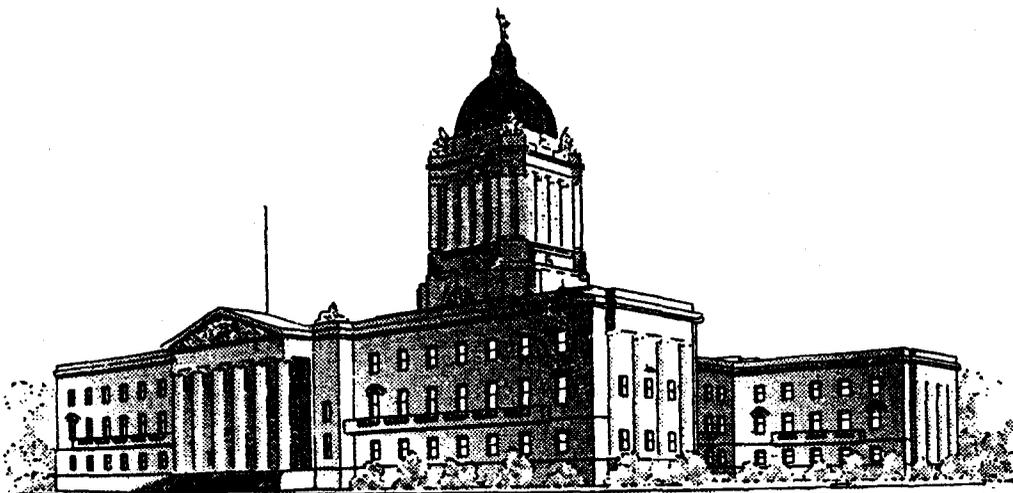




**Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Denis C. Rocan  
Speaker*



**Vol. XLIII No. 13A - 1:30 p.m., Monday, April 25, 1994**

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Fifth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 25, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

#### APM Incorporated Remuneration and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of William Tataryn, Marlene Tataryn, Rod Leveille and others requesting the Legislative Assembly urge the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to personally step in and order the repayment of the \$4 million paid to Connie Curran and her firm APM Incorporated and consider cancelling the recent cuts to the Pharmacare and Home Care programs.

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

#### Curran Contract Cancellation and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement

**Mr. Speaker:** I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Clif Evans). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

**Some Honourable Members:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

*The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:*

*WHEREAS the Manitoba government has repeatedly broken promises to support the Pharmacare program and has in fact cut benefits and increased deductibles far above the inflation rate; and*

*WHEREAS the Pharmacare program was brought in by the NDP as a preventative program which keeps people out of costly hospital beds and institutions; and*

*WHEREAS rather than cutting benefits and increasing deductibles the provincial government should be demanding the federal government cancel recent cuts to generic drugs that occurred under the Drug Patent Act; and*

*WHEREAS at the same time Manitoba government has also cut home care and implemented user fees; and*

*WHEREAS the Manitoba government paid an American health care consultant over \$4 million to implement further cuts in health care.*

*WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Premier to personally step in and order the cancellation of the Connie Curran contract and consider cancelling the recent cuts to the Pharmacare and Home Care programs.*

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

#### Manitoba Builder Bonds Series II

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I have both a report to table and a ministerial statement.

I would like to table the fidelity bonds in accordance with Section 20 of The Public Officers Act.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to announce a second series of Builder Bonds for 1994. The initial offering of Builder Bonds was a great success, raising \$341 million for the province. The people of Manitoba have continued to support their province by investing in excess of \$1.5 billion in HydroBonds and Builder Bonds. More importantly, over \$180 million has been paid in interest exclusively to Manitobans, interest that otherwise would have been paid to lenders outside of the province.

Builder Bonds will be available for as little as \$100 for a five-year term. Purchasers will have the option of monthly, annual or compounded interest.

Builder Bonds Series II will be on sale from Tuesday, May 24, to Saturday, June 11, with the interest rate being announced May 20. The interest rate will be competitive with the principal and interest on all bonds fully guaranteed by the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Manitobans to share in this exciting opportunity with Builder Bonds Series II.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable minister for making this statement, and, certainly, we hope that we can sell these bonds successfully and that we will raise the money, because, indeed, the government does need the money, given the fact that again this year we are going to have a considerable deficit as we have had year after year since this government has been elected.

As a matter of fact, the per capita debt in the province of Manitoba is substantially higher today than it was in 1988. In fact, this higher per capita debt in Manitoba is higher than it has ever been in our history. There seems to be no letting up in the increase in the debt per capita.

Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage Manitobans to buy these bonds because we believe that Manitobans should be financing our government programs as much as possible. Thank you.

\* (1335)

**Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, very quickly, leaving aside the question of the amount of debt and how it comes about, I think that all parties should be in favour of domesticating our debt. The more we can raise internally, the more interest we can pay to Manitobans as opposed to people from outside of our provincial economy, the better it will be.

Mr. Speaker, we supported the HydroBonds; we supported the first issue of Builder Bonds. We will certainly support this issue of Builder Bonds.

I think the real challenge is clearly to move on from this and not just retain dollars in this province to essentially finance debt but also retain dollars for Venture Capital purposes in this province. That, I think, is the second challenge that we all need to address ourselves to—retaining as much of the \$640 million each year in pension contributions and RSP contributions that leave this province. That is the challenge.

The minister is aware of our comments and our ideas on that front, but with respect to the Builder Bonds, I said in my Budget Address and we have said before that retaining the dollars of Manitobans in Manitoba is good for everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have with us this afternoon from the W.C. Miller Collegiate, forty Grade 9 students under the direction of Miss Marcey Chermiak and Mr. Ben Dyck. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner).

Also this afternoon, from the R.F. Morrison School, we have forty-five Grade 5 students under the direction of Mr. Myron Tarasiur. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak).

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

#### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

##### Gambling Treatment Programs

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

In the budget tabled last week, one of the largest, if not the largest, areas of growth in terms of revenues of the government has been in the area of lottery revenue. Some \$180 million is cited as the expected income for the fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, in annual reports past, the government has had an amount of money of some \$500,000 for treatment of people affected by gambling and has had \$1.2 million for advertising in that annual report which now is being expanded by pre-election advertising that is planned by the government. We also see that women's shelters are commenting today that they see a connection between VLTs and domestic violence intake.

I would ask the Premier, do they see the connection between the VLT expansion of this government and domestic violence intake? Secondly, do they think it is appropriate to have an advertising budget for Lotteries some four times more than the amount of money this government has budgeted for treating people who are affected by the social impact of lottery expansion?

\* (1340)

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act):** Mr. Speaker, I, too, read the article today in the paper, and I talked with a reporter last week. It seems that may be an indication of some of the reasons why people have abusive activity within family relationships.

I think Waltraud Grieger, the chairperson of that association, said it best this morning when she said: I think the one thing I really wanted to clarify is that whether it is gambling or alcohol or any other addiction, it does not necessarily cause the violence. What it does do is it intensifies and increases the number of times that it happens.

Mr. Speaker, at this point, we are not entirely certain yet what kind of volume would come from this kind of activity. The shelters are, in fact, carrying on some monitoring of that situation so they can determine whether it is becoming more and more prevalent. It is a concern to all of us. Certainly, we have put sufficient resources, according to the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, sufficient so far for their activities, but if additional resources are required, I have indicated publicly on a number of occasions, we will certainly address that issue.

### Gambling Public Consultations

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the minister indicated that they were not sure of the impact and did not answer the question about the relationship or the ratio of spending on advertising for Lotteries versus programs for people to deal with the social costs.

In 1987, the Premier (Mr. Filmon), on March 11, the then-Leader of the Opposition, called for public hearings to deal with the impact of gambling prior to decisions being made. With the 100-day, part-time charity casinos, he felt that expansion should not be dealt with behind closed doors and that we should have public hearings in this province, and I quote: ". . . so that all these public groups will be heard before any permanent decision is made on the matter?"

The Premier goes on to talk about the potential tax on the poor with the revenue, in the same questions, and again calls for public hearings.

Now, surely, we have had massive expansion. The minister is not aware of the impact on women's shelters. The Premier himself felt that public hearings would be a useful public exercise in areas of gambling. We have called on that; other parties have called on that.

Would the Premier now today commit himself to his own words of 1987 and have a full public hearing and inquiry on gambling, the revenues, the social cost, the expansion issues, so all Manitobans could debate this very, very important issue in the province?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for his question. It begs the question, of course, as to what the real position of the New Democrats is on this issue, because this very Leader of the Opposition is one who in The Pas promised to have a casino for the First Nations at The Pas.

The New Democrats in office in the Province of Saskatchewan have added over 3,000 VLTs without any public hearings. The New Democrats in office in Ontario have opened a casino in

Windsor under, I might say, the management of an American management firm they brought in.

