

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, 26 March, 1985.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

BUDGET DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance and the amendment thereto proposed by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Member for River East has seven minutes remaining.

MR. P. EYLER: Mr. Speaker, I have completed my comments.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?
The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. R. NORDMAN: I took the adjournment at 5:30 p.m.

MR. R. BANMAN: Point of order, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye on a point of order.

MR. R. BANMAN: I believe that if you will peruse Hansard, you will find that at about one minute to 5:30 p.m., the Member for Assiniboia rose in his seat and asked that it be 5:30 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia is recognized.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In joining this debate on the Budget, I find it most difficult to criticize simply because there is so very little in it. There is very little substance, so there is very little criticism of it.

There are several instances, Mr. Speaker, where the presenter of the Budget speaks about ordinary Manitobans. It bothers me a little in that I believe that - what are they trying to do, classify Manitobans into different classifications? Are some more ordinary than others, or are some less ordinary than others?

Mr. Speaker, I would like to believe that we are all Manitobans, and we all care. We all aspire to a better standard of life through honest toil and effort, so I feel that this is a very disparaging remark when we are referring to specific people as ordinary people. We're all extraordinary Manitobans so far as I am concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I also welcome this opportunity to participate in this function for which the people of Assiniboia constituency elected me in 1981 to represent them in this House, a function which all of us in this House have been denied for the past eight-and-a-half months. In 1981, there were 57 members elected to this Legislature to represent the views of the people of Manitoba, and for eight-and-a-half months, Mr. Speaker, the people of Manitoba were short-changed.

Short-changed, Mr. Speaker, because the Government of the Day chose to govern by Order-in-Council. They chose not to debate; they chose not to consult; they chose to avoid criticism and controversy by staying out of the House. So, Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here doing what we are supposed to be doing.

Mr. Speaker, for the past two or three years the government has made much of their Jobs Fund. For all intents and purposes, yes, I guess some jobs have been created, but only jobs of a very short term. I believe that the greatest amount of money that this government has spent, that the Jobs Fund has created, was to the media; all the advertising that was done, and this government certainly has been a boon to the media. Everywhere you go, every radio station, every TV channel, every magazine, every periodical, weekly newspaper and signboard in the country carries an advertisement for the Jobs Fund.

Mr. Speaker, short-term jobs are not enough. What about some jobs with some future? What is the government doing to create the climate that will encourage the private sector to invest in Manitoba? Not too much, Mr. Speaker, but they have done several things that will and does discourage the private sector from investing in Manitoba such as the 1.5 percent wage tax, the labour legislation that was passed tying the hands of the new owners of a failing business, and he inherits the collective agreement of the previous owner who has failed. Particularly, this legislation has forced the closure of some businesses in this province, creating unemployment and forcing people on to welfare.

A MEMBER: Name one.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Superior Bus, and how about the Co-op Implements next?

The former Minister of Industry and Commerce, in his speech the other day, detailed the many bankruptcies that have taken place in Manitoba in the past three years. We, on this side, Mr. Speaker, take no joy out of the misfortune of the people that have failed or lost their jobs. The impact on the marketplace has been tremendous, and we can only feel sadness in the plight of those who have not been able to replace their income with honest toil. But we also feel, Mr. Speaker, that the government is directly responsible for some of these failures by virtue of their anti-business attitude.

Mr. Speaker, where do we go from here? If you are to believe the figures of the Conference Board of 1985, 1985 is not going to be a particularly good year. Indications are that the farm implements - and we see the farm implements stacked up in the salesroom, all I have to do is to go to Headingley in my own area and see the farm implements that are stacked up for blocks on end. There are several of them there; the food processing business - you know it's just not working - the garment industry is in a shambles; and some of the provinces manufacturing industries have not and will not be making the recovery that has been

hoped for. The Conference Board is projecting a growth rate of only 1.6 percent, which is the lowest projection in the country. All in all, the projection is not very bright, but, Mr. Speaker, this government seems to be pinning all its hopes on one project, and that is Limestone.

Mr. Speaker, the leader of the PC Party has made it very clear as to how the PC Party stands in the development of Hydro. Limestone can be one of Manitoba's most valuable future assets, but only if it's developed for markets that we have in place. If the government proceeds to build the project two years ahead of when it's needed, the ratepayers of Manitoba will be committed to ever-rising hydro rates for decades after the five years of construction. The PC Party believes that the development of hydro-electric power should be when we have a market for the energy that will be produced than to do otherwise, as the government is proposing. We are still convinced that the project will be completed two years in advance of the need, which will be a drain on the resources of this province, and of the taxpayers of this province, to the tune of about \$300 million interest per year.

Mr. Speaker, we do agree that development in Manitoba will provide some long-term jobs, just the number of them is debatable. We hope that when it goes into being that it will create a lot of jobs, but that is still debatable. I know that Hydro will attract energy-intensive industry into this province but, Mr. Speaker, development only at the right time and for the right reason.

Mr. Speaker, the National Energy Board has given its approval for Manitoba Hydro to start exporting power to Northern States Power in 1993, but the National Energy Board stopped short of giving its unequivocal blessing to Manitoba Hydro to advance the start-up of Limestone, and has also refused to comment on the effect that advancement will have on domestic power rates.

The National Energy Board points out that it has no right to tell the Hydro when they should build, but they do say that Manitoba customers will have to bear the bulk of the cost of Limestone construction through their power bills, and Manitobans should be concerned about the government's plan to divert some of the sales revenue to general funds and make those funds available for other government departments.

Mr. Speaker, I was quite taken with an editorial in the Free Press where the writer compared the operations of Manitoba Hydro, after the government's proposed changes to legislation governing the Manitoba Hydro, with the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. Mr. Speaker, the proposed change will enable the Hydro revenue to be used for purposes other than keeping electric light rates as low as possible.

Mr. Speaker, under Autopac, motorists in Manitoba already are carrying some of the burden of health costs, municipal borrowing, and some of the cost of maintaining municipal streets. They are involuntary investors in Ontario Hydro, as well as holders of bonds in Manitoba Telephone System and the Provincial Government itself. The interest motorists receive on their money, which is applied to Autopac revenue, is far less than the money the same motorist could have saved through reduction of their premiums.

If Hydro legislation is changed, everyone who turns on an electrical switch will know, as he does so, that

he is not only paying for the electricity he plans to use, but adding to his own tax burden.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Hydro, for all practical purposes, does have a monopoly on the sale of electricity in Manitoba, except for the Inner City of Winnipeg which is supplied and serviced by the Winnipeg Hydro which, in turn, has an agreement with Manitoba Hydro to sell power at the same rate as Manitoba Hydro.

Mr. Speaker, Autopac, on the other hand, is by law the only agency to sell basic automobile insurance to the owner of any vehicle intended to be operated within the province.

Mr. Speaker, the present law governing Manitoba Hydro legislates that all revenue received from sale of electricity must be used to assure that Manitobans are charged the lowest rates possible for electrical power. The Board of Directors are allowed to accumulate reserves, but these reserves are clearly identified to provide a basis for future rate stabilization.

In comparison, Mr. Speaker, the Board of Directors of MPIC has a bit more leeway. This board can invest in Manitoba and, if you just were to look at your Public Insurance Corporation Annual Report, you will find that over the 14 years that the MPIC has been in operation they have accumulated approximately \$247 million worth of investments and the investments range from extremely worthy such as hospitals. I don't disagree, but some of the investments that they have made such as the municipality, to the cities, the hospitals and so on, they're worthy, but the profits that they have made - and as far as I'm concerned profit has never been a bad word. It's not been a four-letter word — (Interjection) — yes, it's a five-letter word. But nevertheless, when you think of all the money that is going into this and what benefits we could have reaped, as far as our insurance, my insurance rates have gone up every year. So, Mr. Speaker, the net result of these investments is that automobile insurance in Manitoba is not as cheap as it could be, yet the government will only take from the motorists that is necessary to provide adequate insurance for the motorist, and the Manitoba motorist is not benefiting as much from having the government as his insurance company as he could.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation that is expected concerning Manitoba Hydro is even more dangerous than this from the point of view of the Hydro customer. Provision to investment has been for the Manitoba motorist. What is proposed is a skimming action, Mr. Speaker, a diversion of ready cash which should be used to keep hydro rates low, but which will be available once the law is changed for any purpose that the government may have in mind. As the Mover of the Throne Speech, the Member for Wolseley alluded to in her speech that profit from hydro sales could be reinvested in the economic growth of our province.

Mr. Speaker, if there is to be the massive profit from the sale of hydro-electric power in the United States that the government is predicting, the best use of this profit would be to reduce the debt of Manitoba Hydro so that customers need not pay half of their present electrical bills towards the interest on the debt. If the rates can be held during the period of massive construction, the greater number of Manitobans will benefit.

