undermine economic confidence among sectors within our economy.

I would like to conclude at this point, Mr. Speaker, by reiterating that my comments today, and I believe no argument will take issue with me, have not been an attempt to present a gloom-and-doom scenario. The Government will recognize that I have presented to them concrete workable suggestions which could benefit the upcoming budget of this province. In past years, as I have presented my pre-budget comments, I have been gratified to see that my comments have not been ignored in full and I do not feel I have wasted my time in this exercise.

I certainly hope that the same courtesy that has been extended to the thoughts I have put on the record at this time, in the previous two years, once again in their third presentation in a different form, receive consideration by this Government, and I look forward to a budget which reflects some of the better intellect of which this particular Member is capable. The suggestions I have put on the record today, the suggestions I put on the record yesterday, were serious ones delivered in good conscience. They were not without a certain intellectual validity that no Member would dispute. I look forward to a budget which reflects certain of the opportunities I have identified and certain of the concerns I have raised. Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, and my thanks to all Honourable Members for their kind attention to my remarks.

Mr. William Chornopyski (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I examined Bill 100, and it covers a wide range of topics. I intend to stay within that range, but I do however intend to cover a number of topics.

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I want to begin by reminding the Honourable Members in this Chamber that some months back we gathered in Neepawa, Manitoba, and the purpose of that gathering was to discuss the dilemma that the rural communities find themselves in. I do not know that we accomplished anything, but I am sure that most of us came out of there somewhat better informed as to what the rural communities are ailing from. Of course the ailment is not a difficult one but the cure is very difficult.

The reason I bring that up, Mr. Speaker, is because I intend to speak about my particular end of the city that is ailing from the very same thing. I wish the Honourable Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) was here at the present time because I am really aiming some of my remarks at—however, if he does not come in here shortly, I will remind him to read Hansard.

Mr. Speaker, what happened in my end of the city in recent weeks was several things, one of the things being the closure of Margaret Scott School, which the Honourable Minister does not see fit to replace. The Honourable Minister however, I would suggest, is probably as ill informed about the north end of the city as I was about the new agenda for rural Manitoba and what they were suffering from. I would like the Honourable Minister to know that there is more to this school closure than just closing a school.

For many, many years, we have suffered in the north end from a dilemma called lack of young people and families. There was a time in the mid-70s where up to 60 percent of the housing stock was not owner occupied. The tenants were very much on the move. There was no stability in the community. I was a city councillor at the time. There were those in the City Hall that were concerned about what is happening to the core area of the city. You are right, Mr. Minister, you were one. You have given me support many times.

There was a great need, Mr. Speaker, to turn that matter around, and it was not going to be an easy task. We did not expect it to be. However, we proceeded to take advantage of all the programs, the neighbourhood improvement programs. The Honourable Minister sitting across from me will remember those programs. There were the community improvement programs. The city invested a lot of dollars, and so did the Province of Manitoba. We were able to reverse that situation to the extent where we now are a very vibrant community.

In order to keep that community vibrant, Mr. Speaker, we must provide these young families with the kind of amenities that they are able to find elsewhere in this city. We are not doing that by not replacing that school. That community school is extremely important to the young families who have established in that community in the past 10 or 15 years. I am afraid that if we continue to ignore these people, we will be back where we were 15 years ago.

What I am really saying, Mr. Speaker, is that the left hand is not really sure what the right one is doing. On the one hand, we spend all kinds of money to revitalize this part of the old city to attract young families to locate in that area again, and on the other hand some

other department fails to provide them with the very thing that everybody wants and everybody else has. What we are in fact doing, we are spinning our wheels. We are not only spinning them, we are losing ground. I am very concerned about that particular situation, because it was a long road to bringing it back to where it was at one time and where we were able to get it back to now.

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

One of the things, Mr. Acting Speaker, that really bothered me when we were notified that this school was to be closed, the young families with children in that school went into a bit of a panic. That is understandable. I guess if I had a young family, I would have panicked with them. Of course they called meetings which I attended. They expressed their concerns. The Minister of course did not see fit to attend the meeting and that was unfortunate.

The Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) did attend and made a beautiful speech while he was there. I want to take a word out of Hansard that was used by the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) extensively and the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) when my honourable friend for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) introduced Bill No. 35. They attacked him unrelentingly, which was really uncalled for. They called him a hypocrite and repeatedly - (interjection)-

* (1540)

Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, if there ever was a hypocrite it was the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), who was Minister of Education in 1985 when that school was first examined by the engineers and was declared unfit. If there ever was a hypocrite it was the Member for Flin Flon in 1987 again when there was another application for the same school, and it was turned down again. He had the audacity to show up at this meeting and make a beautiful speech to these people that were in a panic about losing their community school. That is hypocrisy.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am not one to use unparliamentary language, but I think that if it is fit for a Leader of a Party, then it should be fit for a Member for Burrows, and that is hypocrisy. Further hypocrisy in the mid-'70s, we just recently dealt with the sniffing Bill presented by the Honourable Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis).

In the mid-'70s, the City of Winnipeg formed a committee to look into the matter of sniffing children. We were pleading with the then New Democratic Government to pass a law forbidding selling such things as glue and solvents and all those things across the counter. There was no Bill and there was no law. Today, they have a Bill. They are all of a sudden 10, 15 years later concerned about the children sniffing glue in the back lane. I never saw one New Democrat marching with us in front of one particular hardware store that was selling these things by the gallon to children. Today they called the Liberals hypocrites. The hypocrites are sitting over there.

An Honourable Member: They preach about health care and they shut down beds.

Mr. Chornopyski: That is right. Speaking of beds and health care—

An Honourable Member: They know how to build bridges.

Mr. Chornopyski: That is right, the bridges are sitting there north of Lockport.

In 1985, Mr. Acting Speaker—(interjection)—Well said. In 1985, Seven Oaks Hospital had a maternity ward, which it should have in a very growing community which is growing today probably faster than any other part of this city. Who do you think has closed that maternity ward down? The NDP Government closed it down. It was certainly, like the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) said, it was the NDP Government that built it. That NDP Government that built it was not the NDP Government that closed it down, totally different. It was the most recent NDP Government that closed it down. That is hypocrisy, if they want to speak about hypocrisy.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we lost, yes, the Honourable Member for Concordia said we could have had a maternity ward in every hospital in the Province of Manitoba. Yes, we could have again in 1985, but the money went to Saudi Arabia instead. We did not appreciate or realize anything from that money. It was gone. Now they have the audacity to point fingers at a Party that was not Government for the last 25 years, while they were the Government for the last 20 or 21. That is hypocrisy.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am not inclined to get carried away and get too emotional and to chastise people, but I have no trouble doing it this time. None whatsoever. I am only giving them back what they deserve. They like to point fingers at those that are not responsible. When they were there they were not responsible, and they were there a long time.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would just like to leave a message for the Honourable Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). As I said, I wish he was here. What he needs to do is look beyond a school. He has to look at people. He has to look at a particular community.

Yes, we have many older communities in this City of Winnipeg, but that does not mean to say because it is an old community that it is equally impoverished, as the particular community that I am speaking of. To deny these people a community school was a grave mistake on the part of the Honourable Minister, and I wish that he would reconsider. I wish that he would come, I would be more than happy to take him in my car, drive him through the community and show him really what I am talking about.

He hangs his hat on the fact that the finance board is recommending against it. The finance board consists of people that do not even know where Pritchard Avenue is. They have not been in the north end. They do not know that it exists, but they are making recommendations. Yet a school that was not even on the list, the Robert H. Smith School was not even on the list, is being constructed or contemplated to be constructed in the near future. That is understandable

because it is on the other end of town. That to us that live in the north end is very understandable. We are used to that. We have lived with it for many years.

Mr. Acting Speaker, so what I said about the new agenda for rural Manitoba was to give the Honourable Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) an example that it exists right here in the City of Winnipeg and not only in rural Manitoba. If we do not do the necessary things that need to be done, parts of this city will be dying as they have shown us in the past, and if that is what we really want then of course let us not provide any amenities in these parts of the city. Let us let it go and let them die, and then we will bulldoze them and do whatever to turn them into a football park or whatever.

Having made those few points, Mr. Acting Speaker, I will conclude by saying thank you for listening to me, and I did not mean to get carried away, but it has been building up for some time. I have a lot of time listening, sitting in that Chair, and it built up to the point where I meant to say more in a much quieter way, but because I did not say it quietly, I will not say so much. Thank you very much.