Mr. Speaker, this government has brought the opportunity for examination by the Legislature in our public process of having the committees of the Legislature examine it. Under the New Democrats, there was not that opportunity. The Lotteries Corporation did not have to come before a committee of the Legislature. This government has carried through on its commitment to do that so that there is this kind of public examination of the lotteries practices and the opportunity to be examined by the critics and by the members of the Legislature in a public forum so that we do have that examination and review.

This government has done those things. This government has also increased the funding by 123 percent to women's shelters since it has been in office. So we address the concerns. We are not just people who talk about them, like New Democrats, out of both sides of their mouths.

Mr. Doer: I would suggest that all our commitments are subject to absolute public inquiry in hearings, Mr. Speaker, and we have the transcripts, so let not the Premier again create a false impression in this Chamber, as he is wont to do.

#### **Gambling Expansion Moratorium**

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the government, in November, had announced a so-called moratorium on the expansion of gambling. I have a press release from Plymouth, Minnesota, indicating that the company has sold its first simulated crap game, or video lottery crap game, to the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, a provincial government entity, to be installed in the province of Manitoba. The size of this order was not confirmed.

This game, Mr. Speaker, is the first one, they say, in Canada. This game, of course, is going to be installed. It allows over five players, I believe, to play in a simulated and mechanical way.

I would ask the government how this expansion or change in gambling, given that they do not have

a "crap game" at the casino at the Fort Garry Hotel, how this affects again the so-called moratorium that the government has promised us and seems to be breaking at every occasion.

\* (1345)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, on November 3, 1993, I outlined a moratorium with respect to additional casinos and VLT sites. In addition to that, I outlined, in some detail, the kinds of things that would happen that were already committed to prior to the moratorium being issued.

Mr. Speaker, some of the time frames related to these things take six months, a year and sometimes more to get from the time of order until the time of delivery.

I also indicated at that time, Mr. Speaker, that there would be internally changes in types of games as products mature and so on. If you take one out and put another one in, it is not an expansion of gambling.

#### **Gambling Social Costs**

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): We have recent reports of children being locked in cars in the parking lot of the McPhillips Street Station, reports of gambling-related suicides throughout the province and now a report from the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba showing that 75 percent of VLT users have gambling-related problems with their families. I wonder what evidence this government needs to be convinced of the negative social effects of gambling.

As the Premier (Mr. Filmon) said in his answer to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), and I quote, we address the concerns related to gambling, I would like to ask the government if they would, in a specific way, address the concerns related to gambling and facilitate a meeting between the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, women's shelters in Manitoba and other agencies throughout the province that deal with gambling

problems to try and address, in a positive, proactive, specific way, these issues.

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** As a result of our government's commitment to women in the province of Manitoba, we have increased funding for women's shelters 123 percent since we took office, so we have made a commitment to ensure that the shelter system is there to provide services to women in crisis.

I have already had the opportunity this morning of speaking to Waltraud Grieger, and, indeed, we are putting in place a meeting in the very near future with the women's shelters and those that provide services to women and the Addictions Foundation in Manitoba to ensure that those that are accepting calls from women in crisis do understand the full process of providing opportunities for women to access the Addictions Foundation for any type of addictive behaviour that might cause family crisis.

#### **Gambling Rural Treatment Programs**

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Almost half of the VLTs in Manitoba are outside the Perimeter Highway. A Brandon crime prevention committee report in March of this year indicated that one in 10 VLT users is likely to experience problems with gambling. I would assume that means within the city and outside the city of Winnipeg.

There are no services specifically for gambling addictions outside the city of Winnipeg. I would like to ask when the government will provide services to all the people of the province of Manitoba and not just nine counsellors in the city of Winnipeg, so that all of the residents of Manitoba will have access to these services.

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act):** Mr. Speaker, there are resident people for the Addictions Foundation in Brandon and in Thompson and shortly will be there in Dauphin, as was originally planned.

We have nine counsellors trained in the effects of gambling problems, and they will be dispersed throughout Manitoba to provide services throughout the province.

#### **Treatment Programs**

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for Lotteries stated today that people do not become addicted to gambling overnight; it takes years.

Will the people of Manitoba have to wait years for the government to take effective action to deal with this growing problem, or is the government going to begin now to work with other groups throughout the province of Manitoba to establish programs to deal with the immediate problems facing people in regard to gambling, to look at long-term solutions and also to look most specifically and most importantly at preventing these problems from—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

\* (1350)

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act):** Mr. Speaker, we have been doing that for the last eight or 10 months. We have put in place \$2.5 million worth of funding to the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba to train people. We have had warning posters, a gambling hotline, a litany of other kinds of activities to try and bring the attention of people.

