



Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
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, Clif	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
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALLOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	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
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, May 6, 1994

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee of Supply

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairperson of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Mr. Leonard Evans (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the First Report of the Committee on Public Accounts.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts presents the following as its First Report.

Your committee met on Thursday, May 5, 1994, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider the Provincial Auditor's report for the year ended March 31, 1993, and Volumes 1, 2 and 3 of the Public Accounts for the year ended March 31, 1993.

At that meeting your committee agreed, by unanimous consent, to also consider Volume 3 of the March 31, 1991, Public Accounts.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

Also at that meeting your committee adopted the following motion:

THAT the Standing Committee on Public Accounts recommends to the government House leader that the committee be scheduled to sit on several

occasions, if required, in the future to continue consideration of the 1993 Public Accounts and the 1993 Provincial Auditor's report; and

the committee further recommends that the 1992 Public Accounts and the 1992 Provincial Auditor's report also be referred to the Public Accounts Committee for its consideration.

Your committee received all information desired by any member from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), staff from the Department of Finance and Ms. Carol Bellringer, Provincial Auditor. Information was provided with respect to the receipts, expenditures and other matters pertaining to the business of the province.

Your committee has considered Volume 3 of the March 31, 1991, Public Accounts and has adopted the same as presented.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

* (1005)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review, Department of Education and Training, 1994-95.

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 Sir William Osler School 60 English Language students under the direction of Ms. Sherna Posner and Ms. Mary Jean Davis. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs).

Also this morning, from the Winnipeg Education Centre and other ACCESS programs, we have 60 students under the direction of Ms. Kim Clare. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Doer).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

ACCESS Programs Funding

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we have been raising questions about the ACCESS program for the last number of years. We have unfortunately seen a decrease in funding support from the federal government in the early '90s. In the last two budgets, we have seen a decrease of 11 percent and now 20 percent in terms of the provincial support for ACCESS in the province of Manitoba.

When I asked the Premier (Mr. Filmon) this question in 1990 about ACCESS, the Premier said to us in this Chamber: We have publicly argued for the case for BUNTEP and ACCESS for these kinds of human resource development programs within our Education and Training programs which we believe are absolutely essential for training aboriginal people and disadvantaged people.

Mr. Speaker, we would like to know, if this was the commitment of the government in 1990, why have they cut some 20 percent from ACCESS programs, and what impact will it have on the enrollment for people who need these courses to be trained as social workers, teachers, and other professionals in our communities?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the question has been posed, I believe, shortly after the tabling of the Estimates.

As I replied to a similar question at that time, I indicated that there would be no impact on intakes for the '94-95 year but that we would be calling upon those who were chosen to be part of this program to support part of their educational costs

by way of loan, no differently than the 40,000 other people within post-secondary education throughout the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we already know the difficult financial circumstances many students who are enrolled in this program and have been enrolled in this program feel, and the disadvantaged—as the Premier already indicated in his answer in 1990, he described many of these students as disadvantaged, and he also described the success of this program in getting jobs and training opportunities for people in this program.

Since the government has reduced their budget, we have seen the enrollment in ACCESS go down from 928 to 714, according to the Supplementary Estimates for '93-94.

Mr. Speaker, the government has studies. It has the Coopers and Lybrand study of 1990. It has further studies that I believe it has in its possession they have not released.

We would like to know why the ACCESS programs themselves do not even know the guidelines when they are dealing with intake as early as next Monday.

Why has there been no communication at all about the impact of the government cuts and what this will mean for intake of students that vitally need this program and need these services in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Manness: Again, Mr. Speaker, maybe the Leader of the Opposition did not hear my response. I indicated at that time, there would be no impact on intake. There will certainly though be an impact on those who are in the program now, and they will be expected, in their next year, to garner some of the support for the program by way of loan.

I point out, Mr. Speaker, that the average nonrepayable loan in academic support received by a student in 1993-94, the year we are completing right now, was approximately \$12,000. I am saying that given that virtually all of the graduates in this program are finding employment upon graduation, certainly society should expect that they are being treated equivalent to and fairly with all the other 40,000 within the post-secondary education, who on

leaving schooling have some degree of indebtedness.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, what we see from this government in terms of priorities is grants for Bob Kozminski and cutbacks to the kids that need it the most. We have gone, in the last three years, from zero to \$13 million in terms of corporate training grants and corporate training tax allowances. At the same time, we have reduced the spending and priorities for people that need the investment the most. The people that need this training and the success of this training has been demonstrated year after year, report after report, and all we get from this government is cutback after cutback after cutback.

Given the fact that 30 percent of the students in this program are single parents, single moms, and this allegedly is the priority for the members opposite, or certainly it is the words from members opposite, why would the government cut back support and investment for single parents and single moms who get training and careers with dignity out of this program, Mr. Speaker, at the same time they are giving these extra \$13 million of grants to corporations for training?

* (1010)

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I will not at this point talk about how it is the unemployment rate in the province of Manitoba is improving, and I will not talk about the Ontario budget which certainly made significant changes in keeping with many of the supports to businesses that are reflected, which the member across the way voted against and criticizes today.

I will say to him that the government of Manitoba is directing almost \$9.5 million into ACCESS. Roughly 39 percent of that total goes to the students and the academic support. A total of \$5.7 million of that goes to institutional costs, salaries and administration within the facilities which are providing that service.

All we are trying to do is develop a sense of fairness and equity across all of the support within post-secondary education. I will gladly share, during Estimates review, some of the salient points

that have come forward from the outside review with respect to the ACCESS programs.

Chief Medical Examiner Investigation/Review

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, sadly today there is another cloud over the administration of justice in this province, this time involving the office of the chief—[interjection]

Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious matter, and I hope the members opposite pay close attention to this issue. There is this cloud over the administration of justice, this time involving the office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

The Chief Medical Examiner has publicly admitted that he has presigned autopsy reports, and thereby he seriously breached his mandatory duty to review investigation or autopsy reports and in particular has failed to determine whether inquests ought to be held. This appears to go to the heart of the Chief Medical Examiner's role in Manitoba to provide answers to unexplained or suspicious deaths.

My question to the minister is: When did the minister or the department first come to hear of the Chief Medical Examiner's actions?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, there is currently an arbitration hearing in process now, and during the course of that particular hearing certain allegations have been made. I have asked my department for a full report on the allegations at this time.

Mr. Mackintosh: My supplementary is: I would like to know what investigations or review the minister or the department has conducted of the office of the Chief Medical Examiner over the last four years?

Mrs. Vodrey: We will have the opportunity to discuss issues relating to the office of the Chief Medical Examiner in the Estimates process.

However, I have explained to the member and I am sure he would like to respect a process that is currently ongoing, an arbitration hearing. He would not wish to upset the due process on behalf

of the people of Manitoba or even come close to that.

I have assured the member, in relation to these allegations which have been revealed during the course of an arbitration hearing at the moment, that I have asked for a full report on that matter.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, the apparent answer is that there has been no investigation or review of procedures at the office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

I ask the minister to now look at the records and see what has been done. I further ask the minister, given that this matter may well have grave consequences for many families and the general public in Manitoba, will she, at the earliest opportunity, order that an independent inquiry be made into the Chief Medical Examiner's actions?

* (1015)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me say that I did not at any time say that nothing had been done. I told the member, however, that question is a question which he might like to ask about in Estimates. He has already jumped to an end-point conclusion. He has not allowed my department to look into these allegations which have occurred during the process of another hearing.

The member has very frequently wanted to avoid due process, Mr. Speaker. I have assured him that I have asked for a full report, but we will be respecting due process on the way.

Hazardous Waste Treatment Plant Development Plan

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, many members will recall, it goes back I believe approximately a decade, an initial report by the Clean Environment Commission recommending the establishment of a Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation.

My question this morning is for the Minister of Environment.

We have received some news from the minister that \$250,000 has been placed in an escrow account by, I assume, Industrial Ecology Incorporated to begin construction finally on the

overall plan that was initially put forward and has been worked on over a decade. That has resulted in \$17.5 million of public money going into that process.

Can the minister indicate where this deal goes now and what the timetable is for completion and finalization of a development plan so that we can finally get on with constructing the originally intended facility?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I take some significant umbrage at the phrase "finally" and "getting on with." In fact, Manitoba has gone through a siting process that is now being cited virtually around the industrial world as one of the best and most acceptable methods of finding an appropriately located area for a hazardous waste treatment facility in conjunction and in co-operation with the local community.

Yes, we have now entered into a two-month period in which we will finalize the operating agreement and the construction plans and the company will give us definite assurances of their funding, and then we will proceed.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, the minister indicates a two-month period now in which they are going to be attempting to finalize that development plan.

Government Funding

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Can the minister indicate what the potential job creation for this project will be in that region and whether or not there will be additional funds given to this company in addition to, or is it a straight sale of 50 percent of the asset, or are there other funds which are going from the provincial government, new funds, to the project?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, this is a particularly important period that we are entering into, and I do not want to say anything, nor I am sure would the Leader of the Second Opposition want to say anything that would in any way jeopardize the opportunity for both the corporation and its potential investor to take umbrage at positions that we might inadvertently put on the record.

But let me say this, as he correctly pointed out, over a period of 10 years or eight and a half years, the Province of Manitoba has invested some \$17.5 million, mostly in searching out a site, Mr. Speaker. The broad understanding is that the potential partner will build and operate the facility without any additional monies being put in from the Province of Manitoba, and I think that is a very good premise and one that I hope he applauds.

Mr. Edwards: I think we will all be happy to see this thing built. I said that at the outset, I say it again, and frankly the sooner the better, Mr. Speaker.

Controlling Interest

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): My final question for the minister: The minister did indicate on the record earlier in April that the idea was to sell, I believe, 50 percent interest. Is the government looking to sell controlling interest? Will the government, the Province of Manitoba, remain in controlling interest given our \$17.5-million investment thus far?