To date, Mr. Speaker, the government doesn't have much to brag about. They have failed to deal with the

economic and fiscal affairs of this province. They have failed to attract private sector investment into the province and have failed to establish meaningful long-term jobs in Manitoba, and as a result of these failures, have lost the confidence of the people of Manitoba.

The labour picture remains dismal. There are still at least 20,000 more people unemployed today, in March of 1985, than there were in November of 1981. Many of the jobs that the government is taking credit for through the private sector, and, Mr. Speaker, the Jobs Fund has basically been a real shifting of funds from departmental Estimates and put to use in projects that would normally be carried out by individual departments.

As a matter of fact, the government has manipulated and juggled the figures and numbers to suit their own purposes and have misled the public. Stats Canada has never been able to agree with the figure that the Jobs Fund has claimed and the Minister of Labour has never been able to give a positive number either - that's the previous Minister, not the present Minister - because of too many variables was always the answer that you got.

The one thing that StatsCan was able to establish was that most of the jobs have been created by the private sector. So the question is: if the government Jobs Fund only created about 10 percent of the jobs, what are they claiming credit for?

Mr. Speaker, this government has yet to learn that the basic responsibility of government is to create the climate for business, and if governments do this, business and industry will follow. If the incentives are there, industry will be encouraged to invest and locate in Manitoba, but if, as this government has done, placed roadblocks in the way of development, industry will take one long look and when they see the disincentives that are in Manitoba, what with the sales tax, the 1.5 wage tax, labour legislation and other disincentives, as they did with Pratt and Whitney or Superior Bus or Co-operative Implements, they will pick up their marbles and go home. Manitoba deserves better than they are getting.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the government of the report of the National Manitoba Economic Council of a few years back which warned us that we must create new jobs, new opportunities for skilled people, provide job retraining, improve the character of urban living and prepare ourselves for the 21st century. These are mighty objectives and of great intrinsic value to the Province of Manitoba. But, Mr. Speaker, whether or not they are accomplished will depend entirely on the atmosphere and environment created by the Provincial Government.

To accomplish the necessary goals, government will have to be imaginative and creative. If, Mr. Speaker, as I said before, if the climate and degree of co-operation exists between government and the business community, the business will respond and rise to the challenge with vigour and imagination a new high in economic success will be achieved and everyone will benefit.

So, Mr. Speaker, let the government create the atmosphere; this province must have industrial growth. Everything flows from that and without it there is no profit, no salaries, no wealth and as a result, no public service. Mr. Speaker, this is a dream that I am speaking

of but this can be fact if the government will accept the responsibility.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to say how pleased I am to join in the debate, the fourth Budget Debate for this administration. I will say though that I have become somewhat cynical about the debates in this House, certainly no reflection on yourself, Mr. Speaker, or on this House, but certainly on the opposition because it seems that no matter how clearly the arguments are put forward on this side of the House, the opposition is always able to attempt to show that black is white. They don't seem to listen, to understand. It seems rather futile and fruitless to make a good case for the various programs that we have advanced over the last three or four years, certainly in developing in this province in a way that no other province has been able to do across this country.

So I think it is somewhat futile, but of course we cannot give up as the opposition attempts to throw innuendo back and forth across the floor. They make little impact on us and I guess we make about as much impact on them with our points. But I do find a total lack of understanding or ability to hear and absorb and listen on the other side of the House and it is frustrating.

I saw that just now as the Honourable Member for Assiniboia talked about the losses, the bad deal for Manitoba of the NSP sale and the advancement of Limestone. He's trying to call black white and I want to refer him very clearly to the National Energy Board's findings, in the statements that were made by the Minister of Finance in this House last Thursday night when he brought down the Budget. The Member for Assiniboia was obviously not listening to that and attempting to distort. He said clearly that - and I want to quote from this statement from the Minister of Finance and he can hear it again because somebody obviously told him tonight - put in a speech about Hydro, hit them at their strength, try to undermine their case with regard to Hydro. So he came into the House here today and he was going to do it regardless of how absurd the points that he was making were.

"The board", the Finance Minister said, "this is a federal board, not a provincial board, it's a board set out to determine that this particular sale will be in the interests of Canadians and Manitobans. It's a federal board." It went on to agree with Hydro's contention that a two-year advancement of Limestone would be more profitable for it than a one-year advancement. That was an issue that was raised occasionally in the last little while in Manitoba by some people and of course the Minister of Finance is referring to some people across the way here who raised it again just now.

What did the board say about that? Well, I'll quote from them. "The board has carefully examined the cases representing both the Sale Sequence, which is the two years, and the 500 megawatts Only Sequence cases," - 500 megawatts one year and they say as follows: "For the Sale Sequence" - that's two years - "for Manitoba Hydro's perspective, the excess of revenues over cost for the two-year advancement would be about

\$20 million more than for the one-year advancement." Now, there it is. It's in black and white and if they don't believe these stats that are put into the National Energy Board's report, then they should dispute that with them, but the facts are there.

So the nonsense that the Member for Assiniboia was just making, he devoted almost his total speech to that, it's strictly nonsense. — (Interjection) — Well, I think so, it's very clear.

In addition to that he said that this government - and I just pick out a couple of points that he was just raising here - the Member for Assiniboia said, "We have failed. This government has failed to attract private investment."

Well, the facts are that private investment increased 9.8 percent in 1984; that is nearly three times the national increase. So what is the honourable member talking about? Three times the national increase here in Manitoba, private investment. Totally absurd, total untruths in this House and that's why we cannot take with any credence, any reliability, any of the arguments that are advanced by the opposition in this House. It's why I say it is so frustrating, they refuse to listen. They bring forward - I would say that it seems to me that there's a gross distortion of the facts from across the way, from the honourable members.

There are other examples of this distortion, there certainly is by the honourable members. I wonder when he says that we have forgotten, or that we are unable to attract private investment to this province, what does he say about the programs that we've advanced for the private sector for small business in this province over the last number of years? The Venture Capital Program that we put in place; the Manitoba Interest Rate Relief Program for Small Business; the Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit that was put in place by our government; the Levy Exemption for Small Businesses; the pre-Budget consultations that we've undertaken with small business each year; the development agreements that have taken place between the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology and a number of other of my colleagues in the Federal Government. The management counselling that we've put in place: Careerstart Program, Jobs in Training Program, those are all programs that are put in place to work with and assist small business in this province. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia, if I can call him that, has the nerve to stand up in this House and say that we have not done anything to attract private investment to this province. It's just totally absurd.

Now, I want to get on to another example. The Leader of the Opposition today, when the Premier stood up in this House and made a very important and substantial statement about the industrial spinoffs to Manitoba, the benefits to Manitoba of the General Electric Agreement that was signed with regard to Limestone, immediately the Leader of the Opposition stands up in this House and says that there are 20,000 more unemployed now than there were in 1981. But what he didn't point out is that there are 12,000 more jobs here in Manitoba now than there were in 1981. What he doesn't point out, that in five provinces there are fewer jobs now than there were in 1981.

So that is the significant point that he should be making in this House when he talks about 20,000 more unemployed; he should also point out that there are

12,000 more jobs in this province, which is quite the opposite of provinces like British Columbia and Alberta and other Tory-thinking governments. There are 63,000 fewer jobs now than in 1981 with a Tory-thinking government, a Sterling Lyon-type of government in British Columbia. Those are the kinds of results that we get from Tory-thinking governments across this country. They're about as unsuccessful as that Sterling Lyon Government was during the dark years for Manitoba, the dark ages, 1977-1981.

They have the gall to stand up in here and complain about the performance of this government, of this New Democratic Government here in Manitoba. That's, of course, what makes it seem so futile to attempt to explain the facts to the opposition in the House, because they don't listen. If they only had the fortitude to go back, to look back at the damage that was done under that Tory administration in Manitoba from 1977-81 during those dark years.

I thought it was rather ironic today that the question came from the Member for Lakeside about the Russian turbines at Jenpeg in the '70s. That's as close as they could get to trying to find something that they felt would be negative about the announcement that was made by the Premier here today, and isn't it ironic that the NDP is always buying turbines? Isn't that something? There is never a Conservative Government buying turbines, what do we do with all those turbines? Mr. Speaker, what are we doing with all those turbines? We don't just put them in our backyards and admire them. What are we doing with those turbines? Why is it that a New Democratic Government is always buying turbines, whether it be from the Russians or from General Electric? Why are we buying them? We're buying them at the same rate almost as people were buying tires to get out of Manitoba during the Conservative Government in 1977-81.

