

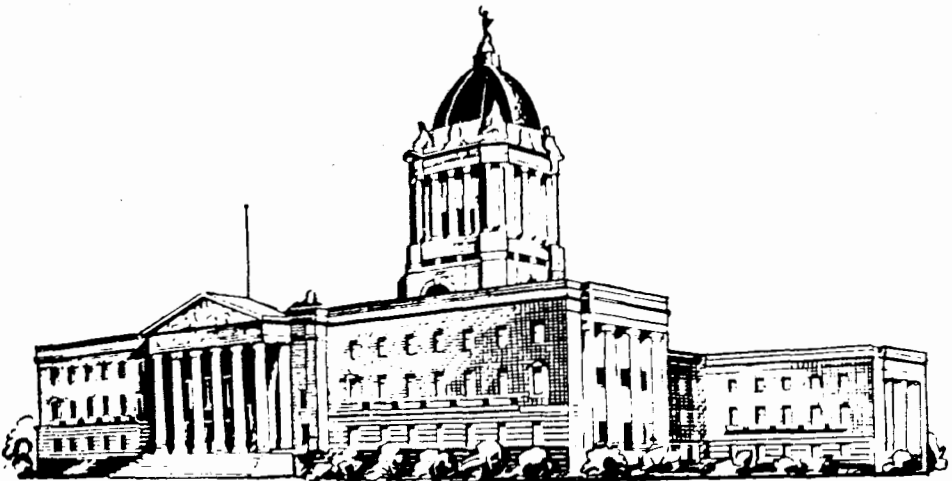


Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

Speaker

The Honourable Peter Fox



Vol. XXIII No. 1 2:30 p.m., Thursday, February 12th, 1976. Third Session, 30th Legislature.

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

2:30 p.m., Thursday, February 12, 1976

The Sergeant-at Arms, carrying the Mace in the crook of his arm, followed by the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly Mr. J. R. Reeves, and the Deputy Clerk, Mr. Andrué J. Anstett, entered the House.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

HONOURABLE WILLIAM JOHN McKEAG (Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Manitoba):

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Manitoba: I welcome you to the Third Session of the Thirtieth Legislature of the Province of Manitoba.

At this beginning to a session, amidst difficult economic times in our nation and throughout the world, the energy and ability of all Members will be challenged as they search for judicious and effective policies to cope with the complex problems of contemporary society.

My Ministers have informed me that despite national and international economic uncertainty the overall performance of the Manitoba economy in 1975 continued to reflect the strength and balance which have characterized it in recent years. Although preliminary statistics suggest that inflation accounted for a substantial proportion of the growth that did occur in Manitoba last year, just as it did throughout the entire nation, it appears that significant real gains were recorded in a number of sectors in our province.

My government will present a full report on the economic situation and outlook later in the session at the time of the presentation of its budgetary proposals for the fiscal period commencing April 1, 1976.

I am informed that stringent limits have been placed on increases in departmental expenditures and that these limits will be reflected clearly when the main estimates of current expenditures for next year are tabled for consideration by the Members of this Assembly. My Ministers assure me that they have invested long hours to ensure that every expenditure is in accordance with our policies and that the administration of expenditures is most efficiently managed. In implementing new programs my government is ever mindful of the dual requirements of restraint and the replacement of certain inadequacies of market forces by the planned application of human values.

My government has also announced its intent to attempt to co-operate with the Government of Canada in its anti-inflation program.

My Ministers remain concerned about certain aspects of the federal program, including the as yet undemonstrated effectiveness of the guidelines applicable to prices and corporate profits, and the apparent inequities in the treatment of professional and executive incomes in comparison to wage and salary income: they believe that rational restraints, if applied fairly, may have a significant ameliorative impact on Canada's serious national inflation problem. However, I am informed that if my Ministers are not satisfied that there is sufficient evidence, within a reasonable time period, of the program having a positive effect and of it being applied in an equitable manner, they will reconsider the Manitoba government's involvement in it.

My government advises me that a program of rational restraints must apply to all factors contributing to inflation if it is to have any probability of success. Therefore my government has informed me of its intent to do whatever is possible, through its participation in federal-provincial energy negotiations at the First Minister and Energy Ministers' level, to ensure that any increase in the price of crude oil and natural gas will be based on real cost increases, and that any additional revenues accruing will be used for Canadian energy resource-exploration and development.

