



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, March 20, 1992

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Janelle Wright, Mark Matsubara, Kim Thiessen and others requesting the government show a strong commitment to dealing with child abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would just like to table the Quarterly Report of the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission, Nine Months, April to December 31, 1961; and

Also, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 65(6.1): Sequence for the consideration of Estimates of the various government departments.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this morning, from the Ste. Anne School, fifty Grades 5 and 6 students. They are under the direction of Margaret Wyllie. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Economic Growth All-Party Task Force

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, over the last eight days, we have had an excellent debate in this Chamber with the 56 members participating on a debate on the budget and the economy in the province of Manitoba. We have heard some excellent speeches from all

parties, I believe. There have been obvious disagreements on philosophical approaches to the economy, but there have been some excellent ideas and a strong consensus in the strengths of Manitobans in terms of our future.

There has also been a strong consensus in the speeches across all parties, Mr. Speaker, on the crisis Manitoba and Canadians are facing in our recession, the worst recession we believe since the Great Depression. In fact, many members were calling this situation very, very serious indeed. We have been calling on the government for a period of time to call together an all-party committee to deal with our economic crisis.

In fact, even two days ago in this Chamber, the member for Rossmore (Mr. Neufeld), a former member of the Treasury Board, said and I quote: "We have to start putting party politics to the side and start contributing in a much more positive, unpolitical, apolitical fashion in terms of how we get Manitoba out of this rut." It was an excellent speech. I did not agree with many things, but I do agree with some things in his speech, Mr. Speaker, but there have been many speeches in this Chamber and many good ideas.

I would ask the Premier today whether he will now agree to have an all-party task force to deal with the economic crisis Manitoba is facing so we can all work together in an unpolitical way.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I am delighted to hear the helpful attitude from the prince of darkness opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable First Minister that we refer to all honourable members as honourable members.

Mr. Filmon: Well, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, this is the ultimate all-party committee. We come here every day hoping to hear positive contributions. I am going to speak a little bit about that in my contribution to the budget speech later this morning.

I am going to compare the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition and his desire, his intense desire to paint everything as black as possible, to put the

worst possible cast on everything that is going on day after day versus some of the positive contributions of members of the Liberal Party. We will compare the attitude and the approach. We will see whether there is any real sincerity behind the comments that are made this morning and the last day of debate after he has had an opportunity to make some positive contributions and failed miserably, but in a death-bed conversion, comes this morning on the last day of debate on the budget with some sort of new attitude.

We will talk about that a little later, but I say to him, this is his opportunity every day. Make your positive suggestions. Make your positive contributions. We will welcome them and we will embrace them.

* (1005)

Mr. Doer: I would note that we have been proposing this idea for month after month after month as the economy slips down and down and down, Mr. Speaker. Even members of his own bench are talking about the economic crisis we are in.

I would ask the Premier in light of the fact that many of the examples he uses in his own budget are from previous governments, in terms of Unisys and other ideas—and there is nothing wrong with putting those in his own budget—in light of the fact that the government has rightfully, I believe, created a task force to deal with the Constitution on two separate occasions, an all-party task force to work together, I would ask the Premier: Why is it more important, why is it a higher priority to create an all-party task force to deal with the Constitution and not have an all-party task force to deal with the economic challenges we have in this province?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, because in the conventional way there is no all-party mechanism on the Constitution normally, but in this House we have an all-party meeting daily. On the Estimates everyday, we meet in party together in this Assembly. Every new session, we have eight days on the budget speech in which all members of this Legislature can make their positive contributions. Throughout the course of any session, we have 240 hours talking about the priorities and the essential elements of government in this province. We are the only province in this country that spends that amount of time that allows the opposition to make positive contributions.

We wait for those positive contributions. We wait for anything other than negative gloom, doom, negative, negative, negative. That is all we get from the New Democratic Party. That is the all-party contribution we get from New Democrats, and we await their positive contribution everyday that we come here.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we have suggested for months that we create an all-party committee dealing with the economy. We have suggested for years that the government have an economic summit with business, labour and government. All these ideas are rejected by the Premier (Mr. Filmon). The Premier likes to pretend that everything is okay; he likes to pretend that everything is fine in this province.

The member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) also said that we must work together, we should work together in this deteriorating economy. It is very serious, and all members in this Chamber, notwithstanding our rhetoric, acknowledge the fact that there is a very serious situation in this province. I again offer to the Premier an opportunity beyond just the question-and-answer period which he knows is an adversarial forum.

I would ask the Premier: Why is he afraid to have an all-party committee when his own budget had many economic examples which had come out of many previous governments as examples of excellence in our economy? Unisys and other projects were examples of excellence for Manitoba on the international stage and came from many members from different parties. Why does he not want to have to put all of those ideas together in an all-party forum, the same way as we deal with the Constitution?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that this government has been very open in ensuring that all elements of the community were represented in some of the major economic initiatives, ones that the members opposite are criticizing.

The Economic Innovation and Technology Council, a bill which is before this Assembly, has representatives from organized labour as part of that whole solution, has representatives from all elements of the community, from the rural community, from the farm community, from small business, from high technology, from resource extraction areas, from processing, manufacturing, all of those areas included in that. The round table

has representation from labour, from environmental groups, from resource groups, from so many groups.

An Honourable Member: Save it for your speech.

Mr. Filmon: There you are, you see. They ask a question and then they become insulting when an answer is given. The fact of the matter is that this partisan group—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The rules are very clear that answers should relate to matters raised. I know the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is anxious to get into his speech later on the budget, but he was asked a very specific question about our proposal for an all-party committee. I would ask that you remind him of that and ask him to bring his comments to order.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I remind the honourable First Minister to deal with the question raised.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that I have responded and members opposite refuse to hear.

*(1010)

We have an all-party committee that sits every day in this Chamber, 57 members from three different parties that devote 240 hours to the debate of the priorities of this government, economic and every other priority, that sits every year and debates for eight straight days the budget of this government, all of the economic priorities, an opportunity for positive contribution by all members opposite.

We have not seen any positive contribution. We have seen negativism; we have seen doom and gloom, and that is all we get from members opposite. If they cannot contribute any more than that, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, their words are empty.

Health Care System Bed Closures

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): I have some questions relating to growing concerns about our health care system, and I wish, as the Premier

(Mr. Filmon) suggested, we could get all those concerns down to a 10-second clip.

Patients are worried; hospital workers are anxious; and now the doctors of Manitoba have expressed alarm and concern about this government's plans for reducing hospital beds and hospital budgets.

The Manitoba Medical Association has documented 6,000 to 7,000 Manitobans waiting for surgery, eye surgery, cardiovascular surgery, orthopedic surgery, and in a letter sent yesterday to the Minister of Health, the Manitoba Medical Association has also indicated that patients are forced to wait months for CAT scans, MRIs and ultrasound diagnostic imaging.

I want to ask the minister in the interests of uncertainty among patients and alarm being expressed by the doctors: Will the minister finally inform this House and all Manitobans about the total number of beds being cut, the jobs being lost, services being reduced as a result of this government's—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, of course, I cannot give my honourable friend that answer because that is a process that the Urban Hospital Council, other informed groups, are participating in to change fundamentally our health care system. But one thing I can guarantee my honourable friend, it will not be 2,000 to 3,000 beds, as it is in Ontario, without consultation, without discussion. It will not be 3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10,000 layoffs, as it is in Ontario, because our process is much focused on the patient and where the patient receives care.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that we are going to have individual groups, including the MMA, the union representing the doctors, offering advice and critique of how we approach, but I simply want to remind my honourable friend that the recent spate of letters from that source on waiting lists is at the same time before the arbitration board, where their demands are beyond belief, and maybe there is an attachment.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I would like to table this letter from the MMA, since they have asked to be consulted by this government, and this minister has refused to listen, to consult—

Mr. Speaker: Question, please.

Health Sciences Centre Operating Budget

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): How much, Mr. Speaker, is the Health Sciences Centre—which has just spent two days trying to address the uncertainty and cutback directives from this government without thorough briefing material and consultation by this government and this minister—receiving from this government? Is it 5 percent, or is it less?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the overall increase to health care is 5.7 percent. The increase is \$101 million year over year; \$53 million of that is an increase to the hospitals alone. Of that \$53 million, there will be increases approximating 4 percent to 5 percent at each of our hospitals in addition to the access those hospitals have to other innovative funds to allow them to reshape their programs internally.