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): I want to tell you, Mr. Acting Speaker, and the Members of the House, that it is always an inspiration to hear from my colleague. I noticed the same was true to the Government and even to the NDP, whether it be in just personal conversation or in caucus or in this House, he always has a very sane, level-headed message to give to you, and it is too bad we do not have more people like the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) in Government offices, Government positions, particularly on the other side of the House. We are very proud to have him here. I would never try or hope to ever—outdo his messages. I will try, as best I can, to do the best that is possible.

My colleague mentioned Pritchard Avenue. Well, that is not surprising that one department does not know Pritchard, because I do not think their bosses know where the north end is, and I think they are afraid to go into the north end.

There are actually three areas where this Government is not in sync at all particularly, and that is they are not in sync with the handicapped and disabled people of this province at all. They are hardly in tune, a little bit better than they used to be but hardly still in tune. We expected a lot of promise, but we do not have it from the Minister in charge of seniors, and certainly those people who are the working poor, and social assistance, this Government continues to leave them in a vacuum.

* (1550)

It is no wonder, here we have a Government that tries to govern with nobody with north end experience. Perhaps you can exclude the Premier from there. I know he was brought up in the north end, but they have no practical experience.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think that some Members, particularly the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) is even afraid to go into the north end. We have chastised her on many occasions for not attending.

We never see her at an event there. We talked about I think it was the December 3 meeting of seven ministries put on a housing vigil on Maryland Street, St. Matthews Church, I believe it was, a very well attended, three or four Members of our Party and even the NDP showed up with one of their stragglers.

We learned a lot of things there that day, but one thing we particularly learned was the Government was not interested, as they are not interested in all the things that go on in the core area of Winnipeg where we have the most poverty. We learned that 300 people a month come to that one church alone, complaining of having to go without food or not able to pay their rent, setting up shelter. We learned that in many rooming houses the landlord just does whatever he wants, varies the rent on the same suite depending on whether the tenant is receiving provincial or municipal welfare.

In other words, they try to gouge the last dollar out of them. In fact, they pointed out that one duplex was divided into eight suites. This is what you put up with in the north end, and you can be sure the landlord is charging each of them about \$200.00. Now that is usury, and this is what our Government in Manitoba continues to allow and it goes on day after day after day and month after month. This Government does nothing to relieve that situation. As a matter of fact, the situation deteriorates.

I noticed that the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs' (Mr. Downey) nose was out of joint because nobody had really talked to him. While I alluded to the Minister of Seniors and how this Government—we were hopeful that they would start recognizing the needs of the elderly in this province, but they really just use a bunch of smoke and mirrors and rhetoric and think that they will get by on that. Well, I want to tell you, Mr. Acting Speaker, they are fooling absolutely no one.

May I stop here now and say, I think we should all have a holiday if we look so well as the Honourable Minister for Emerson (Mr. Albert Driedger). He has got a big smile and a tan, and he looks like the cat that just swallowed the canary. One of the most needs of the elderly, and not only perhaps we emphasize it in Winnipeg, not only in Winnipeg but all over Manitoba, is a need for a reasonable transportation system.

Now the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme), when he used to address it as an expert from the City of Winnipeg, ex-chairman of Executive Policy Committee, said oh, Handi-Transit will do that job. Well, what have we seen of Handi-Transit? This year we see the city talking about not expanding Handi-Transit, which is a transportation for disabled, but they are also talking about cutting it back by \$300,000, and I am sure when you see a transportation system that lately we have seen at least on two occasions the wheels falling off the vehicles while there are handicapped and elderly people in those vehicles, the wheels are dropping off them, that is how hard up they are for funds. The present Minister of Housing who used to answer for the seniors on these matters said that everything was tickety-boo. I want to point out to him that is not the case and Handi-Transit is not the vehicle nor is it well managed to the point where it can look after the seniors. I think the Government should look at that priority and

see if they could not put a little bit of money in and assist the Provincial Government put some money into there, at least to sustain the \$300,000.00.

I will say, Mr. Acting Speaker, that this present Minister, he is a jolly good fellow and he at least listens. I guess maybe Cabinet does not listen to him, but he did send his staff over to look at a very well run, probably the best run operation in western Canada, started by the Liberals over in Fort Garry, Fort Rouge and that area, the seniors transport system.

He did send staff over and they investigated and we appreciated that very much. We looked that they would use that as an example to come forward with some ideas because we do know that when we see wish lists from the seniors, both the MSOS and Age and Opportunity and New Horizons, that what they feel is one of the priorities is a transportation system for the elderly, designated for the elderly. Certainly I think that these people who built this province and this country at least deserve that, if not more.

Since some months ago where the Minister did send his staff over and we thought that we would see almost instant action because he was enthusiastic as could be and I know his staff liked what they saw, according to the reports that I have, that it has been dormant since then. It could be that they recognize how good that system is over there and that it could be expanded and used as a base to build up a system indeed not only as a model for all of Winnipeg but perhaps all of Manitoba, rural towns and what have you.

This would be in a very inexpensive setup and we are disappointed that the Government and particularly this Minister, who we have a lot of confidence in really, but in this particular area he still has not been able to grasp the needs of the seniors. We will be patient and hopefully he will start looking at that as a priority.

I know that the Minister sees the potential not only to help the elderly in all of Winnipeg, but he sees the potential for votes. That is really the problem. He does not know how to grasp those votes and seize them away from the Liberal Party in particular and those votes that will be forthcoming in the next election from the New Democrats in the City of Winnipeg to the Liberal Party.

An Honourable Member: Do you drive a Lincoln?

Mr. Rose: We tell you this, that yes, Mr. Acting Speaker, we have asked the question, do I drive a Lincoln? The insignia on the back says it is a Lincoln. In fact even the licence plate holder, which is clean all the time by the way, says that it is a Lincoln. As a retort from the Premier some time back when he asked me that question, I thought we put that one to bed for all time. Poor little working fellow like me has to enjoy some luxuries. I do not drink or smoke or run around with women so I have to have some enjoyment in life, and perhaps the Lincoln is that. Nevertheless, let us put this to bed. It is an open secret that I used to be a Tory. That Lincoln was purchased five years ago when I was a Tory.

An Honourable Member: Withdraw. That is a sexist remark. Withdraw. Resign.

Mr. Rose: I will correct that I do not run around with women or men.

* (1600)

Anyway, we are getting back to transportation for the seniors and I want to say that I do not think that politics should play a part in this. I think that the Minister in charge of Seniors (Mr. Downey) should look at it that way. I am sure that if nothing else if he followed his instincts and his knowledge of what is needed in this province that he would find a seniors population very grateful and well served by any plans that he would have in that direction. I know people who are in constituencies in my area, we would not be upset at all to let a few votes go over to the Tories on that one. I think we have a few to spare so we do not worry about that.

I hear a harrumph from the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). I had alluded earlier to the Minister's lack of entry into the north end of Winnipeg. I understand that there was a headline not long ago where the Minister—and she was candid about it, she was honest. I think there is nothing to be ashamed of when you are at least honest. She admitted that she had never been at a food bank.

There are lots of them in Winnipeg, no shortage of finding them once you drive into the north end of Winnipeg. There are about as many of them now as there are fast food outlets.

The headline in the paper said that she had never been to a food bank. The gist of it after that sort of indicated that perhaps she would like to, but I think the headline could have read that she had never visited one nor will she ever visit one.

I could stand in my place right now, Mr. Acting Speaker, and have heard the wrong story. I understand just today as a matter of fact—is today the 6th, March 6, yes. That is two years ago today this Government stood up and made promises like SAFER and CRISP, that they were going to do such as this with their Government, they were going to do that in Government. Then two days later, the then Member for St. Vital brought the Party down and they lost all the promises that they were making when they were in Opposition.

I understand that just today, March 6, the Agape Table, which is one of the leading food banks in Winnipeg, laid out a welcome mat for the Minister, invited her there some time ago. You know what—and stop me if I am wrong—you did not show up. That really disappointed the people -(interjection)- so you do admit that such a welcome was put out.

An Honourable Member: I was ill.

Mr. Rose: You were ill? -(interjection)- No, no, this was today, March 6. Not only can you not count, you do not know the month of the year. It was today, March 6. That is today, not February 6.

An Honourable Member: So what is your problem?

Mr. Rose: That the Minister did not show up. She had a welcome so that they could show her a food bank

in the north end of Winnipeg. The church invited her over and she did not show.