Mr. Speaker, the reason we're buying turbines in this province, when there is a New Democratic Party Government in this province, is because we are a thinking and doing government. Things are happening; jobs are taking place in this province; development is taking place. We're not just talking about mega dreams; we're actually producing; we are getting results in this province, which they were unable to do. That's the difference. That is why we're buying turbines, and that is why they can attempt to stand up and criticize where we buy them from. But they should think carefully about something, and that is that when Sterling Lyon and his crew over there were in government they weren't able to buy turbines because they had no place to put them because they couldn't get the development going. Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I remind the honourable member that members of the House should be referred to by the portfolio they hold or the constituency that they represent, and not by name.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, I didn't catch the last part of your statement. I'm not certain what violation I was guilty of here.

MR. H. ENNS: Just standing up is a violation.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I was reminding the honourable member that he should not refer to other

members of the House by name, but by the portfolio they hold, or the constituency they represent.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't recall referring to anyone by name, and I certainly have never made that a practice in here, so if I have it was inadvertent. I always refer to the honourable members across the way, even though I don't always believe it, Mr. Speaker.

I think we should look at, Mr. Speaker, what would have happened here in this province if, in 1981, Sterling Lyon would have been re-elected, the former Leader of the Opposition, the Member for Charleswood. If the Member for Charleswood, as the Leader of the Opposition, had been re-elected in this province, what would have happened?

Well, it's certain that they would have continued to fail miserably just as they had over the period of four years they were in government. Their mega projects would have dried up as history has shown. With all their Hydro eggs in one basket, Mr. Speaker, the Western Power Grid, they would have woken up about now and they would have said, hey there's another election coming we'd better drag out our: "Sitting on a Gold Mine" routine, and perhaps: "Don't Stop Us Now," and maybe we can get ourselves another election in the bag.

That's what they would have done if they had been in government, because things would have dried up for them as history has shown. None of those mega projects would have taken place. They were mega dreams, as we all thought, and the people of Manitoba thought in 1981.

There would have been no NSP sale in this province; there would have been no Limestone; there would have been no Western Power Grid; there would have been no Alcan; there would have been no potash development - zero, a big goose egg. And with no other economic plans in place in this province, and no infrastructure in place, because that government had not planned ahead, they just said, well we'll leave that to the private sector, they'll manage it on their own. Since there was no economic planning in this province, they would have then turned to trying to find some other mega projects to explain to the people of Manitoba that we were, indeed, sitting on a gold mine, another figment of their imagination at that point, in terms of the reality of it, Mr. Speaker.

The private sector would have struggled on their own and, of course, it would have come to pass, as the Minister of Finance said, they would have been sitting on a land mine, as they were in 1981, rather than on a gold mine.

We would have had no Jobs Fund in this province.

MR. H. ENNS: And how lucky we would be.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Oh, listen to the honourable member saying, "How lucky we would be." Of course, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lakeside is saying how lucky the Province of Manitoba, how lucky we would be, if we did not have the Jobs Fund. Yet, those honourable members across the way, Mr. Speaker, stood up and voted for the Jobs Fund when it came to be voted on in this House.

Where are they, Mr. Speaker? All over the place to speak on all sides of the question. Let them look at

some examples of the benefits of the Jobs Fund in their area; for example, the Manitoba Community Assets Program which has benefited so many communities in this province. I recall before 1981 being on the Council of the Town of Dauphin, and feeling the utter futility of attempting to get any major project, recreation, or otherwise, to improve the infrastructure in the province, feeling that futility because there was absolutely nothing that we could count on from the Provincial Government to assist us with taking on a development of any size at all. There was nothing there. They had nothing; they couldn't react at all; they couldn't help; they couldn't assist. Municipalities, local governments had to do it on their own.

But what have we seen because of the Jobs Fund in the constituencies of the members of the opposition here? We have the Member for Lakeside saying that the Jobs Fund is no good for Manitoba, how lucky they would be. But look at the Member for Arthur, for example, as a result of this has seen the Waskada Rink repairs and renovations take place in his constituency. He's seen the St. John's Parish Council undertake extensive renovations for \$40,000 . . .

MR. J. DOWNEY: Where's that? Where are those things?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, they're in the constituency of Arthur in southern Manitoba. He's seen \$158,000 of expenditures under the Homes in Manitoba Program.

The Member for Assiniboia, who was talking just recently, just before I was speaking here, Mr. Speaker, about the fact that there was nothing happening in this province. His constituency has had the benefit of \$410,000 of investment under the Homes in Manitoba Program in his constituency.

If we look at other examples of Conservatives, in Charleswood for example, the Homes in Manitoba — (Interjection) — well, they don't know what's going on. I think the Member for Ste. Rose is absolutely correct - they don't know what's happening. They don't want to know. They don't want to know what's happening because it's all good news, and good news is not good for the opposition when it comes to the government action in their constituency, so they're upset. They're concerned about any good news in their constituency, and they tend to turn a blind eye to it.

In Charleswood, for example, the Homes in Manitoba has triggered \$894,000 of investment and, of course, the Roblin Park Community Centre has had a major expansion of which \$40,000 came from the Manitoba Community Assets Program.

In the constituency of Emerson - oh, look at this. It's unbelievable, Homes in Manitoba - \$1,126,000 worth of investment, and that's under the Homes in Manitoba Program, but under the Community Assets Program, we've seen day care additions and renovations for \$38,000 in the Emerson constituency, and as well the Pine Grove — (Interjection) — Well, there's another one, the day care centre I just mentioned out of the Municipal Community Assets Program, but there's many of them that the Honourable Member for Emerson confuses because there are so many. He doesn't know what's going on. — (Interjection) — I'm led to believe that the Member for Emerson is opposed to these

programs taking place in his constituency, and if that is the case, he might want to notify the people in his constituency that he is opposed to them, and not — (Interjection) — Yes, Sir, I believe the honourable member said he was opposed to those projects taking place. Maybe I misheard him, but I understand that the Member for Emerson said he was opposed to those projects taking place.

Mr. Speaker, we are greeted with silence from across the way. The Pine Grove Senior Citizens Home received over \$20,000 on a \$40,000 project for construction of a building there, Mr. Speaker. That's also in the constituency of Emerson, and the list goes on and on. There is over \$1.2 million of investment in his constituency alone.

Fort Garry, the newest member of the House, has received the Fort Garry United Church, a handicapped access for \$34,000.00.

The Wildlife Foundation of Manitoba enhancement of the Fort Whyte Environment Education Centre received \$30,000 on a \$69,000 project.

You see, the constituencies of the opposition have received a tremendous benefit from the Jobs Fund, Mr. Speaker, but they still criticize it and run it down in this House. I have to think, and I don't like to say this, but it seems to me that there is just a hint of hypocrisy or hypocritical thinking on the part of the opposition when it comes to the Jobs Fund. They would not have put it in, and it's safe to say when I said it here, that the Jobs Fund would not have occurred in this province, and all of the benefits that went with it would not have occurred, Mr. Speaker, it's quite safe to say, if that opposition over there had been in government over these last three years, and coupled with the four years that they were in this province before. — (Interjection) — Now they say that they wouldn't have called it the Jobs Fund, maybe a different name. I wonder what they would have called it. Maybe something more descriptive perhaps. Perhaps they would have found a better name for it, something that was more ambiguous, Mr. Speaker.

But let's look at the fact that we would not have had a Venture Capital Program in this province. We wouldn't have had a Main Street Manitoba Program in this province. Can you imagine that? Can you imagine this province with no Main Street Manitoba Program? Can you imagine that? All of those beautiful communities in this province that have benefited, decrepit, run-down over the years, a chance to rebuild them so they would have pride in their communities; beautify, that it would increase business in the downtown area, bring more people in, have more people stay and open up businesses, all of those things would have been lost. All of those benefits would have been lost to those local communities across this province, Mr. Speaker, and you know it's surprising that they're not saying, oh, no, we would have had a Main Street Manitoba Program but we would have called it a different name. They would have called it a different name.

But I know that they wouldn't have done it, Mr. Speaker, because they opposed it every step of the way. They criticized it every step of the way. We would not have had a Main Street Manitoba Program in this province if they had been in government, and all of that investment would have been lost in towns like Swan River, Erickson, and Morden would not have

benefited from that Main Street Manitoba Program, and many other smaller communities — (Interjection) — Lorette, of course, and many other examples. That would not have been in place for certain.

There would have been no Homes in Manitoba Program. They would have bumbled along, they would have let the construction industry attempt to do whatever possible, whatever way they could hope to succeed with the high interest rates. They would have said, good luck in building homes in this province, and to the people that would have to buy them from their unemployment cheques and their welfare cheques, good luck in buying those homes.