The second part of that, Mr. Speaker, is: If we are selling 50 percent to this particular company, is the idea to sell the remaining 50 percent? What is the government's overall intention in terms of public control of this facility, which was the original idea?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, we have made a very strong commitment to the community and to the taxpayers of this province that we will not renege on our commitment to be responsible for the construction and the operation of this facility. What we are seeking is a private sector partner who will perform those two responsibilities; nevertheless the Province of Manitoba will in perpetuity guarantee the environmental safety of the property. We will maintain our active and, I think, very proper 50 percent input into the operation of the corporation, but it will operate on a competitive basis.

Through the next 60 days we will develop the final tenets around an agreement that will make sure that we have the final say in terms of anything

that might be deemed to be inappropriate, but we do intend to make this corporation competitive so that the best price is guaranteed for the people of this province.

* (1020)

ACCESS Programs Current Student Status

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, since January, when budget planning began, the Minister of Education must have known that ACCESS programs would be cut yet again, this year by 20 percent after last year's cut of 11 percent. The minister knew that support programs would be cut and he knew that he was going to demand that students go to a loan program. Yet last week when I asked this question, he could not even tell us whether students already in the program, those in third and fourth year, looking to graduation, whether they would be grandfathered or whether they would require a loan as well.

So I am asking the minister again—he has had a week's notice now of this question—will he tell us whether the existing students in the program will be required to go to a loan?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the member for Wolseley is correct. A week ago I could not answer that question. Today I can.

The existing students will not be grandfathered. As are the conditions and always have been under the ACCESS program, the department has made it clear to institutions that aspects of the policy are subject to change and depend upon the availability of resources as a result of the budget process. Those guidelines have been in place since the beginning of time with respect to ACCESS.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that will indicate that those who are now within the existing program, to continue on, will be expected to take some share of the support required by way of loan.

Student Loans—Eligibility

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Would the minister make a public commitment today then, that all of these students, the most disadvantaged students in Manitoba that he is forcing to take loans, will be

make a commitment that they will in fact have access to a loan?—because it was clear last year that some students were not even eligible for loans.

Will every ACCESS student who needs a loan be eligible for a loan?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the member puts the question in a very direct definitive way. I would like to say, my understanding is the answer is yes, but I would like to check with the department and have an opportunity again to reflect on that answer. But my understanding is yes; every one of the students will be eligible for loan, but I point out again, the policy has been that ACCESS program students' financial support is subject to change upon provision of notice. That has been well known. That has always been well known and if commitments were made to ACCESS students for financial support for more than one budget year, it did not originate from the department.

I do not know what commitments have been made by the institutions, but certainly there has not been an understanding that the program could not change during the course by the department.

Workforce 2000 Justification

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, would the minister explain what principles of social justice there are in giving a grant of \$50,000 outright to IBM, of \$10,000 annual grants to Keystone Ford and to Budget Rent-A-Car, and telling the most disadvantaged and the poorest students in Manitoba that they must take a loan?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I will answer that question, but maybe the member for Wolseley can tell me what social justice there is in one Eliesen out in B.C. receiving \$195,000 in salary and a \$59,000 bonus for last year. Maybe the member can tell me what is the social justice with respect to that.

Mr. Speaker, the Workforce 2000 program has employed hundreds and hundreds of people—

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, a point of order to the Minister of Education, the Minister of Education knows full well that the B.C. government is not cutting the ACCESS program. This government is.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member does not have a point of order. That is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, they never had one. It was the Province of Manitoba that has an ACCESS program. We are practising social justice. We are the ones who are practising it and we are contributing \$10 million almost to the program this year.

Mr. Speaker, but the social justice, what the member wants certainly has something to do with all the 40,000 Manitobans who are involved in post-secondary education, the vast majority of them who have to call upon student indebtedness through student loan to support their studies.

All we are asking is anybody today who is taking post-secondary training that has virtually a guarantee of a job that they also have some level of indebtedness upon graduation.

* (1025)

ACCESS Programs Government Commitment

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, since Manitoba aboriginal people are starting a pilot project to dismantle Indian Affairs, can the minister explain why at this time he thinks that the ACCESS program which makes it possible for aboriginal people to become teachers, social workers, nurses, engineers, administrators and doctors is no longer important to this government?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, when we came to government, and again from recall, it seems to me that our share we inherited from the former government was around \$8 million, \$8.5 million that this government put in towards ACCESS. Today it is just under \$10 million.

The members do not have to tell us that it is not an important program to this government. We have maintained it. We have accepted and received some of the offloading from the federal government. We are putting \$9.6 million into it this year. We are maintaining the level of intake.

Mr. Speaker, we are doing our best to maintain the programs for the very principles that the member recites.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, prior to when the Minister of Education decided that it was more important to give tax dollars under Workforce 2000 and to firms with no accountability—and you can read today's paper to confirm that—than to continue support for the ACCESS program, how many ACCESS students did the minister talk to?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, the members opposite for a long time have been telling us that when we make these decisions they must be made on the basis of some rationale and some evaluations.

Mr. Speaker, these decisions were made, firstly, on social justice, as the essence of the question, realizing that there is a virtual guaranteed job for everybody that graduates; secondly, the evaluations that are in place, I will attempt to share certain aspects of them, indeed, maybe all of them with the members opposite during Estimates debate, and at that time, I know members will accept the fact that this government has gone beyond in providing almost \$10 million in support of this worthy program.

Workforce 2000 Aboriginal Training Programs

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, since 75 percent of the ACCESS students are aboriginals, I want to ask the minister what percentage of the Workforce 2000 grants go towards training aboriginal people.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Well, Mr. Speaker, that is one thing about this government, it tends not to want to target all its training. Every Manitoban is treated as an equal.

Mr. Speaker, when companies come forward and present training programs that are worthy of support under the Workforce 2000 plan, we do not ask the questions, are you going to train this many people who are of Anglo-Saxon background, this many people of Jewish background? We do not ask those questions. We say if it is a good program worthy of support, reaching out to all Manitobans, that is—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the minister is contradicting the Premier (Mr. Filmon), who stated in 1990 that this program was essential for aboriginal people and disadvantaged people. So let him not—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. That is clearly a dispute over the facts.

ACCESS Programs Goals/Objectives

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education today has said that he wants all Manitobans and all students to be treated equally.

Can the minister tell us then why he is going against his own description of ACCESS programs, which specifically redress the systemic barriers and allow students who face these barriers to have opportunities? Can the minister tell us why he is going against the ACCESS programs which specifically state that these individuals are disadvantaged in terms of social and geographic and, specifically, financial difficulties and that is why we have this program in place? Why is he going against the very nature of his own department's program?

* (1030)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, we are not going against it. We are directing almost \$10 million in support of those lofty goals and those objectives—\$10 million. That is an awful lot of

money, and it is one of the few programs in government that is directed specifically to a disadvantaged group.

But the reality is, is it fair that those who are virtually guaranteed employment should upon graduation have no debt when 40,000 of our students in post-secondary education today, the vast majority of which upon graduation, without a guarantee of a job, have some level of indebtedness? Where is the fairness?

Ms. Gray: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary to the minister.

These individuals do have debt. If the minister would care to read—and I am prepared to table a number of testimonials of mostly women who are not only going to school, are supporting their families, are supporting oftentimes husbands who may be disabled, who take jobs in the summer to pay for debts that they accumulate because the money is still not adequate to pay the entire living allowance.

Can he indicate to this House how he can consider cutting ACCESS programs when, in fact, the very nature of the program is to redress systemic barriers for these individuals?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I accept all of the preamble of the question, and that is why the government today is putting almost \$10 million in support of that program.

Meeting Request

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is to the minister.

If he is not prepared to listen to the opposition in terms of the importance of this program, is he at least prepared to sit down with the ACCESS students, the ones who are here today, and listen to what they have to say and have an open mind? Is he at least prepared to do that?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to engage in debate with the members opposite. I think if I had to make a public statement today to those ACCESS students it would be no different than what I have just made in this House. The decision has been made on fairness. [interjection]

Well, the members are saying, throw more money, restore it. That is what they are saying. I am saying, the reality is that there are tough decisions that have been made with respect to the budget within Education. We sense that the program has worked extremely well. It has fostered the development of a program, and indeed it has reached out to those who are disadvantaged, but nothing is carved in stone forever. Changes will have to be made, and changes are made in this budget.

Employment Creation Strategy Status Report

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

The principal role of government, I think for my constituents at least, is that they try to create jobs in an environment where jobs are available to all Manitobans and not necessarily, as the opposition would have us believe certainly this morning and most days, cater to special interest groups.

I would ask the Premier, because that is our major concern, if he could give us an update on how we are doing in this province in terms of job creation.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for Portage la Prairie for bringing an excellent question to the Legislature.

I am surprised that members opposite, who like to spread doom and gloom and always are talking negatively, would not stand up and ask a question about the employment figures that were released just this morning, because they are good news for many Manitobans.

Indeed, this month's figures indicate that there has been an increase of employed people, working people in Manitoba, of 7,000 over last month. That is a 1.4 percent increase in the number of employed people, which was the second largest gain in the country.

In addition to that, of course, the workforce number has increased by 7,000, giving an indication of the sense of optimism that is there. Many people who had, perhaps, been uncertain about job futures and had taken themselves off the work rolls are now putting themselves back into

the workforce. That is very positive; that is also a very large gain in terms of the increase in the workforce. In fact, Manitoba's increase in the workforce was double the increase of the national rate of all of Canada.

So those are all very positive things. I know that the member for Portage will want to have that information because it is important to his constituents, and I hope that all members would appreciate that this is a positive sign of the improvement in the economy, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Pallister: A supplementary question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker.