Then she said she was sick a month ago. I know that the Minister was in committee today. I am sure that the Government -(interjection)- pardon me? Yes, the Minister was in committee, reading the newspaper all through it.- (interjection)- Maybe she was not reading it, maybe she was just looking at it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, on a point of order.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): On a point of order, Mr. Acting Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) is imputing motives and unparliamentary language related to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). I think he ought to apologize to the House.- (interjection)- Withdraw that remark.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member for St. Vital, on a point of order.

Mr. Rose: No, I was not on a point of order. He was on a point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Acting Speaker, I would just ask, was it in fact a point of order?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Well, it does not enhance decorum in the House that I will—the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

Mr. Rose: Out of respect for the Acting Speaker, I might say that if indeed the Minister could look across the floor and say that at no time or not at a major time during committee that she was reading the newspaper, I would be more than happy with it withdrawn. Having that the Government never admits what they do, particularly if she is ashamed of it, say it, and I will withdraw that remark. I have withdrawn unequivocally and—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose), will you continue your speech? He has withdrawn his remarks.

Mr. Rose: Mr. Acting Speaker, the point I was trying to make was that surely when we have admitted that we never visited this sort of an operation and you are the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson), somebody could have filled in. The committee was important, we grant that. Somebody in the Government out of 24 Members could have filled in to go and make some interest with those people. Listen, it is her problem. It is her that the people are disappointed in, not the Liberal Party. I just say and I prod her and encourage her one more time to spend some time in amongst the poverty.- (interjection)- The Minister says that she rescheduled.

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I do not know whether I would accept that, because I understand that Mr. Sexsmith attended in her absence, so if it was rescheduled it must have been. It may have been now, she says. It seems to me that we know more about what is going on in her department than she does, so we will hopefully change subjects.

An Honourable Member: Are you losing your thought?

Mr. Rose: No, I am not losing it yet. I would like to say that it is NDP time, and my colleague for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) mentioned what he considered the biggest hypocritical thing that he saw for a long time, and he was aiming those remarks at the NDP. Although I cannot use more wisdom than he in my talks, I do think that I can top his hypocritical move, and that is that when the NDP under Edward Schreyer, when he was the Premier, I remember on occasions, many occasions he would get up and say that it is a shame and a disgrace if anybody should earn or take home over I think it was two and a half times the minimum wage.

It might have been three and a half, it was a long time ago, but even that, he used to say that time and time again. Then he used to get up and refer to the capitalists and their conspicuous consumption. These were socialists, people who got down with the downtrodden and the poor and the handicapped. I will tell you, as socialist as they are and as hypocritical as they are, when the chance came along to live in a great big house in Ottawa with 78 servants it certainly was not turned down, and that was the example that the socialists gave us once and for all. I think that indeed was the most hypocritical thing that I have ever seen, and I hope I do not slight the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) by hoping to up his hypocritical move on the part of the NDP.

* (1610)

Mr. Acting Speaker, while I am on my feet—and I want to talk a little bit more about economic security and housing programs a little later on so I want to leave enough time for that—I do want to mention that some time ago we brought up in this House a matter of almost what I would call a miscarriage of justice to a fellow by the name of Mr. Podolsky, Ken Podolsky, who was involved in an accident some 12 years ago.

An Honourable Member: Are we on that again?

Mr. Rose: Yes, we are on that again because it just happened I saw a little while ago it ended up in the paper today on an editorial page. It is the second time this week. What we have now, we have privacy Canada saying that Transport Canada should have never released their report. Yet the department and the Minister still will not acknowledge that the report ever got to Autopac, although the Ombudsman now has said it, Transport Canada has said it. Even the lawyers for the people involved in the accident say it.

Now privacy Canada acknowledges that one report out 2,000, and they have changed the procedure on that, but still there is no move. What happened here,

and I just will not go through the long, long story on it, because that would take an hour or so, but what happened here was that this fellow who was employed by Autopac, who was involved in a very traumatic accident—four people were killed in a car—tried to claim on Autopac.

What they did was brought in a false report, a completely sanitized report and used it against them so that even 12, 13 years later now he has not had any payment from Autopac for his damages. What really happened is that the lawyers wrote four times to Autopac to get some sort of reaction and documents which they are entitled to. Do you know what Autopac did? Autopac went to the courts for a motion of dismissal of the suit, and you know what, they were successful. They were successful because of all the time gone by.

Just after that court hearing where it was dismissed, of course, Ken Podolsky's lawyer issued an appeal of same which is still in the books which the Government keeps screaming that you will prejudice the case, while the information that Autopac put on the record in the papers is what really prejudiced the case. After the report came to light, and I must say I would like to stop and commend the Minister responsible for Autopac, because he was forthright enough and honest enough and interested enough in justice that he did release the report and that I give that Minister the most credit for. It is something that most Ministers, in whatever stripe, probably would not do. I do not want to take away from how I appreciate and have quite a bit of admiration for him having done that, but this was the callous way they went about it.

Now we have conclusive proof that a citizen of Manitoba, a client of Autopac has been maligned for thousands and thousands of dollars, never mind the grief and hardship that he has gone through those years and the embarrassment that he has gone through because of his financial plight and that Autopac nor the Minister would give directions now to let the matter proceed in the courts of Manitoba and get his documents. At least he can have his day in court now that it has been proven, proved once and for all that he was maligned, that it was a false report that was used to find him 75 percent responsible for the accident. This just came out in the paper again today, so therefore I thought it was appropriate to once more put it on the record and hope that this Government would see the fallacy of not letting this case proceed into the courts and Mr. Ken Podolsky will get what is due him.

Getting back to the matter, we had a lot of talk today about housing, and we know how the Government has neglected housing needs. I think I heard the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) today say that he was going to recess this matter and bring it into the next Session. Well, I do not know how you could make a more political blunder than having done such a thing, especially if you think that an election might be imminent during the intervening period. I know in my area there are thousands of people who live in apartment blocks, and they have been maligned by the present system, the system that was put in, as a matter of fact, by the NDP Government. You know, they like to chirp and yell from

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their seats about why there is not some speed on this thing, but they forget that they were responsible for all the evils to tenants that exist in the legislation right now.

Having said that about the NDP, there is no excuse for this Government to bring all the inequities that are inherited and in that legislation to the floor and do something about it. On the other hand, I would not want to wish anything on tenants that is not the very best, but politically I think it is to the advantage of the other Parties that the Government was not clever enough or ambitious enough or whatever it takes to put that Bill 42 into committee and get it finalized and passed. Thousands of people who do live in those apartments throughout all of Winnipeg will remember that this is the Government that let them stay in the morass that they are at the present time and have been for some years in the rental housing area in Manitoba, indeed not just Winnipeg but indeed Manitoba.

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, during Estimates we brought quite a few areas of concern to the Minister. I know there was a point where we were told, in fact we were thanked for starting to have some co-operation with their department, and indeed there has been some considerable improvement in co-operation, but the co-operation does not extend to some of the questions that we have addressed and were looking for answers. One of them was that, when we were in committee some months ago, I brought out to the Minister, to her surprise, a copy of the Social Assistance Review Committee. She said it was a classified document, although I got copies from two different sources, and I wondered at that time why the Government had not released the report.

It is not so terribly important in releasing the report, because I already had one, but we are interested on the reaction of the Minister and her department to that report, what she intends to do, and what areas, if any—and this is the third such report in 11 years—she would put in the budget, perhaps borrow some money from the \$200,000 Tory slush fund for election and implement some of the urgent concerns that are included in that Social Assistance Review Report, which was done by three levels of Government. There is complete input, professional input, and there are some excellent suggestions, and we would like to know if this Minister agrees with the recommendations in that Social Assistance Review Committee Report, and what she intends to do to implement some of those in the coming year.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

* (1620)

Could I stop, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and ask you how many minutes I have left? How many minutes do I— I will just continue. Another matter that had me concerned that we brought up in Estimates was the matter of economic security to people on CPP pensions. In August of 1986 and again in May of 1987, the Honourable Jake Epp wrote the provincial Minister of Economic Security at that time in the NDP Government and urged that the CPP increases that were given would

be passed along to people on social assistance as extra income, rather than being clawed back by the Manitoba Government. Those increases came into effect on January 1, 1987, and of course the socialist Government of that time did not see the reason, or were not compassionate enough to do it, and they left it as it was. Every nickel, every dime of the CPP increases given to people on disabilities was clawed back by the Government.

That is not surprising when you figure what type of Government was in operation in this province in 1986 and 1987. It is rather surprising when you see that it has continued on for some two years anyway with the present regime. We would be very interested to see in those sorts of things, like SAFER, CRISP, CPP increases and many, many other allowances that come to people who are disabled and on social assistance, what the Government intends to do to leave more of that money in their pockets.