There would have been no Critical Home Repair Program. It was almost obsolete by the time that we got in government and revamped that program. That wouldn't have existed.

There would have been no rent controls. Rents would have skyrocketed in this province. That is what would have happened right across and people would have had to pay them because there would have been absolutely no control on rents in this province.

There would have been no expansion of day care, perhaps it would have gone backwards. There would have been fewer spaces under a government led by the Member for Charleswood.

There would have been no Beef Stabilization Plan in this province. They would have had the Member for Arthur sitting on his hands as he did for the last three years of his tenure as Minister of Agriculture and done nothing for the beef producers of this province or for the hog producers of this province. Certainly, that would have taken place. They would have avoided putting in place an assistance program. We would not have had an excellent Beef Stabilization Program that we have in this province if that opposition had been in government, Mr. Speaker. There would have been many other drawbacks of course, because since there would be no beef industry and everyone had sold out and got out of the business in this province, the packers would have gone out of business as well, but we are maintaining them. — (Interjection) — And the Member for Lakeside realizes that and says, yah, yah, as I understand it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what would have happened if they had been in? We should look at it from both sides of the question because that's always important to look at both sides of the question. Well, first of all, I think it's obvious that the Crow would have been gone, just as it is now. We can say that with certainty I think because they would have sped it on its way, kicked the Crow out so the farmers, the grain producers of this province and others in Western Canada would have had to pay higher rates for hauling their grain. We know that the Crow would have been gone had they been in, Mr. Speaker. I think we can say that with certainty.

A MEMBER: Where is it now?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It's gone with the benefit of people like the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, spurring it along its way.

Fuel taxes would have been higher in this province. There's no doubt about that. The ad valorem tax that the opposition had would have meant that people would

have been paying higher taxes on gasoline and diesel fuel in this province. There's no doubt about that. So that's one thing that would have been the case here and we have to, as I said, be fair and look at both sides of it.

The sales tax would be around 8 to 10 percent at the present time because they'd be maybe higher, because they want to balance their budget they would have said at all costs, so they would have brought a sales tax increase anywhere between 8 and 10 percent at the present time. But there wouldn't have been a payroll tax. Yes, we know that with certainty, Mr. Speaker.

Health and education levy: There would not have been a health and education levy despite the fact that federal transfer payments dropped over that period of time from 54 percent over the last five years to 43 percent at the present time. They wouldn't have recognized that, and they wouldn't have put in that kind of a fair taxation that recovers revenue from employers in a similar way, but a different way, than it happens in Ontario where the Ontario health insurance premiums account for, on behalf of the employers in that province, for much more than 1.5 percent of payroll.

As a matter of fact they pay much more for health and education post-secondary education in Ontario through the implementation of these premiums in that province. But despite that they wouldn't have put in place a similar tax that would have recovered some of the health and education and, of course, we're getting to that, Mr. Speaker. We've got to go on to some of the other things that would have happened here in this province had they been here, just to be fair about it.

They would have had user fees in the hospitals of at least \$20 a day for every hospitalized Manitoban in this province. We can say that with almost certainty, Mr. Speaker, that there would have been user fees in this province had the former Premier stayed in government here and, of course, people would have had to suffer with that in the same way that they have had to suffer in British Columbia over the last number of years with user fees, and Alberta as well.

So we would have had an 8 percent to 10 percent sales tax; we would have had user fees in our hospitals; we would have had mill rates in poorer school divisions in this province. School divisions like Duck Mountain with a very low tax base would have had mill rates that skyrocketed over the last four years. That we can say with certainty. There is no doubt that we would have had tremendous increases in the mill rates because the local levy would have had to account for a greater percentage of education financing in this province. So that we can say with some certainty.

As well, I guess we could say with some certainty that there would be more highways in Tory areas of this province. I think we could say that with a great deal of certainty. In addition to that . . .

HON. A. ANSTETT: Well, I don't know; they might have redone the Main Street of Portage . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Oh yes, yes, yes, that's true.

HON. A. ANSTETT: . . . and the Main Street of Morden.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I think there is no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the people who could afford it - I don't want to get into the highways debate now; we have Estimates - and the Honourable House Leader should stick to his own advice and remember that we discuss those kinds of things in Estimates.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that the more affluent members of society would still be paying \$1,000 a plate to have the former Premiers here. There would be countless strikes in this - I want to throw a little humour in but no one seems to pick up on it here, Mr. Speaker - there would be countless strikes and extensive labour unrest in this province over the past four years, now that's serious, it would have been. It's similar to British Columbia, and I think there is no doubt about that, that we would have had a severe labour unrest over the past four years. At the same time we would have had a loss of productivity, a drop in productivity obviously, because people would not have been working as much as they have been in this province over that period of time.

Unemployment would be between 10 percent and 15 percent, there is no doubt, because the opposition would not have made, if they had been government, a concerted effort to deal with unemployment. Instead of being in the neighbourhood of 8 percent as it is now, and as an educated guess we could probably count on a 10 percent to 15 percent — (Interjection) — yes, about the national average, maybe up there on the top and similar to B.C.'s and Newfoundland's, somewhere up around there.

A MEMBER: It was 12 percent.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, Alberta's is around 12 percent. So we could assume quite easily, I think, without fear of being criticized for being extreme, that the unemployment rates in this province would be around 10 percent to 15 percent. Now those are the kinds of things that Manitobans have to consider in the next election campaign. I am sure they are going to be looking at all of these kinds of things and what kind of a Manitoba we would have had, had there been a Tory Government in this province over the last four years, coupled with the four dark years from '77 to '81.

There is no doubt - well I shouldn't have given them a hint on the election date now - that the government would be paying millions more out in welfare in this province. There is no doubt that they would be paying millions more in welfare because fewer people would be working, and I believe that is quite consistent with their philosophy as I recall the Member for Swan River at one time making a statement, and I don't know if it was in the House, but I believe he said that welfare is cheaper than jobs.

A MEMBER: That's what he said.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: People would still be packing their suitcases and leaving Manitoba, as in a well-known commercial that I saw on television a few years back dealing with the packing of suitcases and the cutting up of Manitoba, and they would be going with the blessings of the former Premier as he commented as they went, on all those itinerant socialist idealogues

leaving Manitoba. He would have been commenting and saying that it was good to see them go, those people who were packing their suitcases and getting out of Manitoba.

Of course, what else would have been happening? I am sure the Honourable Premier, the Member for Charleswood, would have still been Premier then. He would be busy implementing a Supreme Court decision requiring the translation of all the acts of the Manitoba Legislature from years gone by while grumbling all the while that the Supreme Court caused all this nonsense. That would have been happening here and it would have all been done with Manitoba taxpayer money, of course.

So it's easy to forecast what the Tories would have done in Manitoba in government, Mr. Speaker, because one only has to extrapolate the four years that they were in government. It's all telegraphed. For more current evidence we can look at some of the things that the Federal Government has been doing over the last few months in Manitoba and we get a more current view of what is to come and what would happen in this province with a Provincial Tory Government, certainly, and after the next election what would have happened in the last four years. I think it's safe to say, with regard to the Federal Government, that we ain't seen nothing yet - just to take a famous quote from the President of the United States - but I don't want to be all negative. You know we have to call a spade a spade.

Well, I just want to point out, Mr. Speaker, and I think it should be on the record clearly, that what I have been doing here is to take an objective view that is not partisan and to put it forward for the honourable members to consider, a fair assessment, I believe, weighing both sides of the question. I gave both sides of it. I said what Manitoba would have had if they were here and what we wouldn't have had if they were here, and I think that is fair to give both sides of it.

Now my colleagues and I have taken the position with the Federal Government that we should always attempt to be positive and co-operative because we believe that's what Manitobans want, that's what gets results in this province. We have done that with the previous Federal Government and we continue to do that with the present Federal Government. We believe that we should always work co-operatively with them in every way possible.

But it has been a little frustrating over the last seven months to say the least, to see some of the major cuts taking place in this province, to see some major developments going down the drain in this province. That has bothered us a great deal, it has hurt us a great deal, because we are trying to work and create jobs in this province and what do we see? In return, we see a cancellation of the Via Maintenance Centre, a \$30.6 million investment in this province and, of course, the jobs that would go with it once it's operating. We have seen the 78 layoffs at the C.N. Transcona Shops because they attribute them to the changes in Via's policy with regard to upgrading existing equipment. So we've seen that loss. We have seen, in addition to that, another 96 workers - 91 carmen and 5 pipefitters - at the Transcona Shops to be laid off by the Federal Government here in this province.