Mr. Speaker, I simply want to remind my honourable friend the New Democratic Party Health critic that in Manitoba there is probably closer to 5 percent than 4 percent increase in funding to hospitals. That is what a Conservative government delivers when in office. When in opposition, New Democrats demand more; but when in government, as in Ontario, they give a 1 percent increase. Our process in Manitoba is much more informed, much better funded than the other adjacent systems which happen to be governed by New Democrats who, from the comfort of opposition, cry for more money, but from the reality of government, demand more—

* (1015)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, I am asking a straightforward question. I think we deserve clear answers to—

Mr. Speaker: Question, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Specifically, how much, what percentage increase in their budget is the Health Sciences Centre receiving from this government? How many beds are they being asked to cut? How many jobs will be lost at our largest hospital in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, government is not asking the Health Sciences Centre to respond to any of those specific questions. The government is asking the Health Sciences Centre, as we have asked every hospital, to adhere to the policy put in

place in 1987 by the New Democrats, this Health critic around cabinet, which said when they cut 119 beds unilaterally out of the system, I might remind you, that they shall operate within budget, that they shall not have a deficit.

Each year hospitals ask for an increase. Each year government provides them with an increase. The Health Sciences Centre will receive the lion's share of the \$53-million increase to hospitals. It is less than what they have asked for and that is why the Health Sciences Centre, as they have done every year, will determine what they do to operate within that NDP policy of no deficit with a funding of approximately \$270 million.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, it seems that Fridays are becoming something of a tradition in this Chamber, and certain members of government become particularly sensitive on Fridays. I just heard the Minister of Health call the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), across the floor, a coward, which is unparliamentary, Mr. Speaker.

Beyond that, I am wondering if we might ask that we have some order in the House and we not stoop to that kind of personal insult, Mr. Speaker, that we just heard from the Minister of Health.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the member for Brandon.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable Minister of Health.

Mr. Orchard: . . . in referring to his absence of public presence in 1987—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): On a point of order, the minister is making allegations that are totally without foundation in fact. He has no information. I asked him—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

On the first point of order raised, the honourable Minister of Health has withdrawn those remarks.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, to the same point of order brought forward by my honourable friend, the senior cabinet minister in 1987, when 29 beds were unilaterally cut from the Brandon General Hospital without—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On that, there was no point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the word "cowardly" does appear on our list in Beauséjour as having caused intervention in the past. If the minister was going to withdraw that comment, it should be an unconditional withdrawal, as has been demanded of other members; in fact, as the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) withdrew last week. I would like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, to rule on whether in fact the minister has withdrawn that, so we can get back to the proper business of this House, not cheap personal insults.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On that point of order raised, I had already ruled that the honourable Minister of Health had withdrawn that remark. On that point of order, I had ruled that that point of order had been looked after.

On the second point of order, I had ruled that the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) did not have a point of order.

Now, on with Question Period.

* (1020)

RCMP Uniform Government Position

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, when I got to my office this morning, I received an electronic message from the Premier, for which I thank him. In that, he said: "I invite you to join us in observing this significant day," and he was referring to the celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination tomorrow, "which serves to rekindle an awareness of our rights and responsibilities as members of society."

I am pleased to see the members of the government are wearing pins, as are most members on the other side as well.

My question is to the Premier. Both the Premier and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) are on the record, not in this House but at public meetings and in public statements, as stating that the wearing of turbans in the RCMP is a mark of respect for the religious observances of the Sikhs.

Can the Premier tell this House how he reconciles that belief with that of one of his backbenchers, the member for Rossmore (Mr. Neufeld), who stated in

this House on Tuesday, March 17, that such a position compromised the RCMP for the sake of a few votes?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, above all, under the freedom of speech in this country that is awarded to each of us by virtue of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, we are entitled to our own opinions and our own views.

If the member has a desire to take issue with the individual opinions of any member of this Chamber on either side, she is entitled to do that. I am responsible for my opinion. My government sets its policy, and we abide by those things. It is very simple.

Mrs. Carstairs: I thank the Premier for that statement.

Charter of Rights and Freedoms Government Support

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): The Premier is entering very delicate negotiations which will indeed impact on the definition of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which guarantees the right to practise your religious faith and was the basis for the decision by the RCMP to change their uniforms.

What assurance do we have from the Premier that he will engage in a defence of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as per the Manitoba task force report and that such defence will have the entire support of the government?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I would say to this that the member knows that I am on the record and always have been on the record saying that we support and defend totally the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Absolutely no question about it. That is the position of this First Minister; that is the position of this government. It has never varied, and it will not vary in any negotiations, discussions that we have on the Constitution or anything else.

That is the assurance that I give her, and that is the assurance that she can see by virtue of the actions of this government and this First Minister.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, my final question to the First Minister: Can the First Minister tell this House that if the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) should choose to wear a turban on the celebration of a religious holiday or, for that matter, for any day in this House, such an action would not

meet with disapproval with members of his back bench?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the matter is a totally hypothetical question, and I would assume that that matter is not in order in this Chamber.

Judicial System Circuit Court

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report that this government has been in possession of now for many months says that the situation involving aboriginal people in the justice system has deteriorated rather than improved in the recent past. It goes on to say that the delivery of justice to aboriginal people in aboriginal communities through the provincial circuit court system is inequitable and inadequate. It is a system characterized by delay in an era of colonialism.

One could only categorize the Minister of Justice's (Mr. McCrae) response to my colleague the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) as paternalistic, as condescending, yesterday, when the member for Rupertsland asked the minister to categorically deny that this government had any intention of creating a two-tiered system which would relegate northern Manitobans to second-class status when it comes to delivery of justice.

Will the minister stand up in this House today and categorically deny that that is the government's intention?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Yes, indeed, Mr. Speaker.

* (1025)

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, in October and again in February, I wrote to the Minister of Justice. Can the Minister of Justice explain why the circuit court system was suspended for four months to the communities of Leaf Rapids and Lynn Lake where they served many on the justice committee? Can he explain why a young woman, 12 years old, who was sexually assaulted has had to wait more than six months to have a matter dealt with in court, why this girl was called to court and the matter not deal with—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, in his first question, the honourable member referred to aspects of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry which identified shortcomings in the justice system in remote areas of Manitoba. My response I hope acknowledges that this government recognizes that, too.

I am hopeful to be bringing forward soon major improvements to the justice system in remote areas as well as in other areas of Manitoba. I am going to ask the honourable member, his Leader (Mr. Doer), the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), and the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) to use their considerable powers of persuasion to persuade the leadership of the aboriginal people in Manitoba to work with this government in bringing these things to fruition.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Justice explain why a court party attending in Lynn Lake arrives at 10 in the morning, departs at four in the afternoon, attempts to deal with 70 cases in that time period, including sexual assault, leaving witnesses stranded, victims unsatisfied? Can the minister explain how he is going to do that by creating a two-tiered system?

Mr. McCrae: The type of system that will be created has not been finally determined, because we have not had the opportunity to include in discussions about that the leadership of the aboriginal community.

There have been improvements made in the justice system thus far since this government came to office. I remind the honourable member that out of the many, many years that he and his colleagues were in office in this province, it was during those years, to a large extent, some of these difficulties arose. This government does not want to be part of the problem as the previous government was. This government wants to make improvements. We desperately want to make improvements to the justice system where improvements are required. We acknowledge that.

The honourable member is attempting, I assume, to be helpful here. He can be helpful by attempting to persuade aboriginal leadership to join us in solving these problems.

Independent Schools Funding Formula

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education.

Yesterday, the minister said I would be interested in funding for the independent school in my constituency. I am interested in funding for all schools in all constituencies, even St. John's-Ravenscourt located in the minister's constituency that is going to get 9 percent this year while public schools are laying off teachers in her constituency.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister not reconsider her position, given its inherent unfairness?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, this government is interested in quality education for all students in Manitoba. Some families choose, as is their right and for their own reasons, to have their children educated in independent schools. I have not yet contacted the independent schools with their funding this year, as the member seems to think that I have.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate whether she will be breaking the agreement signed by this government with the independent schools with respect to the increase that is automatically going to be given and that the independent schools' chairperson agrees is going to be 9 percent this year?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, the agreement which the member refers to, which yesterday he claimed was confidential, in fact has never been a confidential agreement and has been spoken about in the time since it was signed, but that letter of agreement is in fact an agreement between this government and the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools.

Now, the effect of breaking that agreement would be very serious to the taxpayers of this province because it is a phased-in funding amount, and it is only funding relating to operating costs.

Mr. Chomiak: My final supplementary to the same minister: Will the minister consider in her talks with the private schools that she says she is going to have, that she tells them about the financial situation of the government and that they consider taking the same increase in funding that the public school system has been forced to take this year by this government?

* (1030)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I have met with the independent schools, as I have met with school divisions across this province, in the range of almost

20 school divisions, to examine their particular issues as it relates to our new funding formula, but in our opinion, this is an agreement.