We know that they need the money, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We know, as I outlined the other day, that the welfare income in this province is by far the lowest in Canada. We are not living in any clover here. In fact we are 56.6 percent of the poverty line. Saskatchewan is even 11 points higher than us at 67.1, and Ontario is well above us at 75.4. That is not taking into account the \$415 million that was poured into the system in that Liberal province in the past year.

This brings about a situation where CAP in Canada, the Canada Assistance Plans in Canada, went up 20 percent last year, 20 percent. The increase in Manitoba was 5 percent. It does not take a mathematician to figure out that somebody is getting our share of the money, some other province. What we do is if we increase our welfare payments in this province for instance by \$10 million to get rid of some of these inequities, particularly in housing, then \$10 million of that would come from the federal Government. If we do not take the money, it either lies there, or in the case of last year, it is more than taken up by the other provinces in Canada. That is one thing we are behind, and we would like to see what the Minister intends to do to review this report and remove these inequities to people, particularly those who are on disabled.

While I am talking about the disabled, I know that I have brought matter after matter to the attention of the Minister. There was one night—the fellow that was crying out here from humiliation and agony because he was hungry. It was because he did not have enough money to have a decent living, because we do not in this province give our handicapped enough money. I know this fellow does not drink, I know he does not smoke and I know he does not use other drugs. All his money goes for the necessities of life, and yet four or five days before his welfare cheque comes in, he has to cry because he is genuinely hungry, and he is not putting on any act.

I sent the file over to the Minister, and we do not hear anything back. It is just another case there, just another statistic, why should we really worry about it? I worry about it because this fellow had gloves and every finger was protruding. His clothing was all scuffed up and he was ripped across the back from rubbing

against the wheelchair. When we bring this to the attention of the Government, they say that we will cooperate, but we do not even get the courtesy of a reply.

I know another instance is, eight people tried to form a self help centre, an Independent Living Centre in Portage la Prairie, and they went—of course, it is a matter that is under the Health Department. I went out to visit these people in Portage la Prairie. They were all bright, intelligent people. They were capable of running their own affairs, but what reply did they get from the Government of Manitoba? They said no. It is like under the Socialists. Big brother will continue to look after you, and that is the way it is. They dictate who should be in there and who should be coming out and all the rest of the big brother attitude. I think we should let these people live independently, because one thing we have found out is that the Welcome Home Program in this province has turned out to be a disaster.

Institutions like the Manitoba Development Centre, we are seeing where more people are going back into the centre than are leaving. In fact, very few people are leaving the program, leaving the centres like that now. Obviously the program is in a state of collapse, so we should be looking at ways where we can get people out of these institutions and be on their own, because I have studied their figures and I have studied their plans. I have come to the definite conclusion that we are a lot better off in this province financially, and those people are much happier when they are independent on their own. If the province saves money, I do not know why the Government does not follow our advice and the people in that industry in that area and allow that.

I think that it is a matter of the Government and their employees trying to protect their turf. I think they should take a long-term point of view of that and loosen up a bit and at least open some of these places on an experimental basis. I know the Independent Living Resource Centre in Winnipeg, we had a meeting with them the other day, and I notice that their money from the Province of Manitoba has been cut down, they do not get any lottery money at all now, the Government of Canada's Secretary of State is cutting back their money.

All of our colleagues agreed when we met with them that those organizations are doing a fantastic job for the handicapped, but it is like we saw under the NDP, they are out of sight most of the time and out of mind. As a matter of fact, we saw a fellow in a wheelchair who was coming over here early in the year to get an award, and when he ended up at the Legislature to come in, the Government had not seen fit to take the snow off the ramp. So that is the sort of attitude they get. Nobody ever thinks of the handicapped and their needs and how we should be looking after them, particularly in this Government. There is the problem.

Another item that I mentioned in Estimates, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is whereby social assistance claimants—and the Minister acknowledged this. We know that from all standards it is the wrong thing to do, but some of them get kicked around from pillar to post by as many as nine social welfare workers sometimes. We have documented a case and sent her

the files. We have not had any arguments to the contrary, so I imagine her investigation found out that the statement we made was right.

I certainly understand the need for a change one or two times, maybe holidays or illness or changes in jobs, but getting up to the amount of times that we see that the welfare workers change for clients, it is bordering on the absolute ridiculous. I can only come to the conclusion that when the sledding gets tough and they have not got the answers and they do not know how to face the people on social allowance, then the easiest thing to do is change the worker, and then hopefully that makes the problem go away for a couple of weeks, but it really does not go away, it really just makes it worse and worse.

I am wondering if the Minister has yet studied this problem and what plan she has to cause the problem to be diminished in this province so that the people on the social assistance will get the assistance which the constitution says they are entitled to in this country.

* (1630)

Another question I asked the Minister was, with the increasing joblessness in Winnipeg, and in the province many, many more people are going on UIC and that means that more and more people are going on social welfare, and one of the reasons is that the UIC has a real extensive backlog and claims are coming in and being processed very late and subsequently cheques are delayed in the same manner. I am wondering, the Minister at that time promised to approach her federal counterparts and see if something could not be done to speed up the payments, or at least make some compensation that the Government could help. One of the things where the Government of Manitoba, with all these increased problems at UIC and a heavier load, will the Minister now reconsider the decision she made? It was an agency that used to be able to help people on unemployment insurance to get their claims processed and to get their legitimate claims and, therefore, the amount of money that was saved from our provincial social assistance was great, but what did this Minister and what did this Government do? They eliminated the Unemployed Help Centres in Brandon and Winnipeg.

It is an odd thing that they did that because they were helping lots of people and they paid for themselves in the amount of money they saved people on social assistance, and yet they stopped funding them, but luckily we have other agencies that continue their funding to them so they have been able to keep alive, even though they have a heavier workload. The odd thing about it is that at that time the Government department, particularly Family Services and Economic Security, were referring people to those centres when their employees could not get an answer from it—I know I still to this day, refer people to the Unemployed Help Centres—they were referring them even after they cut off fundings for those agencies.

So they understand the need and the great job that Unemployed Help Centres are doing in Winnipeg and Brandon, but they cut off the funds, but they did not

start cutting off the referrals they made there. I still wonder whether indeed the Government is still carrying on that practice of sending people over there for referral and whether indeed they will reconsider the wrong-headed decision and reinstitute the funding for the Unemployed Help Centre. I thank you very much for your indulgence.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a committee change. I move, seconded by the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) for Radisson (Mr. Patterson); Transcona (Mr. Kozak) for Springfield (Mr. Roch).

I move, seconded by the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations be amended as follows: Radisson (Mr. Patterson) for St. Vital (Mr. Rose).

I also understand that we have the Member for Selkirk on Public Utilities and Natural Resources twice, so in order to take her name off the one, I move, seconded by the Member for Selkirk, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Transcona (Mr. Kozak) for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), but with the understanding that the Member for Selkirk will still remain on the committee.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Agreed? Agreed. The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

An Honourable Member: Not again, Herold. You spoke yesterday—two days in a row.

Mr. Herold Driedger: As the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says, I spoke yesterday, and I think he is accurate on this. Obviously I had not finished my remarks, so I will continue.

What we are focusing on today is spending, the spending priorities, the spending agenda of our Government. I believe that in this process as we start looking at what one does when one sets out the spending priorities, one really should take a look at the long-term agenda that one has in mind.

I am reminded that not quite two years ago when we had the election, we had the opportunity in an NDP budget to defeat the budget. The Conservatives took advantage of that situation and propelled the province into an election scenario, which resulted in the current make-up of this House.

I believe that at the time that particular budget vote was taken we had Conservatives who were interested primarily in the overturning of a Government, in a defeat of a Government. They were interested in achieving

power on their own. They were high on the polls. They were riding high in the popularity of the province, and their priority was power, their priority was Government, their priority was not necessarily governing.

We can see that in the kind of budgetary proposals that we have had put forward, largely short term, largely proposals designed to achieve short-term goals only, we are left with a long-term scenario that is unable to be achieved, unable to be achieved because really what we have here is a Government that lacks an agenda. At least they lack the agenda that we would put forward, being a long-term agenda which has the benefit and the welfare of the people of Manitoba at heart, rather the agenda that they may have, the long-term agenda.

If I may recall that in my remarks of yesterday, I referred to the Phase 2 document which called for the fact that the Tories wanted to have a majority Government so they could carry on with their plan, which they had not identified—(interjection)—the hidden agenda, as I am reminded by the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

The hidden agenda, which suggests to me that much as the Conservatives in Ottawa who also said that their main claim to Government was not so much an agenda, a pattern, a proposal, a program for Canada, but rather their agenda was very simple. They wanted to dump Trudeau, they wanted to dump the Liberals and they wanted to get in. Well, we saw what happened. They got in.