I know, despite the heckling opposite, the members there share in their heart of hearts the satisfaction we all feel that 7,000 Manitobans are employed—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, as you have pointed out to us many times, a supplementary question does not require a preamble. If the Premier's staff cannot write the questions to be in order, the Premier's staff should not have a backbencher ask the question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does have a point, but the honourable member will put his question now, I can see that.

* * *

Mr. Pallister: I will be happy to table the questions. They are in my handwriting and everything.

I would like the Premier, for the benefit of all members of this House, despite the horseplay, to share with us the other provinces' performance, specifically western Canadian provinces, for the benefit of the House, please.

Mr. Filmon: I assume that was not a trick question, Mr. Speaker, and I am not certain that they have a heart of hearts over there. When it comes to employment and jobs and improvement in the economy, I am sure they do not.

I think it is interesting to note that Manitoba's unemployment rate improved yet again for the

third month in a row. Our unemployment rate went down, while all the other western provinces went up. We have now improved to the third best in the country in terms of unemployment rate.

I think that these are all very positive signs, and I believe that members opposite ought to be more concerned and more interested in this, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Pallister: Mr. Speaker, very quickly, I just would like the Premier to outline, what specific plans does this government have to continue this positive trend in this province?

Mr. Filmon: I am sure that all the members in the House would be interested to know that our youth unemployment rate is also down again for the third straight month. It is now the second lowest in the country. Manitoba's economy has produced some 10,000 additional jobs since the beginning of this year.

That, Mr. Speaker, is before any contracts have been issued in the Canada-Manitoba-municipal infrastructure program and before any of the house building that is expected to stimulate the economy takes place. So there are certainly some positive trends that all Manitobans should be pleased with.

Education System

Extracurricular Activities

Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Rossmere): I have a question for the Minister of Education.

Extracurricular activities are an important aspect of education in our public schools. Sports, music, drama, various clubs give students a sense of belonging and support their social and economic growth and reduce the dropout rate.

As a result of Bill 22 and other cutbacks which have placed more stress on teachers, teachers in River East School Division and other divisions such as Interlake, Mountain, Evergreen, St. Vital, and Transcona are beginning to withdraw their voluntary services which they have given for many years. What are you doing to promote and maintain extracurricular activities in our schools?

* (1040)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): This year we are directing almost

\$750 million in support of the public school system. Through that, Mr. Speaker, all the salaries of teachers, administrators and indeed all the support staff of the public school system have to be paid.

Bill 22 gave broad powers to school divisions to deal with their salary line. Indeed, many school divisions asked teachers to voluntarily reduce their wages. Had they done that, I do not think this question would have been asked.

But on the broader question of volunteering, I do not know if there is a member in this House who has not contributed greatly to their community by way of giving volunteer time. I do not know if there is a member in this House who has been paid for that. You either want to volunteer, or you do not. It is in your heart or it is in your soul, or it is not.

Violence Prevention Programs

Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Rossmere): As a result of the economic and social problems and the cutbacks that are manifesting themselves in the classroom today, students and teachers are facing violence and other forms of abuse.

Mr. Speaker, what is the government doing to deal with these problems in our schools so that our students will not be shortchanged?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, I was not prepared for the long preamble on the second question. I did not hear the question.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Rossmere, will you kindly repeat your question, sir?

Mr. Schellenberg: What is your government doing to deal with the problems in our schools so that our students will not get shortchanged—violence and abuse?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I am embarrassed for the member.

If the member is saying how is ed reform coming along so that we can challenge our students at a higher level, if the member is asking what we are trying to do to provide greater order in the classroom, if he is asking what we are trying to

do with respect to curriculum reform, I ask him just to hold still and over the course of the next number of weeks we will certainly present the framework for change that we think will deliver education at a higher level in this province.

U.S. Trade Commission Government Representation

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture.

As the minister has already indicated, there is an extremely important meeting coming up next week as the United States International Trade Commission makes its visit to Winnipeg to meet with industry officials. I know that the Minister of Agriculture has, I believe, corresponded with that commission asking for an opportunity to meet with them.

Can the Minister of Agriculture indicate whether or not he has had a favourable response to that, whether or not he, as our Agriculture minister for this province, will have a chance to meet with this very important commission that is coming they say on a fact-finding mission, but clearly is part of a very important process that we must ensure they understand that our practices are not in contravention of the free trade act?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party for that question.

It is correct. I faxed yesterday a request specifically to briefly address the commission that is appearing in our fair city on Monday. I might indicate to the honourable member and to all members of the House that they are here for only a very short period of time. Whether or not that opportunity will be given to me has not been transmitted back to me.

I am satisfied, however, Mr. Speaker, that all the major players, that is, the Canadian Wheat Board officials, the Manitoba Pool people, Mr. Charlie Swanson, the Grain Commission people, that they, in that short period that they are here, will be hearing the best possible expert advice on the grains industry that we have to offer here in Winnipeg.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I would ask, by way of supplementary to the same minister, given that it is not clear yet whether or not he will have an opportunity to personally meet with this commission, has the Minister of Agriculture sat down with the industry officials that they will be meeting with to ensure they at least understand the province's position and that there is a consistent voice and that the minister, perhaps through them, will have an opportunity to make sure that all the points he wants to make on behalf of the farmers in this province are indeed made to that commission?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, with the greatest respect to the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party, and I do think and I am complimented with the remarks directed at me, but quite frankly it would be presumptuous of this little Minister of Agriculture to feel that the senior officials representing the Canadian Wheat Board—and the Canadian Wheat Board headquartered here in Winnipeg, after all, speaks for all Canadian grain producers right across this country.

We have the privilege of having the grain commissioners located here in Manitoba. Certainly I have the greatest respect for the people who represent our major grain co-operatives, Manitoba Pool, United Grain Growers, that these gentlemen are extremely capable and confident in representing the interests of the Canadian grain growers.

Mr. Edwards: No question, but in addition, I do note that a few weeks ago the minister was not quite on the same terms when speaking of the federal Agriculture minister and now they are back in favour with each other, which I am pleased about.

Mr. Speaker, my final question for the minister—no question that these people are competent and able to put those arguments forward.

As the minister who reports to this House on this very, very important shared jurisdictional area in this province, will the minister ensure that all of the committee that is meeting with this U.S. commission does in fact have his brief, the brief that he would have been presenting if he was given

the opportunity, to ensure that they understand our position from a provincial perspective, which is a unique perspective in this, before that meeting?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I made two suggestions to the committee that would have encompassed some of the suggestions that the Leader of the Liberal Party is making. I had suggested that perhaps I could host a modest reception at the place of meeting. They are here only for the one afternoon where I would have the opportunity of having the grain industry representatives present as well to meet directly with the commissioners.

However, I am advised that this commission treats its independent role very, very seriously and they do not go for too much socializing. They are in it to find some hard facts, and I am satisfied they will get the very best of facts from the people that they are calling upon to make presentations.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENT

Friends of Hebrew University Anniversary

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, might I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Kildonan have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I am certain that all members of the House will join me in congratulating and celebrating the fact that on May 12 the Friends of the Hebrew University will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary. In 1944, the Friends of the Hebrew University of Winnipeg began raising money for this institution which initially commenced in 1925—that is, the institution.

Since 1944, this group of people have raised many funds and contributed very directly to the assistance and development of this institution in Israel and indirectly, of course, helped both Canada and Israel directly in terms of the students who are educated there who come back and provide a very interesting and a very useful perspective and assistance to our country.

I am sure all members of the House will join in congratulating the Jewish community and, in particular, the Friends of the Hebrew University who are celebrating their 50th Anniversary on May 12. Thank you.

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): I move, seconded by the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar); Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie); Thompson (Mr. Ashton) for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) for Thursday, May 12 at 10 a.m. [agreed]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, as previously agreed, with leave we will set aside the normal business of today in order to deal with motions of condolences for former members of the Legislature who have passed away.

Motion of Condolence

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey),

THAT this House convey to the family of the late Gerrie Hammond, who served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation of her devotion to duty and a useful life of active community and public service, and that Mr. Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

Motion presented.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak today about our friend Gerrie Hammond, I know that I certainly feel a sense of my own mortality as someone who was in this Legislature prior to Gerrie's election, who served with her throughout her period of time in this Legislature, that sense of continuity and a sense of how life's passages affect us all is certainly brought home. I know that will probably be a similar feeling for so many in this

House since many of us did serve with Gerrie here in this Legislature.

* (1050)

Gerrie Hammond was born in Winnipeg and, but for seven years in Brockville, Ontario and four years in Minnedosa, she lived and loved her life in Winnipeg. I know, from having met many of her friends and the people with whom she retained life-long friendships that they went all the way back to public school days in the west end of Winnipeg, high school at Daniel McIntyre, a bridge club that was a gathering of old friends who constantly got together and not only played bridge together but ultimately vacationed together and spent many happy family times together, that she really did love each and every day of her life here in Winnipeg and in Manitoba.

Gerrie was first elected to the Manitoba Legislature in the general election of 1981, after having served as a school board member in St. James-Assiniboia School Division for a number of years, and a very popular and very highly respected school board member she was. In 1981, she represented the new riding of Kirkfield Park and she was re-elected to that riding in both 1986 and 1988.

In 1988, I was very pleased to be able to appoint her as Chair of the Manitoba Women's Initiative, and this work allowed Gerrie to tour the province extensively to dialogue with women in order to facilitate better relationships with government and more appropriate government responses to their needs and concerns. Through this achievement, Gerrie assisted, I believe, in greatly improving the lives of many Manitoba women. In 1989, it was my privilege and a great pleasure to appoint Gerrie as Minister of Labour, Minister responsible for the Civil Service and Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

Following her decision not to run in the 1990 general election, Gerrie continued her community service as chair of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation. As a member of the Hay Commission, she continued her work to ensure fairness and equality in the Civil Service of Manitoba. On a party level, she was instrumental in establishing

the Inez Trueman Foundation to assist women in the political process.