Health Care System Bed Closures

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Recent news stories on the proposed closure and realignment of hospital beds in Winnipeg and the Health minister's refusal to give any specific answer, Mr. Speaker, is causing a high level of anxiety among patients and health-care providers.

Can the minister today at least give us a time frame when he will make the announcement about these proposed bed closures?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, what we have this year is no different than any other year where budget requests are made of the hospitals and government through the process of deciding where our priorities are in spending, makes decisions on the funding increase to respective departments. This year, the government again decided to provide health care in hospitals, in particular, with a much more significant increase than other departments of government.

We did that because (a) we did not raise taxes for the fifth budget in a row; (b) we do not believe, as others believe and other political philosophies particularly the New Democrats', that you can pave your way to future prosperity by borrowing against tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, what is going on this year is an exercise that with an approximate 5 percent increase to hospitals, how they will arrange their programming. Some of the programming will not be in the hospital environment as happened in Brandon where services in the community have replaced services in the hospital.

I suspect that as hospitals deal with their budgets, liaise with an increased home-care budget to provide more community services, an increased personal care home budget to provide more long-term care, that there will be changes in the hospital program. The patient will be provided with budget for care in the most appropriate location, and that is the exercise hospitals right now are going through—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Community-Based Health Care Government Initiatives

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Can the minister tell us what other alternative methods of community care are being considered other than the home care services, because as the news media is telling us, 300 beds are going to be closed? Patients want to know how they are going to be served in the long run. It is a major issue, Mr. Speaker. We are asking for simple information.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): With all due respect, the media is speculating on rumours brought to this House by honourable members in the opposition.

Mr. Speaker, as I explained in Brandon, they made a decision and they closed a number of beds, but that bed closure followed two and a half years of increased funding by this government to support outpatient surgery. There were fewer admissions to the acute care beds for surgical procedures. The beds were not filled. The community of Brandon received more than double the home care budget. It provided services in the community and not in the hospital, so the management closed empty beds. Does that not make management sense in providing the most appropriate and the greatest volume of care to Manitobans in the appropriate environment with a responsible eye on the taxpayers' dollars? Yes, it does, Sir.

Health Care System Labour Adjustment Strategy

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, we were simply asking for information. Can the minister tell us in view of all these reports and the health care reform, what kind of planning does he have for the health care workers who are going to be displaced by some of the major changes? What kind of labour planning does he have to retrain them so that they can work in the community level?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, let me deal with that issue exactly as it is being dealt with in Brandon, because had my honourable friend asked the question six months ago, how many beds are going to close in Brandon, I could not have answered that. The management, the executive and the board of Brandon General Hospital had not made those kinds of program decisions.

What I can tell my honourable friend is that in the circumstance of Brandon, redeployment opportunities are there, retraining opportunities are there. They have increased the number of spaces in their nursing school for LPNs who may be displaced and wish to go on to receive R.N. education. There are increasing job opportunities in the community, because we have more than doubled the budget in continuing care in the city of Brandon. That is salary-based to individuals. There is more than double the number of people working in the community. Those are the job opportunity replacements from institution to community exactly as informed health-care decision-makers across the length and breadth of North America are making, Sir.

GRIP Program Notification Deadline

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, clearly this Minister of Agriculture has missed the deadline for informing farmers of changes to GRIP. Clause 37 is explicit, and I quote: Changes must be mailed to the farmers by March 15 prior to the contract year for which the changes are first to come into effect.

This violation or this breaking of the contract by the Minister of Agriculture, breaking of an agreement, is a fundamental breach, Mr. Speaker, of the contract by government, and therefore removes any obligation on the part of the farmer to remain in the program if coverage levels or premium levels are altered in a detrimental way to the farmers.

Can this Minister of Agriculture explain to this House on what legal basis he and his spokespersons in Crop Insurance are going around saying that the government has no obligation to announce changes by March 15 even though it is in the contract?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I want to inform the member that the Crop Insurance Corporation, on March 12 of 1992, sent to farmers amendments to the contract for revenue insurance. That is prior to March 15.

Legal Opinion Request

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, this has not been sent to the farmers by March 15.

Will the minister table a legal opinion, instead of trying to alter history here today because his spokespersons have said the opposite, that either confirms his statements or rejects them? Do we have a fundamental breach or do we not?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, this program has undergone a fair level of evolution. As I told the member a few days ago, particularly Saskatchewan held up the process because they wanted to make some major changes that took away a lot of the support that the farmers in Saskatchewan used to have in this program.

I can tell the member that neither Saskatchewan nor Alberta sent any amendments to their producers. Manitoba Crop Insurance did. Whether it is legal or illegal in terms of his interpretation remains to be seen. The information the farmers need in terms of premiums and support levels for 1992 will be out shortly.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind you that amendments were mailed to the producers in a letter of March 12, 1992.

Premium Levels

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, revision is history from this minister.

Will this minister now announce today, to remove the uncertainty, that there will be no reduction in coverage levels and no increase in premiums for the coming year, or does he believe that contracts are only for farmers and not for arrogant governments?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the attempt in Manitoba is to maintain the highest level of coverage we can in terms of negotiating with the other partners in this agreement.

As I told the member the other day, Manitoba has been on record for some time as maintaining a position of having the highest level of protection for farmers. His counterpart in Saskatchewan has already said that premiums will increase in Saskatchewan to the producers. He also acknowledges that in Saskatchewan the program will not be effective if they have a poor crop this year.

Mr. Speaker, that is the condition under which farmers need protection, if they have a poor crop. I can guarantee him that Manitoba farmers will have a level of support that is far superior to Saskatchewan, particularly in the instance where they need it the most, if there is a crop failure in 1992.

Highway Maintenance Responsibility

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Rural Development.

Last year we saw devastating cuts to the Highways budget, cuts of \$9 million. The bridge program was cut, a tremendous offloading onto municipalities.

How can the minister support an additional cut this year of a million dollars to the highways maintenance which will impact again on municipalities, and they are going to have to pick up extra costs—more offloading onto municipalities?

* (1040)

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I was not quite sure whether I caught the total question. I want to indicate that if the member wants to take the time to look at what happened in my budget for this year, I think the rural people are going to be well served.

The bridge program has been returned. There has been an increase in the grant-in-aid programs that I have with the local municipalities. My capital program is \$103 million for this year. I do not know where she gets the idea that there is further offloading, Mr. Speaker. We are trying to recover from that.

Regional Development Corporations Funding

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): I would like to ask the Minister of Rural Development again: In light of the fact that tourism is in such a devastated state in Manitoba and this is an industry that can grow, can the minister assure the people in the Regional Development Corporation that they will not have the same cuts that they had last year in Regional Development Corporation funding? Perhaps he will even look at special funding for these corporations that will attract more tourism to rural Manitoba—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put her question.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I guess I am happy to say that over the last year, there have been several initiatives introduced by this government to

indeed help rural communities to not only survive, but to revitalize rural communities.

Mr. Speaker, I point to a program like the rural Grow Bonds Program, which has been introduced some months ago, has been taken up by many communities. In addressing some of the municipal functions and attending some of the local meetings in rural communities, I have to tell you that Manitobans are very excited about the rural Grow Bonds Program and the fact that it could be a very key instrument in revitalizing our rural economy.

In the next short while, we will be announcing other programs which will generate other forms of assistance to rural communities to help them grow and prosper in this province.

Mrs. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, I wish the people in rural Grow Bonds every bit of success.

Mr. Speaker: Question, please.

Rural Development Government Initiatives

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): I want to ask the same minister: How can he support a budget that allows \$2 million for economic growth in rural Manitoba when there are cuts of similar amounts in Highways and other things? There are going to be jobs taken away in rural Manitoba, in Highways and Natural Resources, in Housing. There are going to be cuts in jobs. How can he say that he has put enough support into rural Manitoba?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that Manitobans, and especially rural Manitobans, are getting somewhat tired of the gloom-and-doom philosophy of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about programs like the Grow Bonds Program, the program that is going to be announced with regard to revenues from Video Lottery Terminals, when we look at what we have done for the rural economy in terms of the support we have given through the GRIP program, Manitobans indeed are looking positively toward renewed growth in our rural economy. The negativism that we are hearing from the other side is just not accepted in rural Manitoba by many of our people.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Nonpolitical Statements

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to make a nonpolitical statement.

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

Mr. Lamoureux: I stand in recognition of the day that has been set aside. As we all know inside the Chamber, the United Nations declared March 21 the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Mr. Speaker, I think that all members of this Chamber are glad to have seen a resolution of this nature because we all recognize the importance of doing what we can to combat racism. It has now been close to two years in which I was appointed as the critic for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, and the minister with that portfolio for a number of years in the NDP has been the critic likewise as long as I have.