Those are the kinds of frustrating things and blows to Manitoba that have been taking place, the NRC

cutbacks and the fact that we were penalized here in Manitoba because we have done well. We have put a lot of effort into youth employment activity. So instead of us getting the 4 percent that our population entitles us to on those grounds across this country for youth employment to assist in the creation of jobs for youth, we get only 2.5 percent because they penalize us for the efforts that we have made in this province.

All the time - yes, it is - the silence is deafening from across the way. We don't hear anything. We don't hear them asking questions. We don't say what are you doing? What representation is the Minister making to the Federal Minister in Ottawa to ensure that these things don't happen in this province? We always heard that when the Liberal Government was in Ottawa. What is the Minister doing? What representation? Has he telexed the Minister, has he called him, has he gone down to visit him, has he asked for a meeting? Nothing like that. What we get instead is silence on all of these important issues facing Manitoba.

Then you would ask, Mr. Speaker - one could ask it and it isn't very hard to be cynical - about the points of view that are represented across the way. And that's what I find somewhat futile in standing up to speak and realizing that it falls on deaf ears because we don't get any support, we don't get any constructive criticism from the opposition across the way. It's negativism and some way to tear down and not to build together, and that's what we're asking for. We want to work co-operatively. Not just with the federal Tory Government, but with the opposition here. We want to work co-operatively but we only get negativism and that makes it very difficult.

But we're trying to work with the federal government in many ways and we've had some successes. You know, at our recent meeting on February 27th with the Minister of Transport federally and I like him. I get along good with him. He's a nice fellow. He's very friendly and cordial. I enjoy those meetings. But the point is, the probe is in the action that you get and of course it's all friendly stuff and we have lots of flowery words but we don't get any action from the Minister.

So what we're getting when we ask to implement immediately the Boxcar Rehabilitation Program at the C.N. Shops to avoid those layoffs, Mr. Speaker, the initial layoffs, I visited with the Minister; got a commitment that he would meet with C.N. So what he did after much procrastination he finally met with C.N., but before he had that meeting we had announcement of another 96 layoffs; that was the answer we got - no inkling, no consultation, nothing - that those 96 layoffs were imminent at the Transcona Shops. They just happened.

So now what he's done, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Minister, is he's asked C.N. to come and see us and see if he can get us off his back. They're going to meet with us soon in early April. Of course, we're going to tell them the same thing that because they cannot guarantee levels sufficient to supply the Port of Churchill for the next couple of years until the new light rail car that we have developed, under the subagreements, and production is under way; and because they cannot guarantee the same levels of employment at Transcona, that we want to proceed immediately with the boxcar rehabilitation so we can help avoid some of those layoffs there. Mr. Speaker, because we are prepared to retain

jobs, to preserve jobs in this province. We want to preserve jobs and create additional jobs, not to see them cut here because it affects the families of those people who are going to be laid off.

So we are prepared to put provincial money, not just to criticize, but to put provincial money into the rehabilitation of boxcars so that we will retain those jobs in this province. I don't know how they can refuse a deal like that. It seems like a deal they can't refuse, Mr. Speaker, but yet they're procrastinating and delaying it.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that I'm almost out of time but I want to express my appreciation for the very short time I have had to perhaps share some ideas of thoughts with members opposite and I hope they will pick up on some of the positive things, stop the negative criticism and be a little more positive in this House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a little over a week ago that I had the opportunity to speak to the Throne Speech, and because of the way this government saw fit to run the affairs of the House, right after the Throne Speech we were into the Budget Debate and as a result we have been having many speeches, a continuous barrage of speeches, and very different speeches, interesting speeches. Some well researched, some people have gone to great pains in terms of doing good research in bringing forward factual things, some not that researched, some very political, some very meaningless.

But I want to take this opportunity to indicate to the Minister of Highways that of the speeches I have heard from the government side, this has been one of the most positive ones. You know, tongue in cheek, I want to compliment the member because he defended his government's position in many things - he did - which is a difficult job but he did, and I want to commend him for that because very few members opposite have used that approach.

The Minister of Labour, for example, covered the whole world waterfront. He covered Star Wars, but he never covered his department or anything along those lines or anything about the Budget. But that's not uncommon for him because he rails all over the place and never gets down to the point, and that's why I say the Minister of Highways did a good job. I was waiting somewhere along the line — (Interjection) — I have a few. If buttering up would help, Mr. Speaker, I would do more of that. But one thing that the Minister didn't do, he talked about everything except the department that he covers, which is highways. I can understand why he doesn't talk about that because he's allowed that department to get raped of funds, because there's virtually no funds for building highways. Look at the record, it's there.

But as indicated, I felt that he was defending the position of government and not too many have done that on that side. That's why I say we've had a barrage of speeches covering all waterfronts and many of the speakers have asked us, tell us what you would want to do. The previous speaker indicated he also wanted us to tell us what would you like to see happen. If the

government side would listen a little bit once in a while because everybody that has been making speeches on this side, has been trying to tell them. This is a government that has been talking about "we're listening to the people." And you know what I said the other day, and people have told me that, "They listen, but they don't hear." They don't get the message. They listen and then they do exactly what they want, and this is going to be the demise of this government.

Let's look at the record. Let's look at what this government has done in the last three-and-a-half years. You know, we're getting very close to an election, in fact we'd like to have an election right now. But let's look at the record of this government. The Minister of Highways used spotty issues and said that we, as Conservatives from 1977 to 1981, that we hadn't accomplished that much. We were in tough times at that time. We made decisions that we thought were right at that time and came out not looking that bad. But we lost the election because the people opposite went out and promised they could turn the whole thing around and that is what's going to defeat you people whenever you call the next election, the false promises that you made.

We as well as everybody else in Canada, are going to judge our federal government on the same basis, based on promises that they made. I hope our federal counterparts, because I'm part of it, are going to produce based on what they said. But what you have not done, after three-and-a-half years, you have not honoured the commitments and promises that you made when you got elected and that is why we as a responsible government, from 1977 to 1981, got defeated, because you promised better.

Then let's look at your record. Let's look at what happened, and what we've had since that time when you finally got into office and you had the responsibility based on the promises that you made. What has happened? Now let's be honest. What has happened? Governments get judged on their performance in terms of making things happen. The Minister of Agriculture the other day indicated, we're trying to maintain. Maintain what? You promised not maintenance, because we gave them maintenance. You promised different things. You promised people would not lose jobs, farms, homes. How do you account for it now? And what you've done, you've used a political propoganda machine in advertising of government money and public money to try and promote the image that you've accomplished something.

You know what bothers me when we look back to the Roblin years, let's go back that far. That's when this country was moving. That's when dams were being built. You know the floodway was built. Highways were built. What has happened? When Roblin stepped down and the Weir government got defeated, the NDP took over and the progression in this province stopped. It did. You hang your hat on Hydro development which fell in your laps and you try to use the same image right now and say, "we're going to build Hydro," because the Minister of Highways just indicated that you are the builders of Hydro. The first time it fell in your lap. Now you're trying to use the same route to try and build your image and it won't sell.

If you're going to be realistic, get out there and listen to people, because you live in your closeted offices

right now, and you've hired all kinds of administrative staff that is doing promotional work for you. Now you're trying to sell something that is going to be a vacuum. The people of Manitoba are not buying it. You must realize the big balloon of Limestone is not materializing.

That is why you have a promotional program that is going to cost thousands of dollars, and you know what? One thing the people of Manitoba and the public sector wants is honesty in government. You're not giving them honesty, because the announcement that the Premier made today was signed in January before the National Energy Board decision. Now, how can you honestly look at the people of Manitoba and say we waited until the National Energy Board gave their recommendation? You had that deal signed beforehand.

Your advertising program that's taking off right now has already been in the mill for six months. Do you know what? This is what governments don't — (Interjection) — too cute by half, you know.

The people of Manitoba demand honesty, and they know they're being duped by this government. You are not being forthright. Governments don't get elected; they get defeated. You will be defeated on the basis that you have not been honest with the people of Manitoba.

What we saw in the Throne Speech was a political document. What we saw in the Budget Speech was even more political. There was virtually nothing in there to motivate. What was in the Budget, Sir, that would motivate people to come in here and invest in this province? All these things that the Minister of Highways was talking about, the things that they have done, where did the money come from? It was scalped off every department.

I just want to get back to the Jobs Fund a little bit.

A MEMBER: I thought you liked the Jobs Fund, Al.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Oh, I'll tell you something, we have got to discuss that a little bit. But you know what, where did all this money come from, the things that you say you've done that are so great? You've saddled us with a .5 billion deficit. What was the deficit when you took over? The things that you have done, we can all relate to that kind of a deficit. That's where it's at.

Why, Mr. Speaker, would a government have to use millions of dollars to promote their image? Why, if this government was sure of the Hydro development, if this government was sure of Limestone, why would they have to spend thousands upon thousands of dollars promoting it to the people of Manitoba? If it's so good, the people will know it's good. Why do you have to do a selling job?