If left to itself inflation will continue to create inequity in society. Those on fixed incomes, those earning low wages, those beginning a new life in the work force are no longer able to absorb increased prices for the basic essentials. Consequently, you will be asked to approve fair and equitable measures to reduce excessive increases in rents for shelter. By this measure, the burden of inflation will be lessened and the inequity of inflation adjusted by a process more rational and humane than the market place. Rent control alone, however, is not a solution to the high cost of accommodation. An expanded

(THRONE SPEECH cont'd) . . . housing supply is essential to ensuring some measure of price stability in the housing market.

Through the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, my government continues in its efforts to assist Manitobans who, because of low incomes, have been deprived of adequate shelter. My Ministers inform me that on the basis of the number of units for which funding has been committed and which are under construction, the corporation has achieved a record program of over 1,900 units in 1975. My Ministers also inform me that the government has every expectation of an even better year for public sector housing in 1976, providing that co-operation from municipal governments is forthcoming.

You will be asked to approve funds, for 1976-1977, to finance the largest program ever undertaken by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation.

My government will also seek financial authority to assist families of moderate income in providing themselves with housing at a reasonable cost through continuing housing co-operatives and sweat-equity programs.

Energy development remains a concern to my government.

In following my government's policy to reduce Manitoba's dependence on non-renewable fossil fuels, Manitoba Hydro's development of the Nelson River is proceeding as planned with the Missi Falls and Notigi control structures already in place. The Churchill River Diversion and the Lake Winnipeg Regulation both will become operational by autumn of this year. Furthermore, the systematic analysis of the implications of nuclear energy will be undertaken in 1976 with the commencement of environmental and location studies before any commitment is made to this form of energy in Manitoba. Concurrently, my government is urging the national co-ordination of research into yet other energy form alternatives, so as to avoid duplication of specialized research costs in this critical area.

Basic communications requirements of the province will continue to be met by the Manitoba Telephone System. During the next fiscal year, a program of service improvements for rural Manitoba and northern residents and the business community will be undertaken. Today's communications needs require much more sophisticated facilities and equipment in the local network. As one example of the Manitoba Telephone System's plans, local broadband network cable will be installed in Brandon, Portage la Prairie and Selkirk to pave the way for the introduction of a wide variety of services, as well as to provide facilities for the distribution of cable television signals.

Although gross cash receipts from farming operations reached a record high of \$888 million, rapidly increasing costs caused a decline from 1974 in net farm income. Average crop yields were at a satisfactory level but adverse weather conditions were the cause of serious losses to standing crops and harvested hay in 1975.

I am informed that indemnities paid by the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation will reach an estimated \$9.2 million on all-risk and hail insurance contracts. The recent decision by the Government of Canada to effect a virtual freeze on its contributions to crop insurance gives cause for serious concern in view of the rapidly increasing costs.

My government, in co-operation with the Government of Canada, instituted an emergency feed assistance program for livestock producers who had lost all or a substantial part of their feed supply.

For the second year in succession, beef producers, particularly the cow-calf operators, had to cope with very unsatisfactory prices which resulted in revenues far below their costs of production. The livelihood of many farm families was threatened, carrying with it the prospect of a decline in the prosperity of rural communities, and the liquidation of livestock herds. In the absence of an adequate federal program my government will continue to pursue its commitment to stability of farm prices and a fairer distribution of farm incomes. For these reasons my government launched the Manitoba Beef Producers' Income Assurance Plan in order to eliminate the price instability for participating producers and to provide them with the opportunity to obtain adequate returns for their efforts. A very large proportion of commercial beef producers are availing themselves of the new program.

In this session the Members will be presented with a report of the findings of the Commission of Inquiry into the marketing of livestock and meat products.

You will be asked to approve a new Pesticides and Fertilizers Control Act and amendments to The Animal Husbandry Act and The Farm Machinery Act.

(THRONE SPEECH cont'd)

You will be asked to consider an Act pertaining to the safety and health at work of persons employed in Manitoba. My Ministers are aware that during the last year four times more working days were lost through accidents at work than were lost through industrial strikes and lockouts. Therefore my Ministers are concerned with increasing the capacity of employers and employees to agree jointly on improving safety and health conditions in workplaces.

Review of Manitoba's labour legislation continued during the past year following invitations to interested parties to recommend improvements. The Legislature will be asked to consider amendments concerning employee and employer rights, the facilitation of certification of bargaining agents for employees, and measures to improve the collective bargaining process in the province.