One of the benefits I find, Mr. Speaker, is that we as critics and the minister get many invitations to go out to different groups. It gives us greater insights in terms of a better understanding, a better appreciation in terms of all the different ethnic communities throughout the province of Manitoba.

I have often argued that if every member of this Chamber had the same opportunity as I have, as the minister and the NDP critic have had, I think we would all learn and benefit a great deal from it. I really and truly believe that when it comes to fighting racism that it is really a question of education and the more the community as a whole finds out and becomes more educated in terms of combating racism, I believe personally, as the Liberal Party and all parties in this Chamber no doubt believe, that Manitoba and, in particular, Canada, would be a much better place to live in.

I did want to stand up and put those few words on the record and I thank the House for giving me the leave.

Committee Changes

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: The member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) for the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh); the member for

Emerson (Mr. Penner) for the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

* * *

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): May I make a nonpolitical statement?

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

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, I think it would be remiss to not take the opportunity to recognize that tomorrow will be the day to eliminate racism. I would just like to take the opportunity to briefly recommend to the government that they take out the Manitoba Intercultural Council's recommendations for eliminating racism—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would caution the honourable member for Radisson. [interjection] Order, please. I am just cautioning the honourable member for Radisson. You have been granted leave for a nonpolitical statement; pick and choose your words very carefully.

Ms. Cerilli: —a political body that has developed the recommendations and they are recommendations that I would hope everyone in the House could agree with and support, take the opportunity to look at that as a way of commemorating this sad day. Thank you.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Might I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

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

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, in 1986, the United Nations declared March 21 the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. In commemoration of the tragic event at Sharpeville, South Africa, 32 years ago, when peaceful demonstrators against apartheid were wounded and killed. Right here in Manitoba, I think many Manitobans like to think of racism as something that we do not have here, but it is something that is a problem within our communities and it is real. It is something that all Manitobans have to deal with.

I do not believe that any of us would not look toward tomorrow as a day, not only tomorrow but every day throughout the year, and what we can do

as citizens of this province to eliminate racial discrimination.

We saw in our province, back in December of last year, criminal charges brought against self-proclaimed members of the Ku Klux Klan, following an extensive undercover operation by the RCMP and the City of Winnipeg police. It is imperative that all Manitobans work together.

We know that racism crosses party lines. It does not belong to any one political party. I think it is important and incumbent upon all members of this Legislature and indeed all Manitobans to work very positively towards eliminating some of the barriers that exist, and work together towards eliminating racial discrimination.

I am pleased and proud that many of our schools today are celebrating. I just want to make mention too that my son in Grade 4 is involved at Emerson Elementary School in an assembly this morning, and he will be making statements on multiculturalism and elimination of racial discrimination. I wanted to indicate that not only at Emerson Elementary School, but right throughout the province and the city of Winnipeg, many schools and many organizations are participating in very positive initiatives. I commend them for it, and thank you.

* (1050)

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Osborne have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Is there leave?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, leave is denied.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the adjourned debate, eighth day of debate, on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) in amendment thereto and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Second Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) in further amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), who has 21 minutes remaining.

Mr. Jerry Storle (Filn Flon): Mr. Speaker, I am going to be fairly brief this morning because there is an agreement to allow the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to conclude debate some time after eleven o'clock, but there are a number of things that I think need to be put on the record with respect to this budget.

This morning the Premier criticized us, and other members of the government have criticized the New Democratic Party, for being negative, for continuing to paint a bleak picture of the economic circumstances that face Manitobans.

I can assure the Premier that the questions we have raised in Question Period over this session and the last session reflect not only our concern about the direction this province is heading economically, but reflect the concerns expressed to us by Manitobans from border to border—from border to border. The fact of the matter is that the economic facts we face as a province are bleak. It is difficult not to paint a particularly negative and frustrating and difficult situation in questions when that is what you are faced with in reality. That is the fact of the matter.

* (1100)

For the record, I want to say that this government's agenda has failed. The Tory, the Conservative agenda for Canada has failed and failed miserably. Mr. Speaker, you only have to look at the statistics to know that this is the case. For the record, for members opposite and people who may be listening to this debate, average Manitobans, if I can use that word, these are the statistics.

If you compare 1991 with 1990, how is the province doing? Can we tell Manitobans honestly that their economic circumstances are going to improve this year? Can we tell young people that they are more likely to find a job this year? Can we tell businesses that they are more likely to succeed this year? Can we tell those who have lost their homes that things are going to improve?

Mr. Speaker, here are the facts—economic growth down 1 percent, unemployment growth down 2.3 percent, unemployment rate up almost 20 percent. More people are leaving the province. Retail sales down 2.4 percent, housing starts down 36 percent, building permits down 23 percent, farm cash receipts down 6.3 percent, manufacturing shipments down 13.7 percent. Weekly earnings have remained unchanged. Investment is down hundreds of percents, to zero in effect.

Tourism, Mr. Speaker—we learned yesterday that Manitoba, again, like on many other economic indicators, has the worst record of any province in the country—the worst record than any province in the country. Where are we going with respect to trade? This government, this Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson), this First Minister (Mr. Filmon), continue to tell us that trade is our bread and butter.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the trade deficit for the province of Manitoba has increased to \$1 billion. We cannot attribute that to the lack of a trade policy on the part of the government. We can attribute it, Mr. Speaker, to the complicity of the current government with the Conservatives federally on a free trade agreement and now it appears after a flip-flop by this government, a concurrence on the North American free trade agreement. It is not a billion-dollar surplus.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, every year since free trade, our imports have increased and our exports have decreased—every year. [interjection] The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) is talking about a billion-dollar surplus. The numbers in Manitoba for 1991 over 1990 show a billion-dollar decline in trade. We are losing, and we are losing big, so it is difficult to be positive.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have the government tabling a budget which attempts to be all things to all people, something that the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) has chastised the government for. It is not even clear today, as we prepare to vote for the budget of the province, that the member for Rossmere is going to support it. He said he is withholding it. He says he has options. He says he is not happy with the budget.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the member for Rossmere is not alone. There are 26 members on this side and thousands and thousands and thousands of unemployed Manitobans, Manitobans on welfare, who do not like this budget either because it does not speak to their needs.

The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) is very sensitive when anybody on this side suggests that the government is using a public relations exercise rather than an economic policy to direct this government. Whenever you talk to the First Minister about sound and pool lights, Mr. Speaker, he goes frantic.

The fact of the matter is that the budget that was tabled by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is another PR exercise. How do you judge whether a budget succeeds? How can we judge whether the Minister of Finance's previous budgets met the mark? I guess you can do it by defining the goals in the budget and seeing if they have met those goals, by doing some elementary evaluation as to whether the goals that the government set for itself have in fact been met. This government has missed its objective.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance says he was out in Crescentwood the other day. Was he telling Manitobans that his desire to control the deficit has disappeared? Has he told Manitobans that we have a \$530-million deficit and that includes a \$70-million lapsing function. If that money is not lapsed, the deficit for the Province of Manitoba is \$600 million. We need a little bit of honesty in this Chamber, and this government has to be a little bit honest about the declining fortunes of the people of Manitoba. They cannot find work; they cannot find work for their children. They are leaving the province. Their businesses are going bankrupt. Their houses are being foreclosed upon. Those are the circumstances.

If the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) says we are painting a black picture of the economic circumstances of the province, well, Mr. Speaker, the First Minister should try living on welfare. The First Minister should try living on unemployment. The First Minister should have his house foreclosed. Those are the circumstances of average Manitobans, and if that is a black picture, if that is a negative picture, that is reality. That is what is happening out there. What we are trying to get the government to do is to set an agenda.

The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) is going to stand up and say we have provided no alternatives. Our Leader (Mr. Doer), today, provided two alternatives. He called for an economic summit. Let us assess the problem. The problem with this government is it will not face reality; the First Minister will not face reality. We have asked on many occasions for the First Minister of this government to establish a task force to examine the real problems of our economy and to help us collectively come to grips with some of those. This government did pose some solutions.

Mr. Speaker, there was some tinkering in this budget but it was only tinkering. That is not only my

opinion. When it comes to the manufacturing tax credits, when it comes to the telecommunications tax exemption, all of the experts, people outside this Chamber, say that it is not going to work. The day after the budget, university Economics professors at both the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg and business people themselves said this was tinkering. This was not going to draw investment to the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the government has to get realistic. The government patted itself on the back in terms of its mining exemption, some new initiatives in the area of mining. It is tinkering. In 1991—

An Honourable Member: Tinkering.