You create a false illusion to the people of Manitoba. There's an old saying that you can, you know, fool most of the people most of the time, some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time. You've run your course in three-and-a-half years with the people of Manitoba.

Let's look at the production of this government. In three-and-a-half years, what have you really accomplished in terms of major accomplishments? — (Interjection) — No, no. The Minister of Finance, you know, he is the one that had the political document that we're debating, very little substance in there. but

he is the one that presented that. How would he defend this document?

There has been nothing but a downgrade, but you can use money. We see on TV the craziest advertisements that they have, but if they pump them long enough somehow some people accept that. That's the philosophy this government goes on. They hire promotional personnel. Look into every one of the Estimates and see where, on the administration end of it, personnel has gone; there is an increase there. Everything else is cut and holding and cut back.

What this government has done is raped almost every individual department, and put that money into a Jobs Fund and then politically decided where they would allow this money to go. A year ago in that program, it wasn't advertised that well. They had to actually go out and look for people to give the money to, but then they went on the advertising program and the last bunch — (Interjection) — yes, I'm getting to that. This last year, they over-promoted, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we had so many applications that many many had to be turned down unfortunately.

The expectation was built in everybody's mind. They had P.R. people running around and saying, yes, this is a good project, you will qualify. Then all of a sudden, the terrible truth came home; they didn't have enough bucks. They had so and so many bucks set aside for this promotion. That's all they could scalp off the departments, because where else did the money come from? We look at the Estimates of every individual department and that's where the money came from.

This is a government that criticized us from 1977-81 during a recession and said, hey, you hard-hearted guys, you're cutting everything back. Looking at what you're doing, aside from the Jobs Fund, you could almost, looking at your departmental Estimates, say you're Conservatives. You followed in exactly our footsteps in terms of cutting back, and you're fighting hard to try and keep an image up front, but you know what? You lost the expectation of the people of Manitoba that you could do better.

You found you had to bite the bullets, and I'm sure that, as individual Ministers, you must be cringing for the things that you would like to do that you are not accomplishing. I think within Cabinet there must be terrible agony going on at times. You also realize, because you cannot fulfill the expectations of the people of Manitoba, that you will be defeated when you call the election, whether it's this spring, fall, next spring, it doesn't matter.

You've run your course in three-and-a-half years. You will not, within the next half-year to a year, get back the confidence of the people of Manitoba. No matter how much money you spend on Limestone which you are pre-building - and you know, the Minister of Energy was standing there berating the Member for Lakeside about a statement here, a statement there. We all do that in this House. We all have our day here where we speak our minds and say how we see it from our point of view and your point of view, but the public out there judges.

I was out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at Gladstone today, together with my colleague for Gladstone, along with the Minister of Natural Resources, attending a meeting. They have a major problem there in terms of drainage. Of course, the Minister of Labour would not want to

hear it, or probably never even realized the problem was there. But aside from that, there were some 90-some-odd people there that had major concerns. It's no easy problem because I was there, as I indicated, with the Minister of Natural Resources.

We both realized it's a difficult thing, and some of these things that we have, and we have many problems across the province, but instead of using maybe some of that money that should be in Natural Resources to resolve some of the drainage and projects that should be undertaken, we don't have that money.

The Minister of Highways doesn't have money to build highways properly. Just look at what has happened over the last four years. Look what has happened, and look at the condition of the highways as you rural members travel around and see what's happening. It is a disaster. How can you go to the people of Manitoba and say look what we've done? The production isn't there.

To the Minister of Finance, you know you can fool them so and so long and you can make all the pretty words you like - the proof is in the pudding and it ain't there. You're going to be judged on that in the next election and you'll have to face the consequences. We can kid each other about this and that, what have you. The people of Manitoba don't get fooled that often, and you're going to have to face these things - little things.

I have difficulty how the rationale happens there. For example, the Minister of Agriculture - and I want to say honestly - has spent a lot of money in the agricultural community. He's spent a lot of money there; I think he did most of it sincerely. He thought he was doing the right things. I'll tell you something about what has happened - chaos, utter chaos in agriculture!

I'd like to go through that. Let's start with the dairy industry. Two weeks ago - and I think some members have already touched on this - what has happened with the transfer of dairy cows and quota. It's worth repeating because if the message is important we've got to repeat it. He is not allowing any transfer of cows and quota, unless the farmer sells his whole farm. He does not allow any Class 2 and Class 3 transfers. Well, does anybody in Cabinet realize what you've done or what the Minister has done?

The Minister is agonizing over it and certainly the representation that you get from dairy farmers must be hurting you guys. You must realize the foolish thing you've done. Does anybody realize what that means? You know, you have to change your position on this. It's a serious thing, but nobody's ever sat down and thought about it because you're so busy trying to look after your own interests that you don't realize some of the foolish things you do, and that is what you're going to be judged on, the stupidity of it. A Minister of Agriculture that has spent all kinds of money on agriculture and he's losing favour with the agricultural community. That is only agriculture.

Let's look at what has happened in the broiler industry. The 499 to 99 birds - big deal, not the big thing. So they say there's a grandfather clause in there. Has anybody checked out what it really means? You know what? The grandfather clause in there says that if you have 499 birds this year, you can still have them, you're not cut back to 99. A new producer has to have 99. But then together with that grandfather clause, the

new regulation says you have to cool your eggs, you have to buy all kinds of equipment. You're putting them out of business. Do you realize what is happening? Who is looking at this? Is the Member for Gimli looking at these things? No. Who is looking at it from your side in terms of the impact you're doing? After the money that you've pumped into agriculture, do you ever consider these matters?

A MEMBER: Never.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: No. You know, you accept *carte blanche* the statements of one Minister, and you know what? I'll give you a little warning, I think that when we were government at one time, from 1977 to 81, we had situations where some of our Ministers floated things by and nobody checked it. All of a sudden, the backbenchers realized, hey, you know, we need some watchdogs in there, and we did that. But who are the watchdogs of the Ministers on your side? Who's watching the Minister of Education and the Minister of Culture when some of your propaganda goes out? It's hurting you people. You realize that? You have to have people that watch you. You can't cover it all, and if you don't have reliable people - you have people in the backbenchers there who should be looking at these things. There are not too many agricultural people in the back bench who would watch what's happening in the agricultural community.

Do you people realize that your Minister of Agriculture should be blowing his horn right now to get together with the Americans to not allow them to put an import tariff on hogs? Do you people realize that 40 percent of our hogs are going to the States, that's it's a major export industry that we have, and that possibly by next week that they could have a 6 percent import tariff on there? Do you realize that? And if that happens, do you know what happens to your hog industry? Do you know what happens to the Minister of Agriculture's Stabilization Program? Within six months the Hog Stabilization Program is broke, and there are going to be many hog farmers going broke. Why is our Minister not on the blower to the Federal Minister making all kinds of presentations?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't have all the answers. The Government of the Day is not paying attention to what's happening among themselves. We're getting close to an election. They're all getting antsy. They're all trying to cover their own departments and what have you, and that's why mistakes are being made. That's why the Minister of Culture and the Minister of Education ran into a bit of a jackpot the other day. The Minister of Community Services, you know, with kids not being able to play together - we can go through the whole works. Those are the things that are happening because you're so concerned about your individual departments now. You're running scared and you're running into trouble, and that's exactly what's happening.

Every time you make a mistake like that, people get turned off. I shouldn't give you advice in terms of what you should do, but get out there and listen to people for a change, and hear what they're saying - not listen, but hear what they're saying. There's a bad message out there for you, and we feel optimistic. Call the election

whenever you want. Call it today, call it six months from now, call it a year from now, the message is already there. And Limestone is not going to save your butts; it's too late for that.

I could go through the aspect of the Department of Natural Resources, and I'll have that opportunity within a week or so when we get into the Estimates because I think that's one of the first departments that's up. The utter madness that has gone on there.

Now, I want to compliment the Premier on the transfer of the Minister, who is now Minister of Labour, out of that department. It's good for the Department of Natural Resources. For myself, as critic, I have had plans laid for six months, you know, if I would like to tangle this individual. So maybe it's just as well. I think for the people of Manitoba and the Department of Natural Resources, I think it's a good move. Tongue-in-cheek I have to say that the present Minister is an old professional. When we jibed at each other a little bit in the public meeting there, all in fun, I said, well - we were talking about maybe going down to the Legion there and we decided if we went down there for two hours or something like that we'd maybe have the Estimates passed. I was having fun with him. But, he says, I'll tell you right now, any questions that you raise, you know, being a new Minister in there, I'll have to review it. He's sharp enough, he's no pro at this game, it's going to be very hard to attack him. But I told him that by the time we get through with the process this year, we'll both be more educated. I expect to learn, and I hope and I know he will learn as well.