When Governments change like this, you have a situation of the people perhaps wanting to buy into that idea. Perhaps the people felt that, yes, the Liberals have been in power for a very, very long time, and maybe it was time that there was a fresh picture, a fresh image, a fresh program, fresh ideas, new ideas, but instead what we saw was a Tory Government that was interested primarily in their short-term goals.

We hear for instance that one of the things that was introduced early on was a cutback in the promises that had been made to seniors, cutbacks in senior welfare, cutbacks in seniors' allowances. We know what happened. We saw a movement across this country of what was called, euphemistically, the gray movement. The elderly, the seniors, got together and they fought for their rights.

What happened, we saw very quickly the Government changed its mind because it saw that there are two things that you have to do when you start looking at bearing an agenda. Not only do you have your long-term view, but you also have to concern yourself to the fact that what you do must not impact negatively on the disadvantaged members of your society.

We have seen this Government here in the two years it has been in power, largely moving in reaction to people, groups disadvantaged in one respect or another, moving from one crisis to another crisis.

I grant you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Government by crisis management makes good press. It is very good press because you walk in, you allow a problem to fester, to boil, to reach crisis proportions, and you walk in at the 11th hour with a solution. That is a short-

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term agenda. That is crisis management and, yes, you get your front page headlines. We see that, yes, the Government came to the rescue in the nick of time. What happens here is you end up creating an expectation that this will happen each and every time.

As we have seen, as the other interest groups decide that perhaps they will use the same kind of method, there is a problem that is brewing. Consequently, we end up having to say to the Government that you must not come forward with short-term proposals, you must not come forward with a short-term agenda, but you must actually come forward with a long-term proposal which you can lay out as an agenda for the people of Manitoba, an agenda that goes past just the first budget, or as the first budget that was presented by the Conservatives was. If I had just had a revolution in voter expectation as we had seen in this province on April 26, 1988, we saw the budget that was introduced. It was a budget that was identical to the budget that the NDP had been defeated on just a month previously. I hardly think that there was any change.

No, you want to end up having something that goes beyond the short term, that extends right past the next election, that goes on to a second and a third term. That is the kind of vision that you want to see, that your proposals, that your long-term view should have. That is what the people of Manitoba, the people of Canada when it comes to federal elections, the people of Manitoba when it comes to provincial elections, should be able to look toward. They should be able to see that this particular Party and that particular Party, these are the visions that they have for the country, these are their long-term views, and then the people can adequately decide and make a decision.

* (1640)

Excuse me for a moment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My light is flashing. Does that indicate that my time has expired? Thank you. I felt I had to hasten my remarks, and I do not wish to be precipitate in the comments that I wish to make.

I had left off at the idea that a Government, any Party, in laying out its agenda before the people, must put forward a long-term proposal, one that goes past the immediate election that is coming, but on into the second and, if you can see that far into the future, into the third.

In this respect I must admit that an initiative that I thought was forthcoming in the first budgetary document put forward by this Government was the multiyear budgeting proposal, the multiyear indications. This is an initiative I think that is well worth following. I would venture to say that having made the commitment, once the proposal is in place, the Finance Department and the bureaucracy of the Finance Department is actually able to fulfill on making these kind of projections, the full Government, the entire bureaucracy that we have in this system of Government is on side and can start indicating longer terms, we can then start sitting back politically and having the politicians make the decisions on policy and do not have to worry about short-term day-to-day

decisions, because it is incumbent upon them to try and decide what the next year's priorities will be.

I believe that the people of Manitoba are owed not only the commitment and the agenda of a full scale proposal that a Party may want to present to them for an election so they can make a decision, but also when a Government comes into power it should be able to start saying to its bureaucracy, these are our long-term goals. Let us start seeing what some of the long term implementation points have to be to try and implement these. I think that when a voter casts a ballot for a Party or for a Member that has indicated that this is my long-term vision, then you are duty bound and honour bound to deliver on that long term vision.

We have, and it was mentioned by the Member who spoke previous to me, the Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose), who spoke about some of the aspects of Government which we should take into account in anything that we do in this Chamber and that is anything that is to do with that aspect of our social welfare, our social consciousness.

I recall that in a previous discourse that I made in this Chamber on Bill 59 with respect to some of the changes in the education environment that the society in which we find ourselves currently is a society that is changing and it is changing in its values that it is expecting its individuals, its children to adopt. We have general generic values which we feel all people should adopt. I can draw Members' attention to the fact that if you have classroom experience you realize right away very quickly that children are not born with the value that you wish them to have. These values must be taught and they must not be taught by talking about them, they must be taught by example. We must live that which we want our young people to acquire and to live by themselves.

If we take that analogy or that particular discussion and bring it forward into this current debate and draw attention to the comment made by the Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) regarding the disabled, the disadvantaged, and their problems that they have in our society, I think we have here an example where Government has a duty to provide the security for those people in our society who are unable to guarantee this security for themselves. Some of the very simple things that we could do in this Chamber which would enable people who, say, are wheelchair bound to have much more accessibility to that which they have every right to expect and to have every ability to actually participate and partake of.

We notice that in the City of Winnipeg as the timetable for changing on curbs and access ways occurs, ramps are put in rather than high curbs, so wheelchairs can get off the sidewalk to cross the road and up on the sidewalk across the road or wherever they wish to go. This is a simple little thing that was implemented by a decision in a Chamber such as this. We should not have a person wheelchair bound being expected to be confined only to his or her block. No, they should be able to move as far as they have energy to move, and have interests in moving.

There is more to this particular little indication, Mr. Deputy Speaker, than merely just ramps and curbs.

What about deciding door entries? What about access for ramps to building that are accessible only now by stairs? What about parking facilities for people who are able to drive but end up finding that the distance from where they can find a parking spot to the place of business is too far?

I believe the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) has brought in this legislation to increase the accessibility for the handicapped parking situation. This is what we in this Chamber should be doing. This is what the Government should be doing in stating, this is our agenda. These are the people in our society who we must vouch safe for. These are the people who we must protect. These are the people who we must guarantee that they can enjoy our society's benefits to the extent that they are able and to do this to the extent that they can be independent in their participation thereof.

I know that when we have a situation of an individual, that individual may need help momentarily but certainly does not want and expect help to be given in perpetuity because this destroys the sense of independence, this destroys the sense of self worth. We want to in this Chamber extend those rights as far as we can and for as long as we can.

Now, granted we have Members opposite who say we have only this much money with which to deliver this particular program and we are going to have to cut back, or we are going to have to restrict, or we are going to have to hold back.

I think we have a classic case that again, if I use as an example as to what not to do, we have a federal Government and the most recent budget cutting back simple little budgetary things in the Northern and Native Affairs budget on the communications allocation.

What does that do, Mr. Deputy Speaker? That cutback denies people the right to communicate in their language, their cultural values in those remote areas and these people do not have access to the Free Press, do not have access to the CBC, do not have access to the CTV, do not have access to the Global TV, they do not have access to the Winnipeg Sun, and furthermore if they had access, I think probably they would not want it because none of the things that are being presented in these documents, in this particular part of the media, really applies to their sense of culture and their sense of value.

Here in the South, yes, we have community newspapers which address the local concerns, community newspapers that address the local issues. We even have local public television, which will address more the local concerns and the differences in the community and have people acquire the medium to deliver their message.

People actually have a medium with which to deliver their message, but for our aboriginal people, for our aboriginal brothers, our sisters, we do not have the same rights. They find that their community newspaper is cut back. Their access to community television broadcasting is cut back. Why, because the federal Government has seen fit to deny that which should be

inalienable to members of our society, this sense of independence, the ability to be free, to be equal, to have access to what everybody else has.

Similarly, and I know I mentioned this yesterday in my remarks, three years ago we have the Meech Lake Accord being signed by those 11 Ministers. One of the things they signed actually has an economic impact upon the rest of the country, that impact being that programs which we hold to be such that they are of such national importance that if you are a citizen who wants access to health care, to education care, should have the same right no matter where in this province, where in this country you live. It is that kind of impact that we should start seeing in the budgetary proposals of a Government indicating what its true intentions will be, what its intentions for the entire province or the entire country should be.