Mr. Storie: Well, Mr. Speaker, tinkering. The total cost for the mining initiatives, the total cost to this government—and it is in the budget if the member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) wants to read the facts—in this budget are going to cost the government \$0.5 million. That is what it says. In 1991, when the Manitoba Mineral Exploration Incentive Program was introduced, there was much hoopla, again a PR exercise. They said they were going to spend \$14.5 million.

My question to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) today, \$14.5 million, have they spent a cent out of that fund to date? The answer is no. In fact, Mr. Speaker, companies like Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting and Inco who employ almost all of the people in mining in Manitoba, almost all, cannot even take advantage of the program.

An Honourable Member: What did you do?

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, what did we do—the Minister of Finance will have forgotten by now that we invested with HBM&S in a mine. We were prepared to have a joint venture with HBM&S and did have a joint venture in which the province owned 49 percent. We also worked with the mining company, had a very successful mineral development agreement with the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, what I am trying to say is that the government's initiatives in mining are a PR exercise. While the government now has recognized the importance of mining, we have lost two mining communities. The community of Sherridon and the community of Lynn Lake have disappeared. Their mining activity has disappeared. Those communities are in turmoil. While the minister was

delivering his budget, another mine was closing in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, there can be no credit to this government because what they are doing is a public relations exercise. It is no real commitment.

This government is attempting to say that somehow there is some stimulation in this budget. In the areas where we most need it, there is nothing. In fact, the statistics that I just provided, the record high unemployment levels, the record high bankruptcies, the record high mortgage foreclosures bespeak to an economy that is in trouble.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing in this budget that is so important to the people of Manitoba that it should override their concerns and their needs. The government, despite receiving many, many responsible and constructive suggestions from members on this side over the past many months, has refused to take any of them.

The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) stood today in this House and rejected two more, even though the average Manitoban believes that we have to address our problems. We cannot continue to turn a blind eye to the failures of this government, the failures of Conservative policies in the province of Manitoba and the failures of Conservative policies in the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, just to show you how desperate they are, yesterday, we learned the truth from the Minister of Finance, the first time it has been acknowledged, that the deficit is \$530 million. The Minister of Finance said that unless things change substantially, we are facing an almost \$600-million deficit next year, and this from a government that started only four short budgets ago with a surplus. That is the fact of the matter.

We have lost our economic base. Our people are leaving, and there are no jobs. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) expect us to stand in this House and support this budget. Mr. Speaker, this budget is a sham. It is a continuation of economic development by PR exercise.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude with comments on only one additional initiative of the government, the First Minister raised it today, and that is the Economic Innovations and Technology Council. In the last budget, the government took \$700,000 away from the Manitoba Research

Council. They said in the budget they were going to create this new innovations council. That was a year ago. Did they spend any money? Did they create the council? No. In the fall, the First Minister said: We are going to create a new one. We are going to reshuffle things, and we are going to have this new Economic Development Board of Cabinet.

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

The only real increase in the budget is a million dollars that this new Mike Bessey super secretariat is going to spend. What is the record of that department and that individual? The successes of this government are MacLeod Stedman, you know the head office that never happened; Piper Aircraft, the company that never came; Repap, the company that just laid off most of its workers; The Pines project, and then we have the most recent, SEA Inc., the turning away of jobs from Portage la Prairie, food processing jobs, needlessly. Madam Deputy Speaker, that is not a record to be proud of.

This budget is a sham. It does not deal with controlling the deficit, which is the first priority of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), and it certainly does not deal with getting the province of Manitoba working again, putting those 52,000 people back to work, saving our services. Instead, we see another \$40-million increase in welfare spending. The people of Manitoba know that is not productive. It is wrong. It should be work, not welfare.

* (1110)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am honoured to speak on behalf of our government's fifth budget that we have put before the Legislative Assembly and the people of Manitoba.

Without question, this budget is a tribute to the hard work and dedication of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and his staff. It is also a testament to the benefits of prudent management by all of this government's ministers and their staff and, as well, to the tremendous dedication and input of all members of this caucus who worked very, very hard in giving their advice and constructive suggestions to those of us who put the work in and the ultimate decisions into this budget and, particularly, to the many, many people and groups with whom the Minister of Finance consulted in arriving at this balancing act, which I believe is an approach that will, I think, stand out as a beacon by comparison to

many other provinces and the kind of approach they will be taking as they bring their budgets forward.

I think this budget is proof positive that our plan for reform and recovery will indeed create a stronger province, a stronger economic base. It is working despite tough global economic times. It is working despite incredible social changes virtually everywhere in the world around us. It is working despite how much opposition parties, both Liberal and New Democratic alike, try to throw up roadblocks to the successful progress of this province.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I have to intercede to just make comment on how quickly the so-called sincerity and credibility of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) was blown by the 20-minute tirade that we just listened to from the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), a negative, critical diatribe that attempted, like his Leader, the prince of darkness, to paint everything black, black, black.

That, Madam Deputy Speaker, tells us more clearly than any of the shallow commentary from the Leader of the Opposition where the New Democrats are when it comes to co-operation, to working with the people of this province to set aside their partisanship and to try and rebuild and strengthen the economic base of this province. He undercut his Leader more than anybody on this side could have by the kind of diatribe that he just put forward.

It is ludicrous, ludicrous, for them to suggest that their so-called constructive approach of tired, worn, discredited policies such as spending the hundreds of millions of dollars on short-term, make-work jobs is the answer to this, that we should embrace that failed philosophy that is being discarded by countries all around the globe, being discarded, that we should embrace that and take it to us as being the salvation for the economic challenges that we face in this province.

Despite opposition disinterest in the real issues, and I say, if you want a real analysis of opposition disinterest, just look at the opening salvo in the speech of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) on the budget. What does he spend his first five minutes on, his initial attack on the budget or his constructive approach to it? A cartoon. He talks about a cartoon as being the essence of his criticism of this budget. That is No. 1. His approach to the budget is to talk about a cartoon.

To show you just exactly what credibility and what substance was attached to the Leader of the Opposition's response to the budget, that is the first time in my recollection in this House, and I have been here now 12 years, that there was no coverage in the press of his contribution in response to the budget. That is devastating, but that is true. There was no coverage in the press of his contributions in response to the budget. His comments, his criticisms, were so shallow, so trivial, they were ignored by the press and with good and valid reason.

Despite this attitude that we are seeing from the opposition, we indeed are making progress and working with Manitobans by standing with them to meet common problems and concerns and challenges and by seeking their advice on solutions.

Madam Deputy Speaker, our government listens to the people of Manitoba. That is the secret to government, to open government and to indeed good government ultimately. Manitobans said they were taxed to death in every survey and every public commentary from every major organization. With perhaps the exception of the NDP "gimme" group, the Choices, every other credible group in this province said we are taxed to death, we have had enough. We listened, and we took action immediately.

This government has introduced five budgets. All five budgets have been centered around a tax freeze and, where possible, tax cuts. This is the fifth consecutive year that we have frozen taxes in this province. It is unprecedented, and it is unmatched anywhere in this country.

Every time the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) and the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) demand that we solve our problems by throwing more money at them, every time the NDP and the Liberals urge us to back up the Brink's truck and spend, spend, spend, that reminds us of the heavy debt and tax load that Manitobans were forced to bear as a result of the actions and initiative of previous NDP governments.

We listen carefully to the opposition every day for new ideas. We search their comments for fresh approaches, perhaps some innovative solutions. We examine their rhetoric for some recognition of the reality facing the taxpayers of Manitoba. Sadly, we find absolutely nothing new, nothing fresh, nothing innovative. They are almost always tightly

bound to their tired old party line, nowhere near reality. For example, day in and day out, we hear the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) and his cronies talk about the NDP Jobs Fund.

Point of Order

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is known for his cheap shots, but he knows that all members of this Chamber are honourable members, and he should not refer to the opposition benches in any way. I would ask you, in light of the fact that the Premier should be showing some leadership in this Chamber, to raise the level of his words with members in this Chamber.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, I do not believe has a point of order, but I can assure him that I can quote the word "cronies" that he has used over and over and over again in this Chamber, over and over, gang, cronies and all of those cheap-shot slurs that he enjoys using. If he is afraid—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would remind all honourable members in this House that indeed all members are honourable members, and reference should be used accordingly.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, all Manitobans know that we have been down that failed road before, courtesy of the New Democrats. Hundreds and millions of dollars of the Manitoba taxpayers were spent creating jobs under the old NDP Jobs Fund. Where are those jobs today? As the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) asked on budget day, where are those jobs today. We all know the answer.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) does not even know that Flyer Industries was not created by the Jobs Fund, heaven forbid. He does not even know that, and he comes and he interjects with a silly contribution. He does not even know the history of this province. Maybe that is one of the reasons why he is so off track.