Mr. Speaker, as long as I knew Gerrie, she was a fiercely partisan individual, very strongly dedicated to the principles and the beliefs and the fortunes of the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba. Yet I thought it was extremely significant that she made friends and very loyal supporters that went well beyond the political boundaries of the Progressive Conservative Party in Manitoba. One only needed to look around at the gathering that was there for her funeral to realize the many lives that she had touched on a nonpartisan basis as a result of her dedication to many initiatives, many causes in Manitoba, not the least of which was her absolute unfailing dedication to equality of opportunity for women in this province.

As someone who has a life's partner who is herself a very dedicated and capable, extremely committed individual, who is also a woman and a very generous and accomplished woman, Gerrie and I found ourselves, fortunately, on the same side of many issues, whether within our caucus, whether within our party or within cabinet on many discussions. I was privileged to be able to participate with her in achieving many of the goals that she set for herself in her dedication to these causes.

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

I know Gerrie's absolute desire to have women elevated to senior levels within government, and we always worked, all of us in caucus, with Gerrie's leadership in those areas to ensure that many talented and capable women were appointed to positions on boards and commissions. Gerrie was extremely proud of being able to appoint a number of people to senior levels as part of her leadership as a minister of government.

Her deputy minister, of course, Roberta Ellis-Grunfeld, Assistant Deputy Minister Doris Mae Oulton were people who rose to the challenge and justified Gerrie's confidence in them, and indeed, she was very proud of their accomplishments, probably, if anything, more

proud of their accomplishments than she was of her own.

Gerrie was a tremendous organizer. Whenever I went out to talk with potential candidates or new candidates for the party, I either took Gerrie with me or advised them to call Gerrie and find out what you do to set up a good political organization within your constituency.

Gerrie's political beliefs were so strong that she took them all the way through all levels of government. She would be as active at the federal level as she was at the municipal level or at the school board level in ensuring that there were good people running for office. Once having been identified, they became part of her family, part of her team, and she ensured that they would have every ounce of her energy and support. When Gerrie left the school board level, she saw to it that good people were there to take over and to run for office and literally hand-picked these people.

I do not think I would embarrass the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) if I said that she, because of her identification of his abilities and commitment, literally hand-picked him as her successor. That is the way Gerrie was. She felt that there should be no stone left unturned, no loose ends untied, and that was a part of the way in which she worked. She used to have her constituency association executive to regular lunches with her in the Legislature to ensure that they were plugged in on everything that was going on here, that they were familiar with issues, and that they knew as much as she could possibly impart to them about the work that was going on in this Legislature and in government.

My biggest regret in terms of my relationship with Gerrie was that she and I ended up being on opposite sides of the leadership campaign in which I was engaged in 1983. I would have dearly loved to have her as a supporter because of the fierce commitment and the tremendous energy that she brought to support any individual. But all of that was past, and as time went on and we had to deal with some very sensitive and very critical issues as part of caucus and part of cabinet, Gerrie's loyalty, commitment and support to the things that we were together trying to achieve made me forget

completely about that particular difference of opinion that we had because we were able to work together so well after that.

I had the opportunity and, I would say, a privilege to visit with her in her latter days, and the Minister of Finance was able to present her with a Canada 125 commemorative medal on behalf of the Governor-General. She was at home in a hospital bed that had been set up in her living room because she had chosen to end her days surrounded by family and close friends in that home setting, and she was there still almost sort of leading her circle of friends and colleagues, former colleagues, still in charge, despite her tremendously failing health, and still more or less leading the conversations and the activities that were taking place around her. It was a joy to behold, I can tell you that, to see her in her element still in charge of her own faculties and still the one who was bringing strength to her family and her friends despite her failing physical health.

* (1100)

In 1990 she was named Woman of the Year for public administration. In 1992, as I said, the Canada 125 medal was awarded to her on behalf of the Governor-General, in recognition of significant contribution to compatriots, community and to Canada. Gerrie, I might say, received the distinction of being the first Manitoban to receive that medal. The medals had just been announced and awards were announced, and because Gerrie had a very few days left, it was a special ceremony. I know that her family and all involved very much appreciated that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I know many here will want to share their own recollections and their own appreciation for Gerrie Hammond. I just say that, on behalf of all of my colleagues and certainly Janice and my family, I extend our deepest condolences to Bob, Sharon, Stephen and Daniel and their families as we remember, and remember fondly, Gerrie Hammond.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I want to, on behalf of our caucus, pass along our condolences to Gerrie's family, to her many friends and to her loyal supporters.

Madam Deputy Speaker, Gerrie Hammond and I entered this Chamber on the same day back in 1981. I was interested in listening to the First Minister's remarks, and obviously I did not know her in the personal way that the Premier did, but I was not surprised by the words he chose to describe her character. It is something I think that was obvious to all of us in this Chamber. He mentioned the words "fiercely partisan." Well, there was no one who was at the end of her questions or who listened to her debate who did not understand that Gerrie Hammond was fiercely partisan.

I had the impression, and the Premier confirmed it, that her partisanship did not just revolve around the Progressive Conservative Party, it revolved around a whole series of ideas, some of which were associated with the Progressive Conservative Party. The Premier's remarks that some debates that occurred in caucus where Gerrie and he were on the same side does not surprise me at all, because I know that Gerrie would be equally as partisan in caucus in defending her ideas and what she believed in.

Of course, one of the marks that she left on the province was in her role as the chair of Manitoba Women's Initiative, a role which we encouraged and supported because of its broad-based effort to look at a lot of issues. Gerrie carried that out with a lot of enthusiasm.

The Premier mentioned her dedication. She took seriously her task as chair. She visited—unlike many other efforts sometimes that governments from time to time initiate, Gerrie took the initiative to travel to all parts of the province. She did, never mind her partisanship, bring in people from all walks of life, from all political stripes. I know this personally from people who I have spoken to who attended meetings in northern Manitoba that she made the very real effort to communicate the idea, not the partisanship but the idea that she was talking about.

Madam Deputy Speaker, Gerrie Hammond leaves a legacy that most members in this Chamber would like to leave when they leave, and that is the idea that public service, the commitment to an idea, an ideal, the commitment to change.

Progressive, supportive change is a duty of all citizens. It is certainly a responsibility, an obligation and a duty of members of this Chamber, and Gerrie took that seriously.

Madam Deputy Speaker, Gerrie Hammond had a sense of humour. Sometimes that was not evident in her speeches because she was so partisan, but privately she certainly was. I recall conversations about Gerrie after we learned of her illness, particularly with the former member for Rossmere. I am sure that some members on the other side recall the partisan debates, perhaps, between the member for Rossmere and Gerrie Hammond.

I think, even speaking to the former member for Rossmere, that Gerrie Hammond won most of the time. I am not sure that the member for Rossmere ever admitted that, but I think that Gerrie Hammond was an intelligent, capable woman, committed to her ideals. She was prepared, as the Premier suggested, to fight and to commit time and energy and devote herself to those ideas.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I also know from speaking to members opposite and friends of Gerrie Hammond that she dealt with her own death with the kind of dignity most people would like to be able to summon up. I know that, again, from people to whom I have spoken. I have a remarkable feeling of respect and honour for people who can deal with that kind of a crisis and be concerned about others and deal with it in such a dignified and an honourable way.

Madam Deputy Speaker, Gerrie Hammond was an honourable member. We did not always agree, although it may surprise members to know that on some issues we did agree. Many of the women's issues that Gerrie talked about so passionately, we agreed with, I certainly agreed with. I think that her willingness to listen to others puts her a step above many others in our society who are not that prepared to listen to alternatives.

She was a remarkable woman and will be missed. Our condolences to her family and her friends and the people in Manitoba who became her friends and became loyal companions to her and supported her work and her ideas. I can think of two in particular, and the Premier mentioned them, Roberta Ellis and Doris Mae Oulton, who

were appointed by the previous government to their positions, the positions in her departments, and whom Gerrie became very supportive of and whom both became very supportive of Gerrie Hammond, and who were prepared to work with her because her commitment to ideals that they shared. That is also a testament to the character of the woman.

Madam Deputy Speaker, Gerrie Hammond will be missed by members on this side as well as, I am sure, by members opposite and by many loved ones.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (River Heights): Madam Deputy Speaker, when I came into this Chamber in 1986, there were three women in the second row. There was myself, Charlotte Oleson and Gerrie Hammond, and we were the only three women on this side of the Chamber in those days.

* (1110)

I remember observing Gerrie on the first day that she stood to ask a question, and her hands shook. It was clear to me that she was extremely nervous. I thought, well, perhaps it was the first question of the session and perhaps she would get over it. Well, I sat there with her for two whole sessions, and she always shook. It must have taken incredible energy from her to get up and ask that question. The questions were always thorough, well researched, completely written out so that she would not falter on a word or a statement, as were all of the speeches. I must say it fascinated me to watch the detail that went into any presentation that she made to this Chamber.

She had my admiration and respect because of the responsibility that she took to serving in this Chamber. Then she and I found ourselves on numerous platforms together. You know, when you wanted a group of speakers on women and politics, you would choose one from the NDP—and that tended to be a variety because they indeed had a variety of representatives. It was often Judy Wasylycia-Leis but often other people as well, and it would be either Charlotte or it would be Gerrie. Of course, because I was the lone Liberal, it was me, and we would find ourselves across the province giving speeches. The theme was always the same: how do you encourage

women to enter politics? There was no partisanship in the debate that took place at those particular sessions, and so I got to know Gerrie well in that session.

Then she served with four others of us in this Chamber on the Meech Lake Task Force for Manitoba. The Constitution was not something that, I do not think, Gerrie Hammond had given a lot of debate and discussion to before she was appointed to this particular session and committee. She certainly had not taken any courses in constitutional history or constitutional law, but again, she was determined to know and to understand everything that she possibly could about the issues in order for her to debate in a rational and reasonable way on this significant issue affecting Canada and this province's relationship with Canada. So that is what I remember most about Gerrie Hammond, was her dedication, her sense of responsibility, her willingness to serve.