What has happened? The little things that turn people off, you see, we look at the big pie in the sky, and you're actually falling into a trap that possibly we fell into last time, and you didn't learn. Remember this old slogan, and we've jibed about it, don't stop us now, we were going for the big project. You know what, what are you doing? Limestone - don't stop us now. So you're going to have the contract made, and you say that's the one. Now, because we didn't have the contract signed, we'll prove that we have a contract signed. You're missing the bread and butter issues. You're missing the bread and butter issues because of the damage you have already done for three-and-a-half years.

Natural Resources - look at all the people that are offended with the little program of feed compensation for the guys that were feeding deer and elk. Not a major thing, but you have offended so many people the way you do these things. I was going to criticize the Minister of Natural Resources because they're now tendering approximately 100 parks, roadside parks, to the private sector. I raised the question the other day - and of course the Ministers are capable and they fudge around these questions and you don't get a solid answer - but there are almost 100 public parks and roadside parks that are being tendered to the private sector. This government, they want to control everything, they're giving it to the private sector. Then they ask what is the criteria for a park being tendered publicly? Is it profit and loss? Yes, it's profit and loss. If it's a loss situation, we'll turn it to the private sector. You know what I say? Hurrah, turn it over to the private sector, I have no argument, but if you want to follow that philosophy through, do it in all aspects of it. Don't just pick an isolated thing and say the roadside parks

where the previous Minister of Natural Resources was smashing all the barbecues and stuff of that nature, your record is very lousy, and I have only one regret. You're record is the lousiest I've ever seen of a Minister of Natural Resources, and I just have one regret that I cannot take you on in Estimates. This Minister has done more to degrade the Department of Natural Resources than anyone has and, Mr. Deputy Speaker

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, P. EYLER: Order please, order please. Order please.

Does the Minister of Labour have a point of order?

HON. A. MACKLING: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I have come to expect the kind of distortion that the honourable members make, but I am not prepared to allow that to be on the record unchallenged. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the honourable member asserts that this former Minister of Natural Resources was engaged in destruction of public property, and that is false. That is false and I want him to retract that.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think that member for his clarification. It was not a point of order.

The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Is the Minister of Labour indicating that during his time in office as Minister of Natural Resources that he was not having barbecues smashed in roadside parks? Ludicrous. Mr. Speaker, this man has left that department in a shambles. He has left it in shambles and that is, Mr. Speaker, why this Minister was transferred to Labour as Minister.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Order please, order please.

The Honourable Minister of Labour on a point of order.

HON. A. MACKLING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member knows that he drew to the House's attention during the time that I was Minister of Natural Resources that some staff in the Department of Natural Resources were alleged to have removed barbecues and destroyed them. But what the honourable member is saying is that this Minister smashed barbecues that were public property. I want the honourable member to put the record straight.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Members may have a different opinion as to the facts; that does not constitute a point of order. However, I would remind members that when a member has knowledge of a subject by his own personal knowledge, that must be accepted by other members of the House.

The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if the previous Minister of Natural Resources indicates that he did not have control of his department at that time, I can accept that. That's

obviously, Mr. Speaker, what has happened because that Minister who was Minister of Natural Resources created nothing but major problems and he can confer with his counterpart who is now the Minister of Natural Resources in terms of the problems that he has created. My conversation with the present Minister of Natural Resources has indicated it will take a year to get the problems straightened out that this Minister created.

I'll tell you something, Mr. Speaker. I am happy that he has been transferred to the Department of Labour because he is going to create the same kind of chaos there because this Minister has been a problem maker for a long time. It's a reflection on him; I regret to say that.

Mr. Speaker, I have tried to cover some of the things that have happened. There are other things and I want to go through these things in detail when we get to the Estimates of Natural Resources because there is a major problem there but it is the same in other departments.

I was talking, Mr. Speaker, about the credibility of this government in terms of the statements that they make, in terms of the Throne Speech, in terms of the Budget, and they have no credibility left. For example, Mr. Speaker, if a farmer was going to go and do a financial statement and in that financial statement of assets, liabilities, etc., he would include, for example, 72,000 - let's not say 72 million, I want to come to that - but he would include \$72,000 that he thinks he will get from the bank, but could you use that kind of a thing when you present a financial statement?

This Minister of Finance turns around and uses \$72 million in his Estimates that has not been included. It's not committed. You know, what rationale? How can the public accept that kind of thing? He says but we think it's going to come. If it doesn't come, Mr. Speaker, what are we facing? What are we facing if this \$72 million does not come from the Federal Government? We would probably face another Budget, a mini-Budget. Will then the Minister of Finance either accept the fact that he will be looking at \$580 million worth of deficit?

HON. A. MACKLING: Albert, aren't you ashamed of yourself?

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I am very proud of myself because I can face the people of Manitoba and you people have to do the same thing.

A MEMBER: Try and control the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Speaker, the member is being argumentative with me and he is throwing me off my track. Can you control him a little bit?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Speaker, I am talking about the credibility of this government in terms of using this \$72 million that you know has been a very controversial thing and putting it into the Budget before they have the commitment.

HON. H. HARAPIAK: You think we'll get it, Albert?

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I don't know. The Minister of Northern Affairs says will you get it, or will we get it? I don't know - I hope - but what fool would put it in his Budget when you don't have that commitment? You know what I envision?

HON. H. HARAPIAK: You don't think it's coming to us, do you, Albert?

MR. A. DRIEDGER: You know what I envision, Mr. Speaker? And I want to lay a little scenario out here. What happens if the Federal Government gives you half? What happens if you get half?

HON. H. HARAPIAK: Would you send it back, Albert?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Okay, I'll change my tactic.

HON. H. HARAPIAK: You've got some inside information, have you, Albert?

A MEMBER: I wish we did, I just wish we did.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.
The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am just trying to relate the position that this Minister of Finance took in terms of including the \$72 million in his Budget and, if it doesn't happen to pass, what is he going to do? Every Minister is going to say we have to cut back because we didn't get the \$72 million. What is the percentage of the \$72 million against your total expenditures?

HON. H. HARAPIAK: Is that what you are afraid of, Albert?

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I am not afraid of anything. I feel very secure in my position because I am forthright and honest with the people of Manitoba, which is something that this government cannot say. You can use \$5 million worth of advertising to project your image and I'll tell you something, it will not sell because the proof is in the pudding. The people of Manitoba are disappointed in this government and the question out there is - and you must hear it too - when are you going to call the election?

I am patient, Mr. Speaker. I predict, as I did in the Throne Speech, that it will not be before spring of '86 because you've lost now, you've lost this fall and the end of the term is next spring. But I'll tell you something: Take us up on the challenge. You feel that Limestone and the \$72 million are the issues, drop the writ and let's go to the people and decide who is going to be forming the government from now on because this government has misled the people of Manitoba. You have misled the people of Manitoba and it's going to come back to haunt you and it's too late to change the image. You can use all the rest of your money and not build one road, you will not be able to get back the confidence of the people of Manitoba.

I know why the Minister of Labour is sensitive because his is one of the hides that's on the line, obviously.

He's gone, he's gone! So will be many others; there are some members there. You know I was saying on the way down from Gladstone, it would be nice if I could pick and choose which ones would remain. Unfortunately, that's not our . . . am I right? The Member for Gladstone and myself had a discussion on this. The message is out there but you don't want to listen. You say you listen but you don't want to hear it.

Mr. Speaker, nobody likes to be negative. Many times I have said to people in Manitoba, and if any of the members of the government come into my constituency, I have treated them with respect. I introduced them to people. I take them around, and I tell people at a public meeting, when I'm there with a Minister or something like that, I never run down members because I think, by and large, we all respect each other. You know, we all to some degree feel we're trying to do the best for the Province of Manitoba.

Many of you people sitting there are influenced by a few individuals that channel the course, and that is where you lose the handle of it. I'm sure that the Member for Ste. Rose, the Member for The Pas and the Member for Flin Flon, I've been in their areas. I've been in most areas, and I have never knocked the individual people when I get out there. I have never criticized individual members, but I criticize what you do as a government because you're not synchronized and you do not have an understanding of what the people of Manitoba want. For that reason, it's a matter of time.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to enter the debate on the Budget. I am particularly pleased to be able to follow the Honourable Member for Emerson. He's also kind of interesting to listen to, even though most of what he says is rhetoric that we've heard over and over and over. It's like an old broken record.