We all know the answer. The Jobs Fund jobs do not exist today in this province. They have not existed for years. All that is left is the debt and lots of it. Big debt forces higher taxes, Madam Deputy Speaker, and that is the only legacy of previous NDP governments that they have left for Manitobans.

The member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) has learned absolutely nothing from the past. He clings to the tired old socialist policies that failed in Manitoba and failed throughout the length and breadth of the world. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition has not learned his lesson from these past follies. Perhaps he has trouble just remembering the past, particularly his past life as a union boss. I believe I can prod his memory. I believe that hopefully I can prod his conscience, Madam Deputy Speaker, because he used to show some common sense occasionally in those days in the past.

In 1983, for instance, the member for Concordia was the president of the Manitoba Government Employees' Association. I remember the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) saying he was a pretty good president of the union in those days. He thought in those days that he made a lot of sense in some of the things that he said.

* (1120)

For instance, on September 28 of 1983, he gave his opinion on the NDP government's newly announced Jobs Fund. It is bloody immoral in my mind, he said. I hope those words are not unparliamentary because they are an exact quote. It is bloody immoral in my mind, he said about the Jobs Fund.

He was even more forthcoming a few months later. In the spring of 1984, he was blasting the NDP government for, quote, hiring people to count flowers along the roadside.

That is the Jobs Fund jobs, hiring people to count flowers along the roadside, according to the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer). Then he went further and he said, the government does not understand the difference between a make-work job and a structured economy. Any economist, he said, will tell you a structured job is more beneficial to the economy.

In more recent times, he has had a lapse of memory. In October of 1991, he said in a letter that was sent throughout the province that this government did not understand labour relations, that this government was unsuccessful in its dealings with its employees. In fact, he said in a letter signed Gary Doer, Leader of the NDP, both the federal and Manitoba Conservative governments have abused their power by ignoring

their own commitments to work within the collective bargaining process.

All right. What happened then just a couple of months later? Here is a clipping from Friday, February 7, 1992, Winnipeg Free Press. "The NDP was rocked by an embarrassing labour dispute yesterday when seven office workers launched a strike to fight against contracting out, cuts to maternity benefits and threats to job security."

"I am disgusted that I had to choose between whether I was a New Democrat or whether I was a labour person said Janice Ducharme, president of the local representing office workers at the party's provincial headquarters. I am disgusted that the elite clique of the New Democratic Party would submit themselves to this kind of public scrutiny.

"Moreover, Ducharme said the tiny local was pushed into the strike by the party executive's negotiating committee after going eight months without a contract."

Now listen to this. "She said the committee"—that is the party's negotiating committee—"is stacked with hired guns from more powerful labour organizations such as the Manitoba Government Employees Association, the City of Winnipeg's CUPE Local 500 and the United Food and Commercial Workers."—Bernie Christophe.

What were the issues that they were unwilling to bend and to be reasonable on with their employees? The union says the key issues include the party executive wants to strip the workers of their current maternity benefits of 17 weeks full salary. Madam Deputy Speaker, we willingly put—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): I cannot hear what the First Minister is saying, besides I cannot see any relevance attacking a political party in the budget.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order, the honourable member for Broadway indeed does have a point of order. I, myself, am experiencing great difficulty in hearing the First Minister's speech, and I would request the co-operation of all members on all sides of the House in complying with this order.

Thank you.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, I can understand the embarrassment of the New Democrats and particularly their women members when I remind them of the fact that their party wanted to strip their female employees of their maternity benefits, benefits that we willingly gave to the MGEA without even discussion. We put it on the table as being a "given," that we would allow them the choice between what they had and what the federal government was giving them.

A second major issue that they were criticizing their employers, the New Democratic Party, for was that the union wants to force the executive to use its work force to full capacity before taking steps to contract out. What they were fighting for was opposing contracting out, when these people get up day after day after day in the House and have the audacity to criticize us as a government for our contract negotiations on issues such as this.

An Honourable Member: How does that fit with your philosophy, Gary?

Mr. Filmon: You see that is the kind of short-term memory—they have difficulty with the long-term memory and they have difficulty with the short-term memory.

Let us talk more about the short-term memory. Let us talk about the multiple positions of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) on the Fiscal Stabilization Fund. About a week ago in his response to the budget he said: "They have no business taking an asset and putting it into the new budget."—in reference to the Fiscal Stabilization Fund.

He was saying that he did not want us to spend the Fiscal Stabilization Fund to maintain essential programs. What he forgets, Madam Deputy Speaker, is the number of times that he demanded in this House and outside that we dip into the rainy day fund because as he said, it is raining, it is raining. We heard him say that, it is raining now. Then when we do spend it to maintain essential services, he says, I object to it.

On June 7, 1989, the member for Concordia felt it was raining for health care, for job creation, for education. The very day before that, he said that the Stabilization Fund money should go to Kllnic, to Municipal Hospitals, to northern facilities, to child care centres. In 1990, it was the Native Communications network he said we should spend

the rainy day fund on. In 1991, it was the nurses' strike that he said we should spend the money on.

Last week he said, no, do not spend it. He said, I object.

Mr. Doer: No, I suggested taking an asset and putting it in. Read it right, the whole statement.

Mr. Filmon: The Leader of the NDP has total recall, all right. It is like the auto manufacturers who say that. He says that his statements are subject to total recall just like the auto manufacturers cars are subject to total recall.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans simply will not buy what he is trying to sell them. Manitobans want consistency and they demand honesty from the people whom they elect. Those cutesy 10-second clips that he goes for everyday are not what the people are looking for. They fall far short of the mark. He is all pretty paper and fancy ribbons and all wrapping and no package.

With all of this all-show and no-dough double-talk approach to government, he is now having to fear the comparisons that are going to be made day after day between what New Democrats say when they have the luxury of opposition and what New Democrats do when they are in office. What his colleagues in Ontario are doing, what his colleagues in Saskatchewan are doing—[interjection] We will talk about that if I have some time. I have a few clippings here that I want to share.

Manitobans know that what we are doing by consistent, by relevant policy matters, by keeping the taxes down, the deficit down and building a stronger foundation, will position us better for the economic recovery and the growth that we know will happen. They are confident in the combined abilities of Manitobans working together. We share their optimism and their confidence. Our government will stand with them and will continue to work hard to build a stronger Manitoba.

Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) would learn something if he spent a little more time listening to what the government was really saying, so that he understood it instead of the knee-jerk reactions that we get day after day. Perhaps he should listen to his honourable colleagues in the opposition in the Liberal Party. For instance, the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), have said some very positive things explaining relevant economics of the

1990s to the people of the New Democratic Party. They understand the challenges. They understand the issues. They understand the opportunities, and I give them credit for evaluating the budget and for being consistent in looking at some of the things that they like and some of the things that they do not like, not the knee-jerk negative reaction doom and gloom, painted-black approach.

* (1130)

You only have to listen to the contributions of the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) from time to time when he recognizes that health care reform is an issue, that health care reform is being dealt with by governments throughout this country, and that health care reform is part of the process of keeping medicare alive and healthy. He says that, Mr. Speaker. Even the tone he takes in response to ministerial statements is head and shoulders above the tone of his counterpart in the New Democratic Party. At least when he agrees with the initiative that the government is undertaking, he has the courage to say so, not like the New Democratic knee-jerk reaction, always negative response.

The member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) gave evidence of his grasp of today's reality in a recent television speech on Provincial Affairs, and I will quote what he said. It is very interesting. He said: If we are going to be successful, we must face these challenges together. We must stop the negativism, reduce the constant focus on what is wrong with this province. It is time to get to work on what is right about it. We do not live in this province because we have to. We do so by choice, because there is a great deal to be proud of in Manitoba and a great deal of economic strength to be built on. We have a strong resource sector, competitive manufacturing and financial industries, a well-trained, competent labour force and a high quality of life. It is time that our political leadership celebrated those strengths.

Well, I agree wholeheartedly with the comments of the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock). I have said those very things myself in speeches across the length and breadth of this province of ours. I believe in Manitoba and in Manitobans working together collectively to make this a strong and vibrant province, and that is indeed what we are doing.

The bottom line is that taxes are a very important factor in determining our economy's ability to grow. Manitobans cannot afford more taxes. Manitobans want a strong economy. Mr. Speaker, this budget

offers far more than just tax restraint. It offers specifically targeted incentives aimed at helping to get our economy growing. We have made tax cuts in strategic areas to promote investment in Manitoba, cuts such as a mining tax holiday which will allow companies to recover their initial investment before mining taxes apply.