I must also say that I always admired that she was so elegantly put together. I always remembered that there is always this sense that when you are a large woman, somehow or other you do not spend as much time on your personal appearance as others do, which is nonsense. Well, Gerrie Hammond put a lie to all that. She never entered this Chamber without being elegantly coiffed. Her hair, there was rarely a hair out of place, and beautifully dressed and groomed. I remember that about her because it was almost an example for other women to follow, both in this Chamber and outside of this Chamber.

Of course, she was fiercely partisan. It was not easy for her to run. It was not easy for her to stand in the Chamber. She obviously was here because she was fiercely partisan and dedicated, but there was not a touch of nastiness to Gerrie Hammond. Her positions were well taken, but there was no personal innuendo to any comments that she ever made about any individual.

Gerrie Hammond represented her constituency very well. She represented her party very well, and she represented women very well. For those who do not remember days in which there were few women—and there are still not very many of us.

Each woman who does this, I think, carries a special burden. I think the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) knows this, and I think the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh) knows this, that other women are judged by how we do our jobs. Perhaps it is not fair, but that is reality, and until there are as many of us as there are men in this particular function, then that will be the case.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Well, there is no young woman coming up in the ranks of politics today, no matter what political party, who can ever say that if Gerrie Hammond had done it better, it would be easier for me. They cannot say that, because Gerrie Hammond did it to the very best of her ability. She served this province, her constituency and her own sense of values very well. For that she will be missed, but she leaves a legacy, and her husband and her children are aware of that legacy. It will go on in the record books as service well given.

Thank you.

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

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, I join with my colleagues in being very proud to be able to say a few words about Gerrie Hammond. I certainly am extremely proud to have the opportunity to follow in her footsteps, serving the people of Kirkfield Park and indeed all of Manitoba.

I have known Gerrie and her family for many years, going back into the early '70s. Our families have shared many good times together, beyond politics, although politics has always been a key element of our relationship and our friendship and our good times. I had the good fortune of serving as Gerrie's campaign manager back in 1981. During that time, as the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has indicated, she was always encouraging people to get involved in politics.

She did just that with me and encouraged me to run for municipal politics, and I was fortunate to serve as a councillor in the area as a result of Gerrie's support. Then I was equally fortunate that she served as my campaign chairperson back in 1990 when we were successful in keeping the seat

in Kirkfield Park. So besides our friendship on a personal basis, politics has always been a key part and a source of enjoyment for both of us.

Many of her outstanding characteristics and qualities have already been touched on by speakers, but I think a few are always worth repeating. Gerrie's commitment to our community and to our province was really unmatched, Madam Deputy Speaker. Her continual hard work on behalf of each and every person that she represented, her ability to keep in touch with people on a day-to-day basis and the time and effort that she always took to do just that is something that all politicians, I think, should use as an excellent example of how to represent the people who elect you to any public office.

I think Gerrie's source of energy was always an amazement to me. She never ever, in terms of all of our dealings, was down or unwilling to take on a task or a challenge and had a level of energy that, again, I think many of us are envious of, that she would take on a challenge morning, noon or night, although I have to admit she preferred not the early mornings. But by and large, Gerrie's source of energy was certainly another asset of hers that was put to good use.

A side of Gerrie that always amazed me was her ability to draw commitments and volunteerism and input. Gerrie was one of those people whom you could not say no to. You might try to say no, but by the time Gerrie was through talking to you, you would certainly come on board or say yes or get convinced that you should get involved in this project, you should help out with this issue, you should take part in this process. She just had an absolutely incredible knack of, as I say, not being able to say no to.

Gerrie's pride and love for her family were obvious to anybody who knew her, her pride and love for Bob, her husband who was always very supportive in all of the endeavours that Gerrie took on. I would see it first-hand in different election campaigns. Bob would take on any task. If Gerrie needed somebody to do something during an election or at any other time of the year, Bob would drop whatever he had to do, and he would take on that task to support Gerrie, as was the case

with her three children, Sharon, Stephen and Dan, who, growing up, as we all know in this Chamber, in a political family, were always expected to do whatever needed to be done to be supportive.

They did it willingly, whether it was dropping flyers, participating in different events, participating at political rallies or social events. Gerrie's children were always willing and eager to participate and be a part of it. As a result, you would always see many of their friends and other young people, from certainly our area and throughout the province, participating as a result of Gerrie's very active family and the support that they always lent her.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) touched on Gerrie's political organizational skills, again, which were, in my opinion, unmatched by most people. I am the fortunate one to inherit the legacy that she has left in Kirkfield Park in terms of putting together a network of support and strong supporters who are there as a result of Gerrie's dedication and hard work.

Gerrie's home, again anybody who knew Gerrie, was in many respects always the campaign headquarters. You could go to Gerrie's at any time of the day, and she would willingly hold a gathering, hold a meeting, pull people together to talk about what needed to be done or what issues needed to be addressed or what was going on in the community. She did not hesitate to open up her home to everybody whom she represented and everybody that she knew.

The Premier, again, touched on her friends, her bridge group, her golf groups, the groups that she went on trips with, that they will all miss her as well. She had a very strong friendship with many people and her own unique relationship.

Gerrie Hammond was one of those people that we were all fortunate to know, that we are all better for knowing. Certainly, as has already been said, her contribution to the constituency and the people of Kirkfield Park and her contribution to the people of Manitoba is absolutely outstanding and this is a legacy that will remain, obviously, for many years to come.

I, too, want to conclude, Madam Deputy Speaker, by offering, which I had done before but again putting on the record, my own personal condolences on behalf of my family to Bob, to Sharon, Steven and Dan in the loss of their mother and a woman who, as I said, will be missed by many and made a very significant contribution to our province. Thank you.

* (1120)

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Madam Deputy Speaker, I, too, would like to join with members of this House in extending condolences to the family of the late Gerrie Hammond, former member for Kirkfield Park and Minister of Labour and Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission.

The first time I met Gerrie Hammond was in 1981 when I was Premier of the Manitoba Youth Parliament. As a new member of the Legislature, Gerrie came to watch our proceedings, sat in one of the galleries, and I remember her taking a keen interest in our work as youth parliamentarians. I got to meet her at that time and speak with her. Little did I ever think that some day I would sit in this Chamber with her as a member of caucus.

When I decided to take up the challenge to seek nomination in Lac du Bonnet constituency and run for office, Gerrie was one of those people who became somewhat of a mentor. She was very encouraging, always there to offer advice and, most importantly, I think, draw the best out of you so that you would take on the challenge that was before you and do the best that you could. She was so very encouraging.

As a new member in 1988, when you come into this place, particularly in the uncertainty of minority government, Gerrie, as our caucus chair, took myself and others who were new members at that time under her wing and again offered guidance, but most importantly encouragement. She always made you feel that you were an important part of the team, that you were needed, that you knew what you were talking about even if you did not and in her very firm but quiet and supportive way would steer you in the right direction and ensure that you did not get yourself into too much trouble.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

In 1990, when I had the honour of being appointed Minister of Labour and taking over the department that she had run before her retirement, she was again there to offer assistance, support and information in transition from one minister to another.

I know today that all of our staff in the Department of Labour and in the Civil Service Commission join with me in extending condolences to her family. She was an extremely well-respected minister, very close to her department of officials, and like myself and the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson), her successor in that constituency, and other members of this caucus, she too was very encouraging of the people in her department and worked with them to give them the opportunity to achieve their best. She will be missed by myself and by many in this House. She was a very noble, wonderful person. It is with great regret that she was taken from us just some time ago. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I want to join with other members in paying tribute to Gerrie Hammond and her life and her career and offering condolences on behalf of myself and my family and our caucus on her passing.

Mr. Speaker, I had met Gerrie Hammond before I was elected. I found her to be a very strong community activist, a very strong person in terms of her community roots and what she believed in.

I visited with her on a number of occasions on different social challenges and economic challenges we were dealing with, particularly as it affected women in our communities. I also had a chance to talk to her and listen to her on other political issues or public issues before I was in this Legislature. I recall the very, very strong debates on French language services and the Section 23 amendment and talking with her at the International Inn about some of my feelings about it. I did not agree with everything the government of the day was doing at the time, neither did Gerrie Hammond. I guess it would be no surprise to members here. We had a different solution to how we would deal with our disagreement.

It was really interesting to talk and listen to her and watch her participate, not just in a partisan way, but she was obviously involved with literally hundreds of people from her own community about what their concerns were. You could tell that she was a person with deep roots in the community. I know that other members have paid tribute to her sense of humour and her partisan loyalty.

I was always amazed by her family, because I knew her children were very strong community activists and very strong in social issues in the community. I was touched at the funeral when the eulogy that was so eloquently provided by her son touched on a story that I think all of us would find rather interesting.

She gave her kids placards to go to a rally and sat them in the front row. This was in Ontario, and I believe it was Stanfield who was running, of course, for the Conservative Prime Minister at the time. She gave her children these placards with Stanfield, but she did not tell them that they were at a Trudeau rally. So when they stood up in the front row, they were facing the PM himself with these Stanfield signs. I guess that would be pretty good training for any children in terms of a partisan—[interjection] Well, members opposite can laugh, but I think that it is a wonderful story about both a sense of humour and a partisan loyalty that I am sure has done her family well.

Her work with women and on behalf of women, I think, has been demonstrated and articulated by other members here. I just know that I did have chances to meet with her before she was in the Legislature and hear her strong commitment on women's equality and women's economic equality. If I can sum up what I believed her philosophy to be, it was similar to Simone de Beauvoir—I can read her but I cannot pronounce her name—where a statement was made some 95 years ago or 100 years ago that you cannot have sexual equality without economic justice. She was very strongly placed in those roots of having economic equality to eventually provide sexual equality in our society. I think those are the principles she worked on throughout her political career, through her chosen political party.