* (1650)

Now I am brought to mind the fact that in this appropriation which is very much part and parcel of the Government's agenda, aspects thereof, are caught up in the management of the agenda. I noticed that we had very much a situation developing in this Chamber where Bills were introduced very, very, very late in the Session, major Bills, Bills of major impact, major impact on the province, but the Session was wearing long.

The Session was extending, and I am wondering what was the agenda in this particular proposal. Being introduced very late in the Session, I wonder whether or not this was simply another aspect of foot dragging or simply extending the current budgetary situation to see whether or not the polls would turn around and perhaps the Government, of its own accord, could call an election and say, well, we could not work. We had all this massive legislative agenda before us. We had intended to do this, but obviously we just could not get all our intentions through the House. We could not put our proposals through the House because nobody wanted to co-operate with us. Introducing these Bills so very late in the Session puts that kind of a thing suspect.

I do not think the people of Manitoba voted for this Government to do that. I think rather the people voted to state, you put down your legislative agenda, you put down your budgetary appropriations, you say this is what we will do and this is what we will go by. You try as best you can to try and make certain that you do this within the bounds of the constraints that you find yourself working under. The constraints that this particular Government finds itself working under is the fact it is working in a minority House.

However, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe I wandered a little bit off topic here. I will come back a little bit more to the fact that when we have an agenda such as we had and the Government should be putting forward its document or its blueprint for the future, I notice that in the last two periods of the Government's term we have two initiatives which are essentially initiatives that they introduced, one which is energy intensive and the other one which is to develop an energy proposal.

The one being the Dow Corning initiative, the agreement to try and find whether or not we can use our silica sand in a high-tech fashion creates ceramic metals which, I believe, are the metals of the future which is something we have in great abundance. Perhaps we can get into the high tech end of this. This will be very good for the province, but that is energy intensive.

If I recall, from the reading I did on the proposals, the initial proposal—and this may change, but I am just going to speak from what I did read—each furnace that would be utilized in this plasma arc furnace for the production of the ceramic metal would use about 60 kilowatts of energy, perhaps 120. I stand to be corrected on that, but let us use 60.

The whole proposal looks at three furnaces initially. That is 180 megawatts of energy, 180 megawatts. That is a small hydro-electric dam. That kind of energy intensive requirement here in this province means that we need to have that kind of energy availability to produce.

At the same time that we are having this particular development occurring, we also have tabled, in this Session, a decision to go ahead with Conawapa. Conawapa is to go ahead because of a 1,000 megawatt electricity sale to the Province of Ontario. It is a major investment and involves not only the building of the dam but also of a transmission line to be able to take the product of that dam, which is electricity, to market. Of this we are going to dedicate 1,000 megawatts to Ontario. The dam is 1,350 megawatts in size, so I do a quick subtraction and I see that leaves 350 megawatts for Manitoba, but not necessarily.

We have not talked about wastage and energy loss in the transmission system and the transmission lines. What we are delivering is firm power, not interruptable power but firm power, to Ontario. We have here two initiatives that may not necessarily square with what we actually want when we need it.

I would like to suggest to this Government, perhaps there is a way in which I could—and I believe that they could also if they were to implement something like this—come up with something about the size of Wuskwatim without actually building a dam. Wuskwatim hydro-electric development is about 400 megawatts in size, give or take a megawatt. This was one of the major alternatives to the Conawapa deal. It is a very costly proposal when you build a hydro-electric dam, very costly. How could we perhaps go about finding an extra 400 megawatts that we do not have to build a hydro-electric dam for?

We take a look at the annual report of Manitoba Hydro where we have an indication of a number of homes in this province that are heated by electric heat. Electric heat in this province is resistance electric heat. It is rather costly insofar that when you have a home serviced by electricity you have to dedicate about a 15 kilowatt heater to each individual home. That means 15 kilowatts per home for each length of time that particular furnace is on.

We are going to end up having to build your entire hydro infrastructure to that particular 15 kilowatt

demand. If we have, in rural Manitoba, 40,000 homes heated by electricity of this nature, you simply multiply 15 by 40,000, and you come up with a tremendous amount of 600,000 kilowatts, 600 megawatts of energy that are dedicated strictly to heating that particular home.

We have a new technology on the market, it is now in the developmental stage, but it is able to be installed for each individual home, and that is the ground-source water heating system whereby you use a refrigerant in a coil and use the latent heat, the residual heat within the earth's subsurface itself, first to take the higher heat of the subterranean area in the winter, bringing it to the surface in a heat exchanger and use the heat differential to heat your home. In summer you do the opposite, you take the excess heat in your home and bring it back into the ground to cool your home. Air conditioning and heating all at the same time out of the same unit.

The beauty of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that a system like that uses only 5 kilowatts of energy, as opposed to 15. Now if you took all of your 40,000 homes in this province and converted them from resistance electric heat to ground-source heating instead, you would find that on average you would save 10 kilowatts of energy per home. Now you multiply 10 kilowatts of energy times the 40,000 rural residential homes currently being heated by electricity, and you find that you save 400,000 kilowatts, 400 megawatts of energy which can be put into a savings account for the long-term development of hydro-electric development in this province, electricity that can then be dedicated to an industry.

We could also, by the same token, with that same thing, because once the capital cost, and it is not that capital-intensive a situation, once that is introduced you can start saying to those individual homeowners who are presently paying a very high price for the electricity for heating their homes, you can offer them an energy saving. That is a double-edged advantage.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

It is things like that, longer-term viewpoints, looking forward into the future, how can we better guarantee the energy security of our citizens, how can we better guarantee the job prospects for our citizens, initiatives like we did here with the Dow Corning initiative which does bring high-tech into the province, but which still is in the shall we say developmental stage. I believe the tests in Switzerland were successful. We are now building a test furnace here. It is a small thing only to see whether or not local conditions can be brought on stream to make certain that this thing will work before you go ahead with the final statement and say yes, we are going to go ahead with the full-scale development.

What are we doing right now to start developing the markets for that particular metal, should that particular initiative go ahead? What are we doing now to start saying, how can we overcome the perception that there is a problem in this province, why we do not have more industrial development in this province, why the perception that transportation costs are high, the perception that labour costs are high? These kind of

things need to be overcome today, need to be overcome now. What is the proposal, what are the agendas for the longer term that the people of Manitoba can start saying honestly, when it comes to an election they have a choice, because they will have two or hopefully three distinct long-term blueprints, blueprints that go past the short-term acquisition, election, for the acquisition of power, the acquisition of Government, but rather a longer-term agenda which will go forward. I see Mr. Speaker is giving me the high sign.

* (1700)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member will have 10 minutes remaining.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., time for Private Members' hour.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Inkster, with a committee change.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I have a committee change. Actually, I would like to rescind what I did regarding Industrial Relations, where I put Radisson (Mr. Patterson) in for St. Vital (Mr. Rose); and I move, seconded by the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), that the Industrial Relations be amended: Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) for St. Vital (Mr. Rose).

Also just for clarification for Public Utilities and Natural Resources, I move, seconded by the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), that Transcona (Mr. Kozak) fill the vacancy.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Member for Inkster for that clarification. The Honourable Government House Leader.

HOUSE BUSINESS

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Funny the Honourable Member should mention Public Utilities and Natural Resources, because I was just about to rise to announce that the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will meet on Thursday morning at 10 a.m. to consider Bills 9, 84 and 92. If I can get direction from the Clerk, I would know which room number—in Room 254 of this building.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Government House Leader for the information. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I also have a committee change. I move, seconded by the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), that the

composition of the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations be amended as follows: the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) for the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper).

I further move, seconded by the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) for the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman); and the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) for the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. McCrae: As a result of discussions with House Leaders, I believe we could move directly to Bills 44, 88 and 94. After the conclusion of discussion of those Bills, it would be the wish of the House, I believe, to call it six o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to go directly to Bills 44, 88 and 94? Agreed. Upon completion or termination of Bill No. 94, we will probably call it six o'clock.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS BILL NO. 44— THE TRAVEL INDUSTRY ACT

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood) presented Bill No. 44, The Travel Industry Act; Loi sur l'industrie du tourisme, for second reading, to be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, at the outset I would like to say that Manitoba does not have a travel Act. In fact, in Canada there are only three provinces who have travel Acts. One is Ontario which has had it for about 10 years, another is Quebec and another is British Columbia. While there has been a mixed reaction to travel Acts in these countries, generally in these provinces, generally Ontario is viewed as having the most successful Act of this type and so this Bill is largely patterned on the Ontario experience.

Now so far, I believe last year there were approximately six travel firms that folded in Manitoba. Fortunately all of these were soft landings and there in fact were no consumer losses as a result, and of course as a result, no publicity. However, that is certainly not the case in other provinces.