The member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), in his lack of knowledge, in his ignorance earlier today, said that amounts to a half million dollars. The fact of the matter is, that could be tens of millions of dollars of forgone revenue in order to get hundreds of millions of dollars of investment here, hundreds of millions of dollars of investment.

Elimination of the corporation's capital tax on mine exploration costs, another incentive that is being welcomed by the mining industry. A sales tax exemption for 1-800 numbers to help improve the competitiveness of business telecommunication services in Manitoba, welcomed by people who are in this field. Extension of the payroll training tax credit to include training delivered in export-oriented service industries, again, targeted at an area of great opportunity for job creation and investment in this province.

A new Manitoba research and development tax credit—even the Liberal Party has said that this is targeted in the right direction because we have to stimulate research and development initiatives in this province, and a temporary 10 percent income tax credit for investment in new manufacturing and processing in Manitoba. Again, there are companies out there who have welcomed this and said that it may well be the deciding factor in their going ahead with expansions and new investment, and that means jobs, real long-term jobs for Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, we are confident that the private sector will respond to the signals that are so clearly presented in this budget. In order to take advantage of these tax breaks, the private sector must invest in the Manitoba economy. That is the only way they can take advantage of this, is to invest and to invest substantially and to create jobs.

The investment will spark economic activity that will create jobs, real long-term jobs, permanent jobs for Manitobans. Our government will work alongside Manitobans to ensure that we can quickly and efficiently create new opportunities and attract new business to Manitoba.

The new tax incentives announced in our budget will continue the momentum that is being generated by other programs that are helping Manitobans to help themselves, programs such as the \$10-million initiative to bring more voice and data-intensive industry to Manitoba, the Manitoba Industrial Opportunities Program, and the Mineral Exploration Incentive Program, the Crocus Investment Fund, a labour-sponsored capital fund that we were the first in this country to bring in. No New Democratic government brought it in; we were the first. We brought it in, Mr. Speaker, because it made good sense, good sense to work co-operatively with labour to form yet another capital pool to help encourage the creation or the enhancement or the consolidation of business in Manitoba and jobs in Manitoba.

The \$20-million Manitoba Industrial Recruitment Initiative announced in last week's budget will help Manitoba businesses expand and diversify, as well as being used to help attract new business and investment from outside the province.

The Rural Development Grow Bond Program and the Community Choices programs are helping to build a strong rural Manitoba.

This budget, with its tax cuts and its tax incentives, encourages businesses to invest in Manitoba, and Statistics Canada says we will have the second-highest growth rate of private capital investment of any province in this country this year.

Our government has also made an investment in Manitobans to help ensure that they are ready to accept both the benefits and the challenges of expanded opportunity. Through programs such as Workforce 2000, we have invested over \$100 million in various training and youth employment initiatives. Included in this year's budget: \$2.5 million for new and expanded training programs at our three community colleges; \$1.4 million for the Partners with Youth program to create jobs for young Manitobans.

In fact, in this budget, Mr. Speaker, there is \$204 million of additional funding in the areas of Health, Education and Family Services, \$204 million additional.

Education and Training spending will increase 5.5 percent or \$52 million. That is three times the rate of inflation.

Health spending will be increased by \$101 million this year, 5.7 percent, three times the rate of inflation.

Family Services will receive an 8.7 percent increase, \$51 million; that is five times the rate of inflation.

Even the pretend budget of the NDP "gimme" group, Choices, they were only going to give a 5.1 percent increase to Family Services. Tim Sale was never very good at numbers. That much I knew. We all knew that.

Increases of this magnitude were needed to protect and assist those Manitobans most severely impacted by the recession.

In addition, we have underscored our commitment to stand with the hardworking men and women of the agriculture industry with a dramatic increase in spending on income support programs.

Last year, we invested more money in agriculture than any provincial government in the history of this province had ever done, and this year we will be investing 21 percent more, primarily in GRIP and NISA, in this budget alone.

Manitobans said they wanted to protect their vital health, social services, education, and they wanted to preserve their agricultural way of life. Once again, we have listened and we have responded by the measures in this budget.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure you will agree that this aggressive package of incentives aimed at getting the economy growing, the significant increase in funding to vital human services and no tax increase is indeed an impressive package for any budget.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that at this budget, because it was the first of any provincial government in the country, we had people from the financial markets of Toronto and New York, from the bond rating agencies, the people who sell our bonds, from the people who evaluate province to province right across this country those who are doing a good job on the management, and they were overwhelmingly positive at this budget and the manner in which it balanced all these things.

In addition, the fact that there is over \$300 million of this budget in direct funding that is being spent on capital, for infrastructure, for highways, for hospitals, for schools, personal care homes, all of those things that are long-term assets to this province—\$1.1 billion if you combine not only the direct provincial

but all of the Crown corporation investment in capital. I might say, I invite you to compare the approach on capital investment that is being taken by this government with that which was taken by the members opposite when they were in government and by what is going to happen in British Columbia and in Saskatchewan.

* (1140)

I was in B.C. I have talked with the people in both provinces who have talked about what is going to happen there. Do you know that the provincial government of British Columbia has already put on notice all of the consultants, the engineers, the architects, the people in that community who say there is less work coming in investment in infrastructure, in highways?

When I was in the hospital, there was a person who was on the same ward with me, an elderly person, who after recovery from a hip operation was still on the ward, was disoriented and confused. The poor woman was very upset because they could not move her out of the ward because they had no personal care beds. The same kind of thing that the New Democrats here get up and bleat about is being practised by their brethren in British Columbia.

It is worse than that. They have been in office for a short time, but they are going to follow the same thing, I predict, that the New Democrats did when they froze capital spending in health care for a full year. They froze capital spending so that we did not have personal care homes and other investments in health infrastructure being made. Those are the things that we have seen from New Democrats in office.

What really sets this budget apart is the fact that it was presented at a time when this provincial government's revenues will likely not increase at all, minimally. The fact of the matter is that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) does not remember some of the things that he should have learned while he was in government, and that is that government revenues lag behind the progress of the economy, that even though the economy is expected to increase substantially this year in Manitoba, the losses carried forward by businesses will result in them likely paying very little taxes this year and that that, more so than anything, will affect the kinds of revenues that we can predict.

We were able to do all of this. We were able to keep the taxes down. We were able to give tax incentives. We were able to keep the deficit in manageable proportions, and we were able to increase the spending in all of these key social service areas and still keep all of this in line because of the fact that this government has learned, and has learned the lessons well, of management and organization and priority setting above all.

Manitoba is not the only province that is facing difficult challenges. From coast to coast, provincial governments are having to make difficult choices. As a result of that, some of them are absolutely frightened silly to even go before the public. You have a government like the Province of Saskatchewan that is now saying that they will not even go before the people until May. They have been in office since October. What happened when we were elected to government? When we were elected to government, we were back in this House within nine weeks with a full session. Within three months, we had a budget in this House, and we did all of that. What is happening in Saskatchewan? They are hiding behind the curtains.

Here is what a recent article said. "On the election trail, Romanow said Saskatchewan people were overtaxed and talked about government learning to live within its means." Romanow is now hinting, tax hikes might be unavoidable. A matter of five months have gone by, and he is now saying taxes—well, I can tell you they will be unavoidable for every NDP government in this country, because both the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and I proposed an economic recovery accord for the whole country that involved agreement to freezing taxes. Three provinces said, no, we will not sign such an agreement, NDP provinces who said, no, we cannot sign that because we are going to raise taxes. We are going to have to raise taxes.

What are they doing? They are trying to suggest that the debt of the province is higher than expected. Where is the big area that they have identified? Unfunded pension liabilities, \$3 billion—those are exactly the same pension liabilities that were there when Allan Blakeney was in government. Those are exactly the same pension liabilities that carried on because, like Manitoba, those pension liabilities are not shown on the books, following the same procedure that every successive government has in Saskatchewan, but to Roy Romanow, it is new. It is new.

Well, in the next few months all other provinces are going to bring forward their budgets, and we will look forward to comparing the priority choices that they bring. We will watch, we will see whether or not their approach of increasing taxes and cutting vital services is the approach that Manitobans would prefer.

In Ontario, let us take a look at what they are doing. There are already signals being sent out. In Ontario, a 1 percent increase in funding for municipalities for hospitals, for colleges, for universities and school boards—1 percent increase. Compare that to what we are doing in health care and education, I invite the members opposite. Metro Toronto is considering cutting hundreds of daycare spaces because of underfunding from a New Democratic government. Ontario hospitals are projecting 13,000 jobs will be lost and 3,500 beds closed this year. The council of Ontario universities has predicted 2,000 layoffs. Local school boards are predicting double digit property tax increases and salary rollbacks for teachers. Meanwhile, Ontario Provincial Treasurer Floyd Laughren has assured Ontarians that their taxes are bound to go up under his administration. He has not said how much but he says they are bound to go up.