We also knew her, and I also knew her personally, in the Meech Lake Task Force committee. The member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) has talked about that. It was an interesting group of people, as you may well expect, chaired by Wally Fox-Decent. I was the sole member from the NDP, from our party. Jim Carr and the—[interjection] Well, I cannot comment on that.

But the member for River Heights and the former member for Crescentwood, along with the now Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), the former Minister of Justice and Gerrie Hammond and with, of course, the able job of Wally Fox-Decent and Kathy Brock. It was one thing to get all the presentations at the hearing, but the real key to that committee was how were we going to write a report and how were we going to agree.

I saw the strong positions that Gerrie Hammond took, because she often took on her own members on some of the issues of dealing with the Charter and women's rights. We saw quite clearly inside the room some of the debate that must have taken place from time to time in the caucus opposite. It was obviously at the end of the day we all reached a consensus on our report. We had a unanimous report. It became the report that the Premier utilized with the other parties during that more tumultuous period of time just prior to June 23, 1990.

I really enjoyed attending public hearings with her and debating the issues, and I always found her well prepared about her feelings. She did not worry about the constitutional technicalities. She worried about the people she represented and the principles she represented and, of course, that formed the basis of the recommendations we made.

I also had a lot of respect for her as a minister on the government benches. She was a very capable person, a very capable minister, well briefed and well prepared. She knew that questions could be asked in the House at any point, and she was very well prepared. We may have disagreed about the answers to the questions, but she always knew what she was talking about. She was well briefed and well informed of her portfolios and the challenges in her portfolios.

* (1130)

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) mentioned her strong roots in the community, the beneficiary of that in terms of his own political career. We know that she was a community activist. She raised her family to be involved in the community. She was a person that always worked with the community. I respected Gerrie Hammond, and I pay tribute to her contributions to our province and her contributions to her community. Her family was well served, and it is a sad day indeed when we pay tribute so early in her life to her passing. We again wish her family all our condolences and tribute for her career.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to stand and pay tribute to the memory of Gerrie Hammond and also to offer condolences to her family at this time.

I had come to know Gerrie Hammond. The reason so many of us stand at this point in time, Gerrie influenced many of us who may be a little bit younger from many different dimensions. I first had come to know Gerrie when I was a young president of a rural riding back in the early part of the '70s.

What members do not understand, even though this Conservative Party would seem, and outwardly may be, to be in the hands of strong male leaders, there was a time all the way through the '70s and '80s that the guidance over the party was very much in the hands of very strong women, and there were quite a number of them. I am talking the machinery of the party—very strong individuals. The Leader can talk about our Leader, and the former Leaders can talk about it.

So when young presidents came in who thought they were riding a wave or on top of the world, I mean, you got your learning quickly, but it was friendly. It was firm, but it was very, very much political. The cause was laid out to you in no uncertain terms, and your role. Of course, it is one of the things I remind those who are bent on jumping from party to party or more so the theory of starting new parties. You do not do it all of a sudden. You got to have these resources and these very strong people, and they got to be close

because that is the continuity from day to day to day.

Gerrie Hammond, I never had the courage to ask her whether we paid her or whether she was a volunteer during those times, but she was there and she was there always.

Certainly, as the Minister of Finance indicated, she brought an energy with her, but also indicated to those of us who were younger how important political process was and how important it was that if you wanted to get close to it you made a commitment and you made a strong commitment in honour of the process.

As it turned out we became a small group from our side in the class of '81. There was a larger group, unfortunately, on the other side of the House in '81, but we were one of four new members at that time.

Although the Premier has certainly cited all of Gerrie's accomplishments up to that point and since that point, I think it was always important to be mindful of the fact that nobody played harder in a political sense to win the day, and yet Gerrie was a democrat. She understood what having more as compared to having fewer votes at the end of the day meant, but nobody worked harder to deliver more votes.

This fiercely competitive and at times combative person—one who, of course, had been historically political steeped I am led to believe in the labour movement, tenacious in many of her responses and her views, but I dare say, Mr. Speaker, as has been mentioned many times, very strongly committed to a fairer society but one based upon greater wealth—she fully understood that to have a fairer society there has to be climate and there has to be in place the energies of those who are going to create the wealth, so it indeed can be taxed away and lead to a greater sharing and therefore more equality in society. She always made that known to us.

I guess another thing that I appreciated about Gerrie and has been mentioned previously is in caucus we know we are part of a society. All of us who belong to—however large the number is within our various groupings, whether it is few or

many, sometimes we are bolder to speak in groups of two and three than we are in groups of 20 or 30. That was not Gerrie. Gerrie in caucus said exactly what was on her mind without fear of favour, because of course that was the only way she could live with herself, she had to. She had to say it, she had to make her point of view known.

She left a legacy, certainly she left her mark everywhere she went, but yet her family—she had always convinced me her family and indeed her community, the same community that the Minister of Finance comes from, that community were No. 1, the associations, the friendships and the long-standing ties, again the family and the community were still No. 1.

I listened to the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs). She talked about the morale, research, commentary and presentations, and that is accurate. I think the world should know that if anybody walked into her office, they saw an incredible spectre of books and I dare say I will be kind and say untidiness. Yet she would make sport of that entitlement. She would be the first one to recognize it. I dare say it would be one of the few offices I have ever seen in government—and I know when she moved, she may have needed a moving van itself to take it from one place to the other. She just accumulated so much material. I would not say it was all perfectly filed because that was not the case.

Mr. Speaker, Gerrie Hammond was a person of the people, a grand person, a very strong person. We are a better society because of her being with us. On behalf of Cheryl, indeed, my family and constituents, I offer our deepest condolences to Bob and her children Sharon, Steve and Danny. Thank you.

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I want to join comments with my colleagues in the Legislature here and in particular with our colleague in the Liberal caucus, the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) who spoke earlier on this motion. I also know that there are a number of others who want to speak today, so I am going to keep my comments very short.

I simply want to stand today and on behalf of all of those members of our party, others who are in our caucus here who do not have a chance to speak but would want to and would want me to express their condolences to the family, as well as, the broader party in this province.

I want to just share one anecdote that I had with Gerrie Hammond. I did not know her for that long a period of time, only being elected first to this House in 1988, but I recall, I believe it was 1989 that there was a package of family law amendments that went through on a number of bills.

The member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) was the Minister of Justice at that time. I recall those meetings, and it was a very important issue for women's groups across the province. I will never forget being visited by a particularly vocal group from our party who wanted me and wanted our party to go obviously in favour of this legislation—which obviously we did at the time—and wanted us to very much see it from the women's perspective.

I recall at that time them mentioning their earlier discussions with Gerrie Hammond. It was clear that they had been in lengthy discussions with Gerrie Hammond in a nonpartisan sense on behalf of doing what they felt was right for women in this package of materials. I think that was my first indication that she, in fact, had gone beyond partisan politics on that issue. She was wanting to do what was right for women to improve their economic equality in our society and improve their rights as far as we can in legislation here.

So that was a signal to me that she did have a deep and abiding commitment, not just to the process, certainly to the party she represented, but indeed to service of the public. Her special role in this House, as I saw evidenced many days in the days that she served that I was also present, was clear that she was standing up for the economic equality of women, the social and legal equality of women and truly, I think, was a great source of inspiration to all of us and an important legacy to remember.

I join comments with the members who have spoken already. It is a great loss obviously to this

House, a great loss to the community of Kirkfield Park that she represented, to her own family most particularly, but I think also it is a loss to society at large that her life ended so early, and she was not able to continue her work which was significant.

Really I think the silver lining in all of this is that the legacy remains and will remain for many, many years to come. It will be worked out in the women who are coming up and who will serve in this Legislature in the future and who will understand and hopefully continue her very good work.

* (1140)

Our condolences to the family in particular at this time, Mr. Speaker, and again on behalf of the other members of our caucus who will not have time today to speak but would ask that I put their comments on the record as well. They join comments with mine. Thank you.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I want to join all members of the Legislative Assembly in the condolence motion to Gerrie Hammond.

Gerrie, very committed to family, to the province and to a country and to the party, taken far too early but knowing full well in the time that she was here gave it her best and contributed to the maximum with courage and determination.

My first opportunity to get to know Gerrie was as she worked as EA to Norma Price, or Norma Haney as she now is. Her ability to organize and to make sure that the proper things were done, I think, will always stand out in my mind. I will keep my comments short, but I do say genuinely that Gerrie Hammond was probably one of the best communicators that I knew. Maybe not because she was always on the phone, you had to have her phone you because you could never get her on the phone because she was always busy, but she was always keeping in touch and used the telephone to the maximum.

Those are the two things that stand out in my mind, Mr. Speaker, her ability to communicate and get her point across, and a person that can do that in today's society and in any society is effective and will be remembered. Of course, it has been

well said as to the particular areas of which Gerrie was committed and there is no question. The other one is in her ability to organize, whether it was a campaign or whatever cause that she put her mind to, and get the job done. That I admire in a person. This province, this country and community will be far better for it.

She was a champion for the causes which she put forward. I again compliment her and the work that she has done. So to Bob, Sharon, Steve and Dan, I would like to express the sympathy of Linda, Ryan and myself to them. I am sure they will miss her as we do.

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, I rise today as well to pay tribute to the life and work of Gerrie Hammond. When I was first elected in 1988, one of my first opportunities that I remember in having a long conversation with Gerrie Hammond was when we were both on our way to Thompson, Manitoba, along with the then-Minister of Northern Affairs and the MLA for Arthur-Virden. It was a conference on women's issues. She had very graciously invited me along to attend. So we had a long conversation on the flight up.