In view of increases in the cost-of-living the level of the minimum wage will again be reviewed to determine possible adjustments.

You will be asked to consider amendments to The Workers Compensation Act to upgrade benefits and extend coverage.

Parts I and III of The Pension Benefits Act have been proclaimed. The Pension Commission has been established to administer the Act, to hear representations from the public and concerned parties, and to report on progress from time to time.

During 1976 my government will designate a major new provincial park in the area between the Whiteshell Provincial Park in the south, and the Manigotagan River to the north. A new scenic route will be developed connecting Highways 314 and 304 between Long Lake and Cat Lake. Ten major lakes which can support a wide range of recreation opportunities, plus many smaller lakes and streams, will be accessible to the public.

Improving the quality of life and increasing the opportunities and options available to residents of remote communities will continue to be a priority of my government. It is hoped that the responsibility in local government which Community Councils in the North now exhibit will be complemented by a response to economic development opportunities which my government proposes to identify and develop in close co-operation with northern residents.

The Department of Highways will continue with its program of expansion of the road network and upgrading many provincial trunk highways. My Ministers inform me that the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation continues to operate without the necessity of public subsidy.

My Ministers will continue their opposition to abandonment of railway branch lines, of rights of way and of rail passenger service, in recognition of the serious consequences such action would have on the producers' communities and the province.

My Ministers inform me that agreement has been reached between the City of Winnipeg, the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada to provide for participation by all three levels of government in a comprehensive review of the Greater Winnipeg Development Plan during the next two years. It is anticipated that this co-operative effort will lead to greater co-ordination programs in Winnipeg.

My Ministers inform me that a substantial program of renewal and revitalization of Winnipeg's central core area has been initiated by the province in consultation with the City of Winnipeg. Planning is proceeding in close co-operation with the city on a major construction program which includes senior citizens' residences, family housing and a number of provincial buildings.

With regards to education my government intends to place further emphasis on program supports for the classroom teacher, including more opportunities for teacher involvement in program development, greater emphasis on professional development activities at the school level and improved access to resource materials. Program supports for rural and remote areas will be extended with particular concern for small schools as well as developing and expanding inner city programs in urban divisions. Children with intellectual, physical and emotional handicaps will be assured appropriate educational programming in the regular classroom or as close to it as possible.

Funds will be included in the estimates for shared programs at the post-secondary level in order that limited enrolment or special programs can be offered by the western provinces on a co-operative basis.

(THRONE SPEECH cont'd)

Major progress in developing a province-wide home care program was achieved during 1975, and further development of this program is contemplated in 1976. Progress is being planned in further development of community mental health services; this will stress prevention and early treatment of mental health and emotional disorder problems in conjunction with other preventive service throughout the province.

The children's day care program launched during 1974-75 has experienced a considerable degree of growth; nevertheless further improvements in this service are required.

My Ministers tell me that 1976 will see the beginning of the Manitoba children's dental care program which has been under preparation for some time. This program will begin in the Interlake Region and in Flin Flon and part of the Parkland Region. It is anticipated that establishing the program will lead to improved techniques in the delivery of treatment and prevention services to children throughout their school systems as part of the public health service of the Province of Manitoba. It is further anticipated that expansion of the service to cover other parts of the province will be proceeded with over the next few years.

A study analyzing the utilization of health services in Winnipeg and the role of the Health Sciences Centre has been completed. This will assist my government in a planned, phased development of hospital services in metropolitan Winnipeg, including geriatric services, health and manpower education and bed distribution.

The development of human staff resources, rehabilitation and community re-entry will be the emphasis of corrections activities in 1976.

A bill will be introduced to establish the Manitoba Employment Opportunities Authority for the purpose of increasing the participation of Manitoba residents in the economic life of the province through special efforts in employment skills development relevant in the modern labour force.

Last year the Law Reform Commission circulated a working paper on family law for criticism and comment from the community. The final recommendations of the Law Reform Commission have now been received. It is my government's intention to place the legislation in that regard before you at the present session.

You will be asked to approve amendments to The County Courts Act to increase the jurisdiction of the court.

Proposals will be presented to the Legislature in order to revise and streamline the law for corporations in the province and to establish a practical balance of interest among shareholders, creditors, management and the public.