*(1150)

Let us look at the Saskatchewan new NDP government in a little more detail as they prepare for a new provincial budget. They have increased the rates for local telephone service by 30 percent. Can you imagine what would happen if anything close to that happened here? Can you imagine what the New Democrats would say, a 30 percent increase in local telephone rates in one fell swoop? Hydro and natural gas prices increased at two and a half times inflation. That is what is happening there.

Mr. Speaker, here is a collection of clippings about these provinces and what is happening. Here is Ontario, the special report on the revolution in health care—Ottawa Civic Hospital, these are cuts only since December. This is without bringing in a new budget. This is based on the funding that they already have. Hospital cuts since December, Ottawa Civic Hospital, 43 beds; Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, 50 jobs; Ottawa General Hospital, 54 jobs, 40 beds; Riverside Hospital, 28 beds, 10 jobs; Queensway-Carleton Hospital, 28 beds, 28 jobs; Montfort Hospital, 27 beds. Over the next year 400 to 500 beds will be closed in the region, just in one region of Ontario and 300

positions eliminated. Why is it being done? Well, this article explains it. It is called: Health Ministry Shake-Up Coming. It tells the story of how they have replaced all the senior management with their NDP supporters.

The deputy minister, Michael Decter, former Clerk of the NDP Executive Council, has just replaced five of the six assistant deputy ministers—whoop! Out, the axe came. One ministry source said, the senior officials are being dumped or reassigned to make way for people who back the NDP's agenda, of bed cuts, of thousands of jobs lost, of 1 percent increase in funding, that is the NDP agenda. Of course, no reasonable people who had been working for the department would go along with that insanity so they had to put their own hacks in, in order to do it.

Let us look at what their priorities are. This will be interesting for the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer). This is a story from the Ottawa Citizen that is entitled "Economy speech cost \$62,000." That little speech that Bob Rae gave on television to tell people how tough things were cost \$62,000, of which \$2,600 was to rent a teleprompter to make sure he got his lines right.

"The supper-hour lockup, which was formally opposed by the Queen's Park press gallery in a letter to the premier's press office, cost taxpayers \$51,000," to do what the Leader of the Opposition does every day, which is to entertain the press—\$51,000.

*(1200)

"There were \$200 for 18 pots of yellow chrysanthemums that lined the stage where Laughren spoke to reporters." They not only have potted lights, they have potted chrysanthemums at their news conferences, the New Democrats. This is in a time of economic despair.

"Laughren said the lockup was intended to assist media coverage of both Rae's speech and his announcement that transfer payments would increase by only 1 per cent—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, one of the rights of all members is to be able to hear the speech that is being given. This statesman-like speech should be heard.

* * *

Mr. Fillmon: Here is another priority area of New Democratic policy in Ontario. It is called "The NDP's war on the yellow peril."

"As everyone knows, Post-it Notes are the most user-friendly item to hit offices since personal computers." That is the little yellow stickies, in case you do not know. "Everyone, that is, except Ontario's NDP government. Word is that the province's environment ministry recently made a bid to ban the little rip-and-stick sheets because they use nonrecyclable glue. The proposal made it all the way to the management board of cabinet where such weighty decisions are made. The plan was only killed when 3M Canada Inc., the company that makes Post-it Notes, threatened to close down the Ontario plant."

In case you have not seen it, they have a new billboard campaign going in Ontario that has a picture of Bob Rae with his thumb up and it says, Buffalo Business Boosters' Man of the Year. Then there is a story called Uncivil War about the ideological battles that are dividing bureaucrats from their NDP masters in Ontario. It says, one very senior bureaucrat still serving says he is appalled at the incompetence of all but three or four of Rae's cabinet ministers and the political staffs which surround them. I might tell you that the bureaucrats call them the Clampetts.

The concluding paragraph is—this is from the bureaucrats, the civil servants—we still see ourselves dealing with self-interest groups, not a government, says one assistant deputy minister, and all the little interest groups have an axe to grind. The tyranny of the periphery is now the government of Ontario.

Well, I have a great deal more to talk about, about British Columbia. Regrettably, I do not have the time. Make a comparison between what has been done in this budget and what is done by our government. We have given an increase of over 10 percent in transfers to municipalities in this province. Tax-sharing revenues to local governments in Saskatchewan are going down by 18 percent for rural municipalities and 14 percent to urban municipalities.

In British Columbia, 200 teachers have been laid off in Victoria, and they are going to be cutting more. The difference between Manitoba and the provinces of Ontario, Saskatchewan and B.C. lies in

management and planning. Our government has worked hard to lay a solid foundation, a fiscal foundation for supporting vital services and providing opportunities for economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans already realize what the balance of the nation is just finding out. Government spending sprees mean big deficits, heavy debt loads that transfer into higher taxes, and higher taxes mean fewer jobs 10 times out of 10. I know that our co-ordinated approach to economic renewal is working. Our trust in Manitobans has been well founded.

The Conference Board of Canada is forecasting our real GDP will increase by 3.2 percent, ranking us in the top three nationally. Stats Canada says that Manitoba is expected to have the greatest increase of capital investment of any province, public and private capital investment.

Believing in ourselves and our ability to accomplish and excel has always been part of the Manitoba identity. We have succeeded against all odds throughout history, and we are not a society of quitters. We just ask the members of the opposition, Liberals and New Democrats, to come to the table with positive views, to join in with Manitobans and to work towards a brighter and more successful future.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. In accordance with Rule 23(5), I am interrupting proceedings to put the question on the subamendment to the House.

The question before the House is the subamendment moved by the honourable Leader of the second opposition party (Mrs. Carstairs) to the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer).

THAT the amendment be amended by adding thereto the following words:

And further regrets that:

- (a) this government has failed to adequately invest in education and training as witnessed by the cuts to Keewatin Community College and the cuts to Education and Training Assistance and its failure to restore the drastic cuts the community colleges received in 1991; and
- (b) this government has failed to address the employment needs of many Manitobans by reducing funding for special employment programs including youth programs,

employability enhancement and the Human Resource Opportunity Program; and

- (c) this government has failed to live up to its commitments to the most vulnerable in society by granting below inflationary increases to 55 Plus and CRISP; and
- (d) this government has failed to provide capital stimulation by cutting highways maintenance and by providing below inflation increases to highway capital projects; and
- (e) this government has failed in its commitment to promote sustainable development by cutting funding to the Clean Environment Commission, making further cuts to forestry and silviculture and by eliminating energy conservation programs in the Department of Energy and Mines; and
- (f) his government has failed to provide adequate resources for community health development with its cuts to external agencies under healthy public policy programming; and
- (g) this government continues to obfuscate the government's financial statements with its continued use of the Fiscal Stabilization Plan.

All those in favour of the proposed subamendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Alcock, Ashton, Barrett, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Gaudry, Harper, Hickes, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylycia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Nays

Connery, Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, Manness, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Neufeld, Orchard, Penner, Praznik, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas 26, Nays 29.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the subamendment lost.

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is the amendment moved by the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) to the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government.

THAT the motion be amended by deleting all the words after "House" and substituting the following:

Regrets that:

- (a) by the government's own projections, economic growth in Manitoba will be below the national average; and
- (b) this below average economic performance will lead to continued unacceptable high unemployment, increased numbers of Manitobans on social assistance, more and more discouraged workers leaving the labour force and further reductions in our province's services for people; and
- (c) this government refuses to take action to fight the effects of the worst recession since the Great Depression.

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

All those in favour of the proposed amendment will please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Alcock, Ashton, Barrett, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Gaudry, Harper, Hickes, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway, Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie, Wasylycia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Nays

Connery, Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, Manness, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Neufeld, Orchard, Penner, Praznik, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey.

Mr. Clerk: Yeas 26, Nays 29.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion lost.

* (1210)

Mr. Speaker: The question before the House is the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

All those in favour of the proposed motion will please say yea. All those opposed will please say nay. In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Ashton: Yeas and Nays.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the members.

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas

Connery, Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, Manness, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Mitchelson, Neufeld, Orchard, Penner, Praznik, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey.

Nays

Alcock, Ashton, Barrett, Carstairs, Cerilli, Cheema, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Gaudry,

Harper, Hickes, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Maloway,
Martindale, Plohman, Reid, Santos, Storie,
Wasylycia-Leis, Wowchuk.

Mr. Clerk: Yeas 29, Nays 26.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

Is it the will of the House to call it 12:30? The hour
being 12:30 p.m., this House is now adjourned and
stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Monday.

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Friday, March 20, 1992

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