I know the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has referred to her today as being fiercely partisan. I prefer to call Gerrie fiercely loyal because in fact that was the one thing that I remember from our conversation going up to Thompson, was her fierce loyalty to a particular party, to a cause and to a set of ideals. For that I certainly admired her. I think that to the very end, she was loyal to causes. I give anyone credit for that.

I think it is important as well that she has represented women and has been for women someone who has taught women. It does not matter which political party you belong to or which political ideals you aspire to, but the important thing is to get involved and to try to make a difference.

I also remember that same fall the House had sat on July 21. It was getting near to December 25, Christmas Day. It was, I think, the week of the 20th of December; the House was still sitting. Gerrie and I had this inside joke going. When Question

Period would be over, we would go oftentimes and chat.

We had figured out that we were going to be sitting on Christmas Day. Of course, we used to say, now if we are going to be sitting on Christmas Day, it is going to be up to all the women in the Chamber to organize Christmas dinner, because not only are we here as elected representatives of our constituencies, but since a woman's work is never done, we have to organize Christmas dinner. So we used to have a joke about how we were going to cook the Christmas turkeys and all the different things that we were going to have to do. We really thought, up to about December 22, that we would be sitting on Christmas Day.

I remember that in fondness, in laughing with Gerrie about that, talking about basically women and not only sitting in the Legislature but how busy women were around Christmastime because usually we were the ones who spearheaded events that took place at Christmas.

I had the opportunity, when she was Minister for the Status of Women, to attend a number of the workshops when she had the women's commission that travelled across the province. Although I did not always agree with all aspects of that commission, it was certainly obvious to me that when I saw Gerrie operate in those workshops, she espoused the needs of women, and her goal was to really create a level playing field for all women in Manitoba.

She was well known by the women's community. More importantly, she was well respected within the women's community and within women's groups who had various political affiliations. She was able to span and to go beyond those political stripes, and certainly was very well respected in those communities.

The member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) spoke about Gerrie's dignity in death. I recall having a conversation with one of her, I would say, close friends, the MLA for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson), the minister who became the Status of Women. She, as well, spoke about Gerrie's dignity in the time of death and about her courage through all of that.

Certainly Gerrie leaves a legacy of her loyalty to a party and to a cause, her dedication to women's issues and, as well, and not any less, her devotion and her love of her family.

I think we would all hope that each of us here in this Chamber would be so honoured to be remembered as Gerrie Hammond is remembered and will continue to be remembered. That is as a politician whose main purpose was to create a better quality of life for all of the citizens.

Service and politics were synonymous with Gerrie Hammond.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Urban Affairs): I am pleased to rise today to share some thoughts about Gerrie Hammond and to express our sympathy to her husband and children.

Many people here have talked about Gerrie's fiercely partisan perspective and about the intensity with which she viewed issues, her dedication and her drive to accomplishing her goals. Those, indeed, are all very true and accurate comments.

Gerrie was the one who ran my first campaign for school board. It was mentioned earlier that Gerrie looked around and found people to succeed her, never leaving a vacuum in her wake. The Minister of Finance is here, I believe, not just because of his own desires to be here, but because he was actively wooed and solicited by Gerrie Hammond.

My campaign for school board was not one that I was expecting to enter, but when Gerrie retired, the opening was there. The next thing I knew my coffee table in the living room was covered with little cards and pieces of papers, and Gerrie was explaining to me how politics worked and how campaigns were run and spent night and day, night and day, throughout that campaign and taught me what to do in a campaign and then, of course, had me hooked. Thereafter, I worked forever on campaigns of Gerrie's, which were always incredibly well organized, and a very smooth and efficient machine of dedicated, hardworking, knowledgeable people.

I was not a member of the Tory party when I first ran for school board in 1980. That did not deter

Gerrie. She felt there was hope for me and did her evangelical proselytizing, and within two or three years, indeed I did join the Tory party. Gerrie was, as I say, fiercely partisan. Of all the things outside of her family that she was passionate about was the Tory party and the Tory philosophy which she believed in as deeply as anyone could say. I used the word "evangelical," and I feel that was the degree of passion she had for that philosophy, those beliefs and that party.

* (1150)

Despite that, I know that there was a moment when, in quiet conversation with Gerrie, Gerrie indicated that of all the things in the world that she had been given, her family was the very most important and that she would walk away in a split second from her party and politics and everything connected with it if her family's needs were there to take priority, that she would walk away from politics for her husband and her children. She had that kind of deep commitment to them. Her relationship with her husband was a wonderful thing to see because they had complete understanding and acceptance of each other as they were, and that was a very good thing.

Gerrie, of course, once she took someone under her wing, made sure that she followed through, so we had many, many long debates, some of them very heated. Sometimes we fought like tigers, Gerrie and I, over issues, but it was always gone the next day. We would sit down with a cup of very weak tea, because the tea that she made was barely coloured, but she liked it that way, and talk, or we would talk on the phone for what was going to be just five minutes, and two hours later, we would still be on the phone talking about all manner of issues. We never had light, casual conversations. It was always "hello" and into an intense issue immediately.

It was mentioned here earlier about Gerrie's organization and about the state of her office. For any of you who have had the unique and distinct privilege to peek into the den at 48 Trigwell when Gerrie was MLA, it was a sight to behold. I was over there one day, and we were going to go into the den to get something. She opened the door, and she said, no point going in there; there is no room

for us; it is too full of papers. It was true. She had a lot of material there, but she knew where everything was, and she knew how to use it.

It has been mentioned how Gerrie spent her last days. She came home, she accepted ultimately that her fate was such that she would not be in the world as long as she had hoped originally. She came home, and the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) was talking about how Gerrie enjoyed Christmas. Knowing that she would miss Christmas, because the time line was clear to Gerrie, they had Christmas in October at her home so those of us who spent a bit of time with her in those last few days enjoyed Christmas decorations and all of the things that went with Christmas in October at Gerrie's home.

I do not want to say much more, Mr. Speaker, because I think there are other people who want to put comments on the record. Those of us who knew and worked with Gerrie were given a great privilege and had a great example set for us. We miss her and extend our very best to her family and hope that the memories they have of her will brighten their lives for the rest of the time that they have here.

Thank you.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I am humbled and I am honoured to offer my condolences to my good friend Gerrie Hammond. My friendship with Gerrie went back some 15 years to my election in 1977 and Gerrie's service to the government through the Minister of Labour's office, through Norma Price's office.

Gerrie was a very good friend to myself personally but also a pretty good friend to all of us who were elected from rural Manitoba, because Gerrie had very strong mothering instincts, I think it is fair to say, and would take under her wing some of the rural MLAs who during the session would be in Winnipeg and away from their families, and I know Gerrie's home was always open.

On a number of occasions, I was there for a meal or a swim in the backyard during those hot summer days when some of the sessions would get

prolonged into July and August. I always appreciated that kind of genuine friendship that she extended not only to myself, but to Janie and to my children who Gerrie knew during the course of our association in the Legislature.

Gerrie was always very solid in her advice. You could always count on Gerrie advocating certain issues that were very near and dear to her. The women's issues were one of her main strengths in terms of bringing opinion to the caucus.

I have to say that as I looked over the two-candidate field in the last federal leadership for the federal Progressive Conservative Party, I have to say that Gerrie Hammond, in discussions I had with Gerrie, very much guided my decision to support Kim Campbell in that, because I know that that is where Gerrie would have been. We had been in a number of those kinds of campaigns in the past so I thought it was the right choice to make at the time, and I made it towards the end of that campaign as it progressed.

Gerrie was always very strong in her conviction, and that has been mentioned by a number today, and certainly willing and very, very able to defend those strongly held beliefs in any forum, whether it be public, whether it be this Legislature in terms of Question Period or speaking to various legislation, committee of the House or in our caucus room. I know we are not to share caucus secrets and I shall not, but Gerrie would very directly express herself to us in caucus, and her opinion, I know, was always, always very valuable.

The one thing that I was always amazed with and I guess why I have to say that we became such good friends, was that I was constantly amazed at Gerrie Hammond as an individual, the tremendous personal growth that she was constantly involved with and part of.

As a rural MLA when I came in 1977 and in sitting with Gerrie as an MLA in the caucus, Gerrie, with a lot of involvement in the city, was always constantly wanting to hear the latest development in rural political issues, the rural economy, small business issues in rural Manitoba, the agricultural community. She wanted to understand the driving factors behind what made people like myself and my colleagues from rural

Manitoba committed to the positions we put forward. Gerrie always wanted to learn more, to grow more in understanding. She wanted that kind of knowledge so that she could make those kinds of balanced judgments.

When I think of some of the reflections other members have made about trying to get a phone call through to her which was virtually impossible because the line was always busy, and the weak tea—I had forgotten about the weak tea. That was always a hallmark of sitting down and discussing an issue. You could not have a cup of coffee; it was always a very mild tea.

But Gerrie had a great hearty laugh—and maybe members who did not sit with Gerrie Hammond or engage as we have sometimes done in singsongs in this Legislature—tremendous hearty laugh and very, very much enjoyed the camaraderie that we from time to time would engage in in what we called our caucus choir. She was always right close to the piano during our Christmas singsongs at the Premier's house and really enjoyed having fun with friends in the political environment.

All of us have difficulty, I think, in visiting with a person and having discussions with a person when you know that their days are numbered and that they are not going to survive their illness. I have to confess, Mr. Speaker, that I do not have the ability to do that very well. I cannot think. I plan ahead and I try to think of what am I going to say because I do not know what you say to a person when they are in that kind of circumstance. It is probably the most difficult thing that I have to, from time to time, regrettably do.

* (1200)

I kind of braced myself up for two or three days to go to see Gerrie when she had the hospital bed set up in her home. I think the kindest hallmark of Gerrie Hammond was that she made conversation so easy. It was as if we were just having another one of our conversations, and that kind of remarkable talent to face adversity and imminent death with such a free and open ability to discuss the issues, to talk about the past, to talk about the future, even though she knew she was not going to part of that future, to talk about that and to sort of reminisce around where we had been and how

much we had accomplished together and how much more there was to do. It made the task that I do not enjoy and do not do very well exceedingly easy, and that was the hallmark of the person.