In the last couple of months there have been examples of Western Sun, the large tour operator from western Canada going bankrupt in Alberta; Holidaire Airlines and a number of other large companies have folded. In fact, in Ontario this year there has been a very large number of bankruptcies in the travel business. In fact this year, the month of January 1990, saw I believe something like 19 bankruptcies in Ontario. That exceeded the entire total number of bankruptcies for

the entire year in Ontario last year. So just in the first 30 days of this year, the calendar year 1990, there were more bankruptcies in the entire year in Ontario.

So far the public has not really been adversely affected because of these bankruptcies and once again I submit largely because of the presence of a travel Act and a travel fund in the Province of Ontario. Let me tell you how in fact that comes to be. The fact of the matter is that in Ontario the agencies have been levied a certain amount of money each year in order to build up this fund, and because of good management on the part of the fund, the fact of the matter is that the agencies in Ontario have not been making contributions for the last couple of years because they have a surplus in the fund and they find that they are not paying out as much. It is not because there are not increasing amounts of bankruptcies. There have been the normal amount and I guess in a number of ways they have been increasing in the last year.

What has happened is the travel fund administrator has been very, very prudent in the way they have been administering the fund and administering the Act. For example, a few years ago in Ontario they used to allow an operator who got into financial trouble back in the business within six months or a year. Many of us wondered why that was happening. In fact, under the new Registrar in Ontario for the last two years, it is very difficult for an operator to get back in business in a six-month period or in a year without some financial guarantees or some promise of repayment for the past losses that he or she caused the fund.

So for example, in a recent case, and this is just typical of how they have been operating lately in Manitoba, Ontario and in fact in B.C., an operator who say went bankrupt last year and cost the Ontario fund \$100,000, for example, was recently let back into the travel business only after he promised to come up front and pay a downpayment of say \$10,000 toward that \$100,000 and then he had to sign a guarantee that he would repay the fund back over the next number of years until it was all paid off.

The other examples are irrevocable lines of credit from the bank and other financial guarantees, other collateral securities that people have to come up with. This in fact has been a very, very good practice in Ontario. Once again, it has not eliminated the bankruptcies, but it has made certain that anybody who has gone bankrupt is not turning around and coming right back into the system without paying back what he or she owes the fund.

Another good measure that is being employed, particularly in Quebec, but I believe in Ontario as well, is the view that the agent's fund should be viewed as trust funds. As the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) knows, if you subscribe to that view and if you follow that view, you will never have a bankruptcy, because you will never have a draw down of those trust monies. So what has happened is the fund in Quebec and the fund in Ontario police the agencies. When they find that the financial statements are not up to par, they require the agency right up front to write a guarantee of whatever the deficiency is so that they are catching these things in advance. That partially explains why,

while the bankruptcies are still going up, so is the amount in the fund. Less is being paid out because of this system, so this is working very, very well in the Province of Ontario right now.

* (1710)

As a matter of fact, although that really does not tell us the whole story, just the other day, February 22, in one of the magazines, there is a statement here from IATA that in fact 1,300 agencies in Canada were delinquent in filing their statements. So as I had indicated before, the picture seems to be improving in Ontario, but still, 1,300 agencies in Canada have failed to file their statements. That is 43 percent, or 1,300 failed to file.

What is even more interesting than that is, believe it or not, that of the ones who did file, 21 percent of those were in a position where questions were raised about their financial viability. So that does not really give us a very, very positive view of the financial stability of the travel market at this time, regardless of what I said about how the fund in Ontario has been operating recently. It is necessary for us to begin looking at this area.

I would also like to point out that I just uncovered a couple of days ago an article that indicated—it was from 10 years ago and it might interest the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) to know that it was the Minister of the Day, Warner Jorgenson, who was saying that he was looking at travel legislation and he was going to hopefully get it into the next Session of the Legislature. That was some 10 years ago, actually 10 years ago last May. Yet we have gone through admittedly a number of years of an NDP Government, which did not do anything about it either, to where we are right now. That was at a time when we were just prior to the recession of '81-'82, and there were a large number of bankruptcies. Consumers were hit in a big way because of losses. I once again from a pro-active point of view believe that we should be looking at the problem before it hits us.

I think what is going to happen because of the inaction of this particular Minister of this Government in Manitoba is that he will not do anything until one of the major operators goes bankrupt and people are lined up in front of the Legislature looking for their refunds. At that point, I will be showing them the way to his office, because we have certainly let him know in advance to the extent that we have even brought a Bill before this House. Prior to that, we have asked him over and over again, would he do something to protect the travelling public, would he bring in a travel Act? To this day of course we have nothing positive from him.

Now, also there are many signs of an upcoming recession. As most of you know, the type of travel is one type of business that is certainly not recession proof. You know, when a recession hits, that is one of the first things to be dropped, travel plans and trips here and there.

So when you have agencies that are operating on the basis of, I believe, a one or two percent return on

investment, I mean that is an incredibly low rate of return, but that is what the rate of return is overall in Canada as far as travel agencies are concerned, and that is in an expanding market.

When you have a crunch, a recession, even for a few months, how many agencies, tour companies or airlines may in fact not survive a recession? Now you know we may be lucky and the recession may only be for a few months. We may come out of it with minor damage, but if the recession sets in the way it did in 1981 or '82, then we are looking at a major disaster here.

So we have to start early and advise the Minister of this because if he is getting the advice he is not acting on it. He should be coming to his Cabinet colleagues as I am now and explaining the situation to them. Has the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery) explained any of this to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay)? I doubt it. I think this is the first time the Minister of Agriculture has even heard about these particular problems.

Another problem is there has been a dramatic doubling of charter seats in the last two years going out of Toronto. It has been incredible. What is actually happening is that European operators whose business is primarily in the summer are in fact moving their equipment, which people understand it is very expensive to buy and operate these airplanes, over into the Canadian market for the fall season. It works just nicely for them, so they have it in the European operation in the summer months where their high point in tourism is, and then they move the equipment over to Canada for their low season which is our high season for the winter charter flights.

So what has happened is the capacity has been doubling for each of the last two or three years. The result is the fares have been dropping. So that is why you see these incredible seat sale prices to Florida and other places because of this competition. Well, the result of it has been that several companies have gone out of business. In fact, the national transportation agency just took away the licence of one such airline just a couple of weeks ago. I believe it was Crown Air out of Toronto. There have been so many going down recently that it is hard for me to keep score here. Points of Call Airline out of Vancouver is another one that has gone down.

Lest you think that this is not a problem, I can assure you that there are a tremendous amount of people who are chasing down the Alberta Government right now wanting to know why the Alberta Government has not brought in travel legislation and why they found themselves stuck in places in Mexico and Hawaii and why they are out all of this money. So the Ministers of this Government can ignore the warning now, but come the first bankruptcy that affects Manitoba, and I assure you it will not be that long, I will be personally directing the aggrieved consumers to the right door in this building. It will be the Minister of Consumer Affairs whose door these people will be arriving at. I can assure you of that.

I just wanted to explain at this time a couple of things that The Travel Industry Act would do. No. 1, it would

provide a fund for reimbursement of customer's monies when a supplier defaults, which I think most of us here would like to see. No. 2, it would provide strict rules on what constitutes fair and accurate advertising. That has been a big problem over the last couple of years with hotels and different places not being in the condition that was promised in the brochures. It requires financial accountability, which again I explained is something that is very important. It requires standards for agency personnel. It also requires all firms to be registered in order to operate in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I see that my light is blinking. That means that I have used up my time. I had so much more to put on the record, but I will have to leave it till next time. Thank you.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Niakwa (Mr. Herold Driedger), that Bill No. 88, The Physically Disabled Persons Parking Act, be now—

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The Honourable Acting Government House Leader.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

* (1720)

BILL NO. 88—THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED PERSONS PARKING ACT

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks) presented Bill No. 88, The Physically Disabled Persons Parking Act, Loi sur les emplacements de stationnement réservés aux handicapés physiques, for second reading, to be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Minenko: It is indeed an honour for me to be introducing this Bill, Bill No. 88, into second reading.

Mr. Speaker, the situation today in Manitoba, in fact in many jurisdictions in Canada, is that many Governments, in fact perhaps all Governments, have indeed encouraged people who perhaps were forced through illness, disease and other means of an accident, of staying home.