In addition to that, the Addictions Foundation trained counsellors. This is a little bit of a new field in terms of that. It has only matured in the last 10 years or so in the U.S., and those trained counsellors are conducting seminars and information sessions with other trained professionals, Child and Family Services and so on, so that they can become aware.

In addition to that, some training is ongoing at the moment with front-line people involved in the premises in which these machines are located so that they too can have an awareness of an attempt to provide prevention as opposed to treatment afterwards.

### **Gambling Volberg Report**

**Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the minister said, and was reported as saying, as my friend has indicated, specifically that people do not become addicted to gambling overnight. Then he went on to say, if there is stress in the family, then it creates difficulties, but at this point no one can say yet if there is any direct association.

However, in fact, I would like to remind the minister of the Volberg report. We do not yet have the full report because the minister has refused to release it, but the precis version that we did get back last year indicates at page 16 that there is a linkage between—substantial numbers of women experiencing domestic abuse have partners whose gambling is problematic or whose own gambling developed as a means to remain out of the home is problematic.

The Volberg report went on to specifically indicate at page 20 that training should be offered to a broad array of professional groups, including family therapists, social workers and staff of domestic abuse agencies.

Mr. Speaker, why did we spend all this money for this report that the minister apparently has not read or has not listened to, or does he dispute the findings of this report that he commissioned? Which is it?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act):** Mr. Speaker, firstly, let me say that the question that was put and the response in the newspaper that was printed there related to an increase in people attending wife abuse shelters. No one disputes the fact that Dr. Volberg in her report indicated that some 1.3 percent of adult Manitobans could have a problem associated with gambling. We have freely admitted that, and that is why we hired Dr. Volberg in the first place: it was to try and get a handle on what kinds of problems we might have to deal with.

But, Mr. Speaker, the words there are not my words. The words that say gambling addiction

does not occur overnight, those are the words of the executive director of the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba at a public meeting, standing right in front of the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), who heard that exact statement.

### **Treatment Programs**

**Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have already put on the record the words of Ms. Volberg who wrote this report and clearly made that linkage. I will await the minister's recognizing that this does exist.

I want to further ask the minister and table correspondence dated April 20 from the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation which now indicates that—earlier we had indicated there was \$1.2 million, we thought, being spent on building upgrades and renovations. In fact, that is \$2.4 million, double what was earlier thought.

I would like to ask the minister, given that the Lotteries Corporation is spending \$2.4 million on building upgrades, \$548,000 on a public relations advertising campaign, spent \$619,000 last year on travel, why is it that only \$500,000 per year is committed to deal with the in excess of 10,000 addicts we know are in our province?

Why is it that there is only a \$106,000 increase this year in all of domestic abuse services in this province? Clearly, the priority of the government speaks loudly and clearly. Why is this government putting more money into public relations and building upgrades than dealing with domestic abuse in the province created by gambling?

\* (1355)

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act):** Firstly, let me say that with respect to the \$2.5 million we are putting into treatment programs to the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, my honourable friend heard the executive director of the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba a couple of months ago at a public meeting say, we have adequate resources to deal with the problem, and Mr. Speaker, we do meet

with the Addictions Foundation on a regular basis to determine if, in fact, additional resources are required.

My honourable friend says there are 10,000 addicts. How does he know that? No one knows if there are 10,000—

**An Honourable Member:** Volberg said so.

**Mr. Ernst:** No, she does not, Mr. Speaker. She does not do that at all.

With respect to building additions and equipment purchases that are going on with respect to the Crown corporation, we have a hundred-and-some-odd more employees at the head office of the corporation than we had a couple of years ago. We need some place to put them. They are entitled to a decent workplace, as well as everyone else who works for a Crown corporation.

We are putting in the \$800,000 he refers to for a new computer system to operate the Lotteries Corporation. Does he not think that we ought to have timely information and so on to deal with those operations? This is necessary in order to fully provide management information related to the operations of the Crown corporation.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, I am intrigued by the minister's refutation, in essence, of Ms. Volberg's report which he has up to now said represented the final word, specifically the statement that there is currently 1.3 percent of the adult population, which represents at least 10,000 people in this province, and that also came out at that meeting from the executive director of the Addictions Foundation. Currently, those people are, in fact, pathological gamblers, and he acknowledged that more were being created all the time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Addictions Foundation only responds to somebody who complains, who comes to them.