Amendments to The Trade Practices Inquiry Act will be introduced which will make the legislation a more effective instrument in examining price increases.

In accordance with the needs of the co-operative movement for adequate legislation, my Ministers inform me that a bill governing co-operatives will be introduced for the consideration of this Assembly.

Experience in our province in connection with environmental matters indicates that for the most part the division of legislative, executive, and quasi-judicial authority is well balanced within the provision of our present legislation.

Some concern has, however, arisen with respect to the authority by the Clean Environment Commission over publicly elected bodies, notably municipalities. In order to avoid any question on the responsibility of publicly elected bodies for their own action, it is intended to permit such bodies to accept full responsibility for environmental problems arising from their own actions within their jurisdiction, provided that such practices will not adversely affect any areas outside their jurisdictional boundaries.

Le gouvernement manitobain, dans le but de favoriser le programme relatif aux ressources historiques de la province, a proclamé la Loi du Patrimoine du Manitoba, en 1975. Les nominations aux postes prévus dans la loi seront effectuées au courant de cette année et un programme sera élaboré afin de hâter les mesures de conservation des édifices, des objets et des lieux qui ont une signification historique importante pour le Manitoba.

In keeping with Manitoba's leadership role in promoting a policy of multiculturalism, and in particular, with maintaining our heritage of languages, a new program of linguistic

(THRONE SPEECH cont'd) . . . support will be introduced. The needs for such a program were demonstrated in a very successful pilot project during 1975.

The plans and legislative proposals which I have outlined to you have been prepared by my Ministers in consideration of the interests of the people of Manitoba. The estimates of expenditure for the public service of the province for the next fiscal year as well as the Public Accounts for the last fiscal year will all be submitted for your consideration.

En vous quittant, je prie que la Divine Providence et un jugement éclairé vous guident dans vos délibérations.

May God Bless the Queen and our Country.

MR. SPEAKER: O Eternal and Almighty God from Whom all power and wisdom come; we are assembled here before Thee to frame such laws as may tend to the welfare and prosperity of our Province; grant O Merciful God, we pray Thee, that we may desire only that which is in accordance with Thy Will; that we may seek it with wisdom, know it with certainty and accomplish it perfectly for the Glory and Honour of Thy name and for the welfare of all our people. Amen.

The Honourable First Minister.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable the Minister of Labour, that leave be given to introduce a Bill No. 1, an Act respecting the administration of oaths of office and that the same be now received and read a first time.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: In order to prevent mistakes, I have obtained a copy of the address of his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, which was read. I should also like to announce and inform the House that Ragnar Gislason has been appointed Sergeant-at-Arms for the Third Session of the Thirtieth Legislature.

The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable the Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management, that the Votes and Proceedings of the House be printed, having first been perused by Mr. Speaker, and that he do appoint the printing thereof, and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print same.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, that the Standing Committees of this House for the present session be appointed for the following purposes: Privileges and Elections; Public Accounts; Public Utilities and Natural Resources; Agriculture; Municipal Affairs; Law Amendments; Private Bills; Industrial Relations; Statutory Regulations and Orders; Economic Development; which several committees shall be empowered to examine and enquire into all such matters and things as may be referred to them by this House, and to report from time to time their observations and opinions thereon with power to send for persons, papers and documents and examine witnesses under oath.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I move, seconded by the Honourable Attorney-General, that William Jenkins, Esquire, Member of the Electoral Division of Logan, be Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the committees of the House.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable the Minister of Urban Affairs, that a special committee of seven persons be appointed to prepare and report with all convenient speed a list of members to compose the Standing Committees ordered by this House and that such committees shall be composed as follows: The Honourable Misters Green, Hanuschak, Paulley; Misters Jenkins, Johnston (Portage la Prairie), Jorgenson and Sherman.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Monsieur le Président, Je propose, appuyé par l'Honorable Ministre de la Santé Développement Sociale, que le discours de l'Honorable le Lieutenant-Gouverneur soit considéré demain.

MR. SPEAKER: Moved by the Honourable First Minister, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health, that the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor be taken into consideration tomorrow.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Monsieur le Président, je propose, appuyé par le Ministre du Tourisme, Recreation et des Affaires Culturelles, que cette Chambre s'ajourne maintenant.

MR. SPEAKER: Moved by the Honourable First Minister, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Tourism and Recreation, that this House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The House now stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.