Mr. Speaker, I think the problem that we have in the opposition is that they're in a bit of a quandary at the present time, because things are happening that are good for this province. Things are happening that are good for the people of Manitoba, and they don't like it; it's as simple as that. They don't like good things to happen in Manitoba, because it makes it more difficult and maybe impossible for them to get re-elected. That has been the whole theme of the comments that we've heard from every member on that side of the House.

It seems that doomsday is the order of the day. All we've heard is doom and gloom for eight days on the Throne Speech, and we're hearing similar songs coming from members opposite on the Budget Speech.

Mr. Speaker, 1977-81, we had a government that was out to lunch. They were out to lunch for four years. For four years we had a government that was out to lunch. Mr. Speaker, as we were entering into a recession, they went out to lunch. They backed off, Mr. Speaker. They said, now that we are heading into a recession and the private sector is unable to stimulate the economy by itself, now is the time for us to back off. Now is the time for the government to pull back, to cut back. We had four years of that, from 1977-81.

Since 1981, we've had an opposition that has been out to lunch. Mr. Speaker, they are still out to lunch. Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague, the Honourable Minister for Highways; he followed the Member for Assiniboia and, of course, the Member for Assiniboia said, you know, what has happened? Tell me what has happened? Nothing has happened. My colleague started to itemize what has happened in his constituency, and he's itemized what happened in Emerson's constituency, and in Swan River Constituency. I believe the Member for Niakwa acknowledges that something happened in his constituency.

But, Mr. Speaker, they don't know what is going on. Don't they travel in their constituency? Don't they go to Lorette? Don't they go to Swan River, and see the Main Street Program there, Mr. Speaker? Do they not go to Erickson? Does not the Member for Minnedosa go to Erickson which is in his constituency, and see 30,000 interlocking bricks on the street, red ones? Mr. Speaker, does he not go there to see, before and after, that there were three stores closed, boarded up and, before the program was finished, the three stores were open?

They say there is no confidence in this government in this province. I say, they're wrong. Let them go and walk down Main Street, Manitoba, and see the confidence that has been instilled in 29 communities, Mr. Speaker.

A MEMBER: Who put that program in place?

MR. A. ADAM: I believe this government did. This government put that program in, something innovative, something that creates confidence. As Mayor Oshust from Erickson indicated, it was a shot in the arm. It's just what we needed.

My honourable member, the Minister of Labour, is trying to distract me. Mr. Speaker, we have demonstrated to the people of Manitoba that we can provide good government. We are not concerned about meeting them head on any time, anywhere, to face the electorate; we are not concerned at all.

Mr. Speaker, we listened yesterday, they're opposed to Limestone. Why are they opposed to Limestone? It's not because it is not a good thing. It's just because they know that it is going, going, gone as far as the Conservatives are concerned in the next election; that's what they are concerned about.

So, Mr. Speaker, we listened to the critic, no less, for Hydro. The Member for Lakeside spoke for 40 minutes, and he never said one word about the Limestone construction and the impact it will have on the economy of this province, the jobs that it will create, the manufacturing stimulation that will take place because of that, the opportunities for Northern Manitobans, not a word about Limestone. — (Interjection) — Well, I apologize, he said Limestone once, and he tied it in with 99 chickens.

He talked about Limestone, and he tied it in with 99 chickens because, Mr. Speaker, they are devastated by what is taking place in Manitoba; they are devastated by the Limestone Project; they are devastated by what was announced by my Premier this morning, the statement that he made in this House on the agreement

that we have signed with Canadian General Electric. Mr. Speaker, Canadian General Electric is not afraid to come to Manitoba. They're not concerned about the rhetoric, about the 1.5 percent levy for health and education. They're not concerned about that. There are opportunities here, Mr. Speaker, and they will come here. So, Mr. Speaker, let them not be too confident and holier than thou about what is going to happen in the Province of Manitoba between now and whenever an election is called.

Mr. Speaker, we have a job to do. We had a job to do four years ago. We had to clean up a mess. It's unfortunate, I guess, the timing was bad, because the philosophy is, let the private sector do it. Everything will come out in the wash. Unfortunately that doesn't happen, Mr. Speaker, and I don't blame the private sector. It's not their role to create jobs. The job of a private entrepreneur is to make a profit. That is the role of capital, to make a profit, not to create jobs.

So there is a role for the public to play, and particularly more so when you're going into a recession, and that's where the Conservatives of this province went wrong, when they took office. They didn't realize that we were entering into a recession, not only in Manitoba, but right across the Western world and right across Europe and all over. It happened all over. They didn't realize that, and they backed off at the wrong time. When they should have been going forward and trying to pick up some of the slack, at least mitigate, lessen the impact of the recession that we were going into to try and preserve our strengths and our resources to take advantage of any turnaround. They didn't do that. I'm saying this tonight so that they will know and they will learn a lesson of how they lost in the last election. I expect that if they had taken a different tact, they would have been more progressive, more innovative and understand what's going on out there in the real world. They may well have been still on this side of the House. They shocked the entire - well, I wouldn't say entire - but they shocked Manitobans in their four years of tenure.

Mr. Speaker, we heard them cry for the last eight months or so. They were calling for the Legislature to get back in, call back, reconvene the Legislature so that we can talk about Limestone, and that we can talk about agriculture, problems that farmers are facing in Manitoba, and I guess the member who spoke more about Limestone, I guess, was the Honourable Member for Assiniboia. I think he referred more about the Hydro project than any other member on the other side. I find that passing strange that even the critic for the Department of Energy and Mines said nothing.

Mr. Speaker, there was a major announcement this morning by the Premier on another major development of the Limestone Project, another phase of it, and not a question. I find that passing strange, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the second sector that they were talking about when we were not in Session was agriculture. We have to talk about the problems of agriculture and, Mr. Speaker, what have we heard? What have we heard from members opposite on agriculture? We've heard nothing, nothing at all.

We have a critic, the Member for Arthur, who appears to not know what the problems are, not being aware what should take place, and is prone to criticize on what our Minister of Agriculture is attempting to do,

the co-operation that we're having with the federal people, and things are happening. We know that it's bad. We know that the situation in agriculture is not good, and we've heard the Member for Assiniboia. I think maybe he should be the agriculture critic, I honestly do, because he mentioned about the concern that he had about blocks and blocks of tractors and farm equipment that are sitting in his constituency that are unsold. Mr. Speaker, he should know the reason why those tractors are sitting there and why that equipment is not being sold. I'm sure that he won't find out from the Member for Arthur, because the Member for Arthur doesn't know why those tractors are sitting there.

We heard them talk about dairy quotas, Mr. Speaker, as if this government had done something drastically wrong with dairy quotas. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, put in the record and they were accusing the Minister of somehow not allowing quota transfers and so on. I will read verbatim from the quote, and now the present Minister of Agriculture is referring to the Member for Arthur, the former Minister of Agriculture. "The Minister advised the secretary that the policy had not been changed with respect to preventing the capitalization of quotas in Manitoba. However, the Minister felt that modifications could be made to the existing quota regulation policy that would eliminate the cost of appraisals and still prevent quota capitalization from occurring. The Minister indicated that if evidence was obtained that a person had purchased quota and the quota so obtained would be cancelled."

Now the Member for La Verendrye spoke at length on quotas. I want to tell him that it was their policy, the former Minister's policy that I'm referring to now. So obviously they're not speaking to one another, Mr. Speaker.

So I want to say, Mr. Speaker, we've heard not a word about the cutbacks on federal support for agriculture. We've heard not a word of criticism. We've heard some of the members opposite ask the province to take over, take the Federal Government off the hook, to help the beet growers, the beet producers. Since the Federal Government wants to change its policy and not provide support for the beef producers, they're saying, well, let the little province take over. They didn't say we're going to go to Ottawa and we're going to talk to the Minister of Agriculture and see if we can't convince him to change his policy. They did not say that.

They don't say anything when FCC is now proposing to cut back \$400 million in funding for loans. They don't say anything about FCC wanting to move to long-term loans rather than short-term loans. They are not complaining about that.

A MEMBER: Yes, we did.

MR. A. ADAM: Well, we haven't heard it. I read the honourable member's complete statement in Hansard today, and I haven't seen a word about that. I hope you have phoned Mr. Wise, and I hope you have something nice to report. I hope you have also called him and asked him not to increase the cost recoveries for services provided to grain producers, registered

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seed producers, hog producers, beef producers. I hope the Honourable Member for Lakeside has also contacted the Minister of Agriculture and asked him not to do those things, because they are not putting their thoughts or their words on the record, Mr. Speaker.

We would like to know where they stand on those issues.

I realize that it's 10 o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. A. ADAM: Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: When this item is next before the House, the honourable member will have 20 minutes remaining.

The time of adjournment having arrived, this House is accordingly adjourned and will stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Thursday.