Gerrie worked exceptionally for her family and for her friends and for the party and for the province and really was a very instrumental person in the government that I have been most recently part of in terms of coming to grips with some very complex issues in terms of programming and policy and approach to program and services to women. Gerrie I think will be, as has been mentioned by many, many people, very, very significantly remembered for her commitment to that cause and her accomplishments in that regard.

I guess I have to say that Gerrie Hammond was probably a very, very fine example of a member of the Progressive Conservative Party, because Gerrie always had a very basic, common sense commitment to bring, with a great deal of compassion, solutions around causes that she believed were important to her, and there was not an ideological bent necessarily to those issues.

In fact, on a number of them, I suppose one could comment that it would not be traditional issues that are normally in this silly environment we get into of right, left and those sorts of labels that outside observers try to put on political parties and their individual members. Gerrie Hammond genuinely exemplified the kind of balance and approach to issues without ideological, but with a pragmatic desire to reach solutions that made sense and were doable.

I could say that my friendship with Gerrie Hammond led me to understand that her precedence and commitment was to Bob and the family first, to her friends second, to her colleagues thereafter in this Chamber and colleagues of all parties. It was not just partisan in terms of members of the governing caucus, and a tremendous commitment to her beliefs and a tremendous belief in the future of this province.

I can say no more than that I consider it an honour and a privilege for this country lad from rural Manitoba to have known Gerrie Hammond and to have learned from her and to be part of her family and to know Bob and to share in his grief

and to know Sharon, Steve and Dan and to have the privilege of considering Gerrie Hammond a friend of Janie and me.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to express my condolences to the family of Gerrie Hammond. I met Gerrie when I entered political life, so I knew her in the more recent years, and I was one of those people who benefited from Gerrie as a mentor. People this morning have spoken about Gerrie as a mentor and how she helped people who were moving into the political life and what the women who came behind her would gain from the work that she had done on our behalf and had done ahead of us.

I can tell you that when I first considered political life, Gerrie would provide quiet phone calls and encouragement to me, and she also understood the issue that I think many women in political life struggle with, and that is to find a balance between the needs of our families and the needs and demands of the work we are doing.

At the time I entered political life my three children were still in the elementary grades, and we had a very busy family life, and it was how do you look ahead to see how you manage all of those issues. I certainly appreciated the support of Gerrie and the discussions that I had with Gerrie, and the encouragement to say that, yes, it can be done.

When I was named to cabinet, that challenge was one in which I also appreciated the support of Gerrie Hammond. When I had that privilege of being named to cabinet, Gerrie Hammond phoned me, dropped in at my office to see me and made a great effort to let me know that there was someone there that I could speak with and someone there who could offer support. People have spoken this morning also about her smile and her laugh. I was really a beneficiary of that joyfulness, and it was often a great support and a great help to me to be with someone who was so ready with that smile and that laugh and could really encourage and make sure that your spirits were good.

I now have the privilege of being the Minister for the Status of Women, and I follow Gerrie

Hammond in that office, and our colleague Bonnie Mitchelson also held that office as well. I can tell you that Gerrie Hammond did set an incredible standard and example for ministers who hold the office of Minister for the Status of Women.

She is respected in the women's community today. People still speak of her with that respect, and she certainly worked hard, earned that respect and continually worked with people within that community. She set a standard and example of action and of interest within the community, which was a very genuine interest, and also a standard of commitment. Now it falls to those of us who follow her to strive to meet that standard.

On a personal note, I can say that I always enjoyed being with her. I enjoyed the talks that we had and the times that those occurred outside of the work that we do in government. I appreciate the service of her life, the support that she offered to many people, myself included, and my condolences and those of my family go to the family of Gerrie Hammond.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, it is an honour to rise to extend my thoughts and my condolences to Gerrie Hammond's family. As part of the class of '86, I was treated to sharing an office, as you were, Mr. Speaker, just along the hall from Gerrie, and she was a tough, committed, hard working MLA and made a point of making sure that her commitment rubbed off on the rest of us. We learned a lot. She taught us a lot, and in fact she made a point of teaching us, I think.

I would also say, however, that I came from the same school of bookkeeping as Gerrie did. There is much to be said about retaining all of that valuable information. You never know when it might be useful in a campaign or in correspondence, but you have to know just where to find it, and that was the secret that Gerrie never quite shared with me. Nevertheless, I was always able to find something that I could not locate if I went over and asked her.

Mr. Speaker, in extending my condolences to Gerrie's family, I want them to know that sharing their hospitality was very important. They always made us feel welcome, and we miss her.

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I am too pleased to be able to stand and offer my condolences to Gerrie Hammond's family, Bob and Sharon and Steve and Dan. My memory of Gerrie is one of fondness, and I often think about her as I sit in the Legislature here, the commitment that she had to her community but, first of all, her family, first and foremost.

Mr. Speaker, I think Gerrie Hammond had many passions, and we have spoken about them. Many of us think of those passions and have been spoken of very kindly this morning. I think that Gerrie's passion for her political party, her colleagues, her passion for serving her community and, first and foremost, I guess, are the issues of establishing quality. I saw in her something that you do not see in very many people. Her dedication when she made up her mind to serve in a particular area, how she was able to follow through with that.

* (1210)

I know my wife Jeannie would feel badly if I did not reference her involvement with Gerrie Hammond when she was asked to run and serve as a school trustee, and Gerrie Hammond was a very large part in that in terms of her organization, her determination and the skill in which she was able to carry that out and to provide assistance in all aspects of that campaign.

Although she did not work directly in my campaign, she certainly was there with the advice and talking to other people behind the scenes, and for that, I will be forever grateful to her. I think that Gerrie will be long remembered in this Chamber, and I cannot help but think that as we speak of her this morning, somehow I feel that Gerrie does hear what we are saying. She is up there, and she is hearing everything that we are saying because that is the type of person that Gerrie was. She is here with us, and she always will be. This was a real part of her life, and she will always be here. Her memory will live on forever.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is suitable that I should be speaking last on behalf of around our side of the House because my

association with Gerrie Hammond was not quite the love-in that many of my colleagues speak about.

We had parallel political careers for a period of time, Mr. Speaker, she on the school board representing the communities of Westwood and Crestview, and I as a member of City Council from that area, and that brought us from time to time into areas of conflict. We did not necessarily see eye to eye on certain issues and we did bump heads during those parallel political careers.

I am not sure if it was because I was a new Conservative at that time, having only seen the error of my ways previously and decided to become a member of the Conservative Party. I think that Gerrie was of the school that if you were not born one, you were not. Nonetheless, it was a very interesting time.

She was always extremely dedicated and steadfast in the way she dealt with her issues, and others have said that here this morning, that when we did bump heads I am not sure that any of us won, but I think she won more than anyone else.

She had an awesome capacity for organization, as others also have said this morning. I mean, there was not a time when Gerrie Hammond could not muster 100 people on a half an hour's notice out of her community, and that ability to organize and that network that she had throughout her electoral district was something to behold and, of course, managed to hold off those who would consider challenging her for a nomination, such as me.

Mr. Speaker, it did occur at one time that while we were on opposite sides, I might say, during the leadership campaign of our party in 1983, Gerrie fiercely worked for Brian Ransom and was very, very dedicated, and I at that time was supporting our current Premier, and we ran into organizational meetings from time to time, as anybody knows from a contested nomination for leadership how those things work inside a political party, but we did run head to head a few times, and there were not many, but each time that she did not succeed and I did, it caused no end of aggravation and pain, I am sure, in that household.

Others have said also, and when you speak last it is difficult to try and bring something new to the debate, but I wanted to say that she certainly was in the vanguard of women's issues in this province, and I think the bane of her existence were we, the men, of the Progressive Conservative caucus. She brought to the caucus, of course, the perspective of equality for women, of gender neutrality in terms of language, of political correctness which are all the buzz words today.

Mr. Speaker, at that time, she was at the vanguard with that particular issue, and I can remember, and my colleague the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) is chuckling—because what happened was there were a number of people, who only from our environment and the fact that we were brought up in a certain way and had followed certain career paths that did not perhaps bring us quite as far along in that process as we might have been or should have been, Gerrie Hammond decided that she was going to have gender-neutral classes. I can remember, Mr. Speaker, in Room 254 in the Legislature here, that Gerrie Hammond had organized the gender-neutral classes so that we could be exposed at least, if not educated, in the basics of gender neutrality and how to be politically correct.

Many of you know my colleagues, the former member for Rossmere, a number of others who were present in this Chamber from time to time were not always quite as open to change, not quite always as open to change as others, but I might say, and I was one of them, I can tell you over a period of 20 years in politics I have learned a great deal from an awful lot of people, but I will tell you that from Gerrie Hammond, I certainly learned a great deal with respect to women's issues and those areas surrounding that.

So, Mr. Speaker, she has left a legacy, certainly in my mind, and I think in the minds of a great many people as we have heard here this morning, and we wish her family our very best wishes.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to adopting the motion, I will ask everyone to rise for a moment of silence to reflect on the life of Gerrie Hammond, MLA. She

will be sadly missed and always remembered in this Assembly.

A moment of silence was observed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it 12:30?

House Business

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that because of the large number of people this morning who wished to speak to the condolence motion for Gerrie Hammond that other condolence motions which were to have been considered were not. I will attempt, along with other House leaders,

to try to arrange a more suitable time to continue with consideration of those motions.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, we will be considering the Estimates process once again following Question Period, and the Department of Education will be in the committee room.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable government House leader for that information.

Is it the will of the House to call it 12:30? [agreed]

The hour being 12:30 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Monday. Have a great weekend.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, May 6, 1994

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