We have seen just recently there was a conference or an exhibit held where various inventors in Manitoba and outside of Manitoba showed farmers some of the inventions that they have put into place and put in market, to allow them to be able to work even though they may be in some means, through accident or other means, handicapped. This legislation deals with a very important issue in allowing people who found themselves physically handicapped in some way to be able to get outside of their home to participate in the everyday life that we all indeed take for granted sometimes.

I would like to perhaps deal with a couple of highlights from a report prepared for the Health Promotion Studies Unit, Health and Welfare Canada, dated March 1988, where in this study it was estimated that some 3.1 million Canadians aged 15 and over reported some level of activity limitation because of a health problem. This figure represents approximately 16 percent of all adult Canadians. This report also went on and highlighted the fact that the proportion of Canadians who are restricted in their activities increases sharply with age, ranging from a low of 8.5 percent among the 15- to 24-age group to a high of 34.3 percent among the elderly, as defined in this study, 65 years and over.

Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge I understand that the only jurisdiction in the Province of Manitoba that has some sort of by-law or legislation putting on restrictions or dealing with the issue of handicapped parking is the City of Brandon.

The intent of this legislation is to ensure that all Manitobans, whether they live in Winnipeg, whether they live in Sprague, whether they live in Vita, whether they live in Thompson or Churchill, have indeed the same type of legislation enforcing handicapped parking throughout the province.

This is an important aspect of this legislation, Mr. Speaker. That is why, instead of necessarily working with city councillors to pass a by-law for just the City of Winnipeg, I have introduced this legislation.

This legislation is a result of very wide consultation. I have first spoken with or received information from various jurisdictions to look to their laws. For example, I looked to the legislation from the State of Minnesota, and the State of North Dakota. I have looked to the by-laws of the City of Brandon and of North York in Ontario. I have also looked at the regulations of the Province of Nova Scotia and the Province of Newfoundland to see exactly how they deal with this issue in their own jurisdiction.

Looking at this legislation, Mr. Speaker, I went on and consulted, individually and as a group, with four organizations, namely the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, the Canadian Paraplegic Association, Community Therapy Services and the Manitoba League of the Physically Handicapped. Consultation with these groups indeed took in many hours. I felt it was extremely important to have their input in this legislation, because they again deal with this issue on a day-to-day basis.

I also, Mr. Speaker, consulted with the people who provide the parking. I consulted with representatives of the major shopping centres in the City of Winnipeg, consulted with the Building Owners and Managers Association, representatives of some of the paid parking people in the City of Winnipeg, as well as with the City of Winnipeg Police Department who were able to provide me with information on some of the concerns they had with respect to the enforcement issue.

I also consulted with the Department of Highways of the Province of Manitoba to see exactly the system they have in place right now, as well as many private individuals who wrote me and called me about this legislation and some of the matters that should be dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the other two Parties for allowing us to continue on debate on this very important piece of legislation. Indeed I appreciate that at this time without their co-operation this Bill would not be able to continue through legislative process.

Mr. Speaker, with this piece of legislation, with Bill No. 88, people who now are transporting a loved one who is handicapped as a result of illness, disease or accident will be able to at least bring to the attention of the local police force a piece of legislation that the police force in whatever city, town, village or rural municipality, could then enforce.

This is the important aspect of this legislation because we can indeed legislate so many things, and yet without enforcement, there would be really no need for legislation. This is something indeed that the Department of Highways, once this legislation is passed and becomes law in the Province of Manitoba, will hopefully be able to work with the various people who will be in the position to enforce this legislation to work out some means of this enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to continue with too many of the specific points in this legislation because all Honourable Members indeed have a copy of this legislation. I am sure they have reviewed it. One of the important issues that have been included in this legislation is the actual size of the parking space although many Members would suggest that this aspect of Bill 88 could and perhaps should be part of the regulations. I submit that this is perhaps again one of the critical points of this legislation, where the legislation before us increases the size of the parking space from eight feet to 12 feet.

The reason, Mr. Speaker, is, and this particular problem has been pointed out to me by individuals who may not necessarily even belong to some of the organizations that I consulted with. Individuals came up to me and said, you know, Mark, I do not even bother parking in some of the handicapped parking spaces that are designated as such today and the reason for that is that I may be able to come and park in that spot, be able to get out of the vehicle. Yet when I come back in out of the store I will not be able to get into my car because with the eight-foot size parking space I find that when another car comes in and parks beside my car I just do not have the room for opening the door and being able to get into my vehicle.

Mr. Speaker, that is a very important issue in this legislation. That is why I have included it as part of the legislation. Ultimately dealing with the whole issue of fines and the proposal that I have before us, and I will certainly look forward to the participation of the other two Parties as well as our community in committee stage.

I felt that after some conversations with the American jurisdictions they advised me that when they first introduced their legislation, their fine was \$10, and as a result many people simply ignored the ticket or allowed them to build up because seemingly \$10 was not all that important. When they increased the fine to \$100, people started paying a little bit more attention to it. That is again the reason why I felt that as a

minimum fine that should be at about \$100, but certainly if presenters maybe would suggest that could perhaps be changed then I would certainly be interested in listening to any such amendments.

Mr. Speaker, I would again like to thank the other two Parties for allowing leave, and myself the opportunity to begin debate on this in second reading. All Governments and all Parties believe in greater accessibility and this leads us along that direction to greater accessibility. Thank you.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 94—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (4)

* (1730)

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood) presented Bill No. 94, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (4); Loi no 4 modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, for second reading, to be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, at the outset I will try to keep my remarks below the 15-minute limit here so that we can call it six o'clock and proceed onto other things.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill 94 basically calls for a ban on cheque cashing charges on Government cheques cashed in Manitoba at all levels of Government, be it municipal, federal or provincial, and the Bill actually comes from the Province of Quebec.

This particular piece of legislation has been in Quebec and successfully operated there for the last 10 years while it has been currently opposed in the courts in Quebec, I believe, by Money Mart. The Money Mart operation actually are operating successfully in that province and that is of course not the reason why the Bill was drafted.

It was drafted because of the increasing number of incidences that we find in Manitoba where grocery stores across this province, and credit unions in some of the rural areas, have been known to charge what we think are exorbitant amounts of money to cash people's cheques. The people that patronize cheque-cashing facilities tend to be poorer people in this province, people who with not much economic clout and people who are the least able to afford the cost associated with it.

The fact of the matter is that I believe the Money Mart as a company charges 4.9 percent for cashing a cheque, and that is in the neighbourhood of \$49 on a \$1,000 cheque. I know that most of us here in this Legislative Building and most of the people in our constituencies who deal with banks, who have bank

accounts, are aware that when they cash cheques the cheque cashing charge is roughly 25 cents a cheque. It is an awful lot of money to be paying \$49 on a \$1,000 cheque when most of the people in this province are paying 25 cents to cash the same cheque.

Once again the people who are cashing these cheques and paying this charge are by and large people who cannot for whatever reason get a bank account very easily in this province, and they are people who tend to be on social assistance.

So the \$49 charge to a person on social assistance is a much bigger take of a person's income than 25 cents on a cheque that one of us here in this House are cashing.

So it should be noted that the people who are most interested in a ban on this particular charge are the people in the anti-poverty organizations and the social assistance groups who are spearheading the charge and supporting and advocating for this particular measure.

Now, Money Mart as an organization is the only organization that has really approached us in regard to this particular measure, so they are the only people whose experience we have to deal with here. When I was in a position to ask them about their experience regarding Quebec, where in fact they could not charge for cashing cheques, they were of course telling us how this was such a hardship for their business.

The fact of the matter is that there are at least two examples of that not being a true statement on their part. The fact that they are operating I believe it is six locations, they list five on their brochure, but six locations I believe the president or vice-president told me in Quebec and successfully at that tells me if they can operate successfully without charging for cashing Government cheques in Quebec, then certainly they can do the same in the rest of Canada.

I also recall last year seeing a national TV show in which they were featured as a company and the president of the company when asked about his success being tied to social assistance business, made a very, very definitive statement that his whole corporate growth was really geared to expansion into the suburbs. He had said that over the next couple of years that the preponderance of his new stores and his growth would be into suburban areas and he would be making his money from the middle class in this country and not the poor people. So I took that to heart and have certainly mentioned that to him as well.

Now we in this caucus feel that this particular Bill is something that really is necessary at this time. It is something that is long overdue and we would encourage Members from both Parties in this House to join us and support this legislation and let us do something positive for people who are economically deprived in this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), that debate be adjourned.

Tuesday, March 6, 1990

MOTION presented and carried.

An Honourable Member: Six o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock?

Mr. Speaker: Six o'clock. The hour being 6 p.m., this House now adjourns and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).