My question for the minister: Why is this government not taking a proactive approach at, in fact, dealing with these problems before the person reaches rock bottom and comes to the government, as Ms. Volberg specifically recommended at page 20, where she talked about training for counsellors in domestic abuse agencies? She talked about how

training should be provided to the staff of gaming revenues about its social and economic costs.

Why is this government not taking a proactive approach to deal with the pathological gamblers who are already in existence in this province?

**Mr. Ernst:** Mr. Speaker, let me say firstly to my honourable friend that 1.3 percent of the adult population, according to Dr. Volberg, are not pathological gamblers. What it says is they have the potential, or they could have a problem associated with it. It does not say they are, it does not say they were and does not say that they are going to be, but I am—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I believe the minister has indicated that there was some misinformation put on the record. I want to indicate—

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

\* \* \*

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable minister, to finish with his response.

**Mr. Ernst:** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the question of broadening the scope of people involved in the potential for either recognition or treatment of problem gambling, in my response to the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), I think I indicated that we are, in fact, dealing with Child and Family Services and a number of other agencies, that the nine trained people from the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba are broadening the horizons, dealing with them in terms of seminars and so on.

#### Post-Secondary Education Access

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, students in Manitoba's ACCESS programs are, generally speaking, adults in their thirties, out of school for many years, often with a Grade 8 level of education. Most are aboriginal, more than half

are female, and many are single parents. Common sense alone would tell us that these Manitobans are the least likely to be aware of post-secondary education, the least likely to have the confidence and the least likely to have the family support to take on the \$60,000 debt required.

I would like to ask the Minister of Education to table any shred of evidence he has to demonstrate that such students will continue to have fair access to post-secondary education.

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, I will welcome, certainly, the dialogue around this issue once we move into Estimates, and there will be some views and, indeed, some learned conclusions that I will be able to share with the member at that time.

The decision was made on the basis of fairness, and what we sensed was that in today's society where we have a large majority of our youth who are having to call upon loans or are having to call upon loan with respect to their post-secondary education, that that should be the right, indeed, that is applied to everybody.

\* (1400)

#### **ACCESS Programs Report Tabling Request**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, will the minister confirm that his department has spent thousands of dollars on an evaluation of ACCESS programs which concluded that they continue to be of enormous benefit to individuals and to the province of Manitoba as a whole? Will he table that report?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, that is correct and that is why we are maintaining a level of intake that we have had over the years.

#### **Current Student Status**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, does the minister intend to honour his contract with existing students in the ACCESS programs, including those at the Winnipeg Education Centre, and allow them to continue their programs under

the conditions under which they entered the programs under the original ACCESS program?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that question as notice.

Certainly, when we have made policy changes in the past, the latest being the Student Loans Program a year ago when we went from a bursary program more to a straight loan program, we did grandfather the rights of those students to whom we had made commitments. That is a general approach this government has taken with respect to all policy changes.

I will endeavour to give specific detail to the question another day.

#### **Youth Unemployment Rate Reduction Strategy**

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question either for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) or the Minister of Education.

Youth unemployment in Manitoba has risen dramatically in the first three months of this year compared to the first three months of last year. We have jumped from 14.6 percent unemployment for young people to 20.1. That is a dramatic increase. Yet I note in the 1994 Estimates, tabled with the Budget Address, that the government has only allocated \$2.6 million for the CareerStart program, which is only half of what it was under the previous NDP government.

I ask the minister, will the government reconsider and increase its efforts to combat youth unemployment this summer? Youth unemployment has risen substantially. Will the government improve its efforts to combat this unemployment?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, the member then would be happy to know that the latest statistics indicate our youth unemployment, I believe, has dropped from 22 to roughly 17 percent. I would think he would be overjoyed with that revelation.

We are trying, and we are maintaining our dollar commitments to the youth employment programs

that are in place. Our youth again lead the nation in terms of labour market participation. It is indicated that employment opportunities for youth in general are more favourable in Manitoba than the rest of Canada.

Through CareerStart and the youth programs we have in place, we know that our numbers will come in looking more or less like they have in years previous to this. We are allocating millions of dollars with respect to youth unemployment. We will share with whatever federal program comes forward to maintain the level of employment there is within our youth category.

#### Provincial Comparisons

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Again looking at the first quarter of this year, the first three months of this year, can the minister explain why youth unemployment in Manitoba was higher than in Canada as a whole? Traditionally, we are below the Canadian average, yet the first quarter of this year we were above the Canadian average.

I want to ask the minister, why has their position deteriorated in this time period? Why have we worsened compared to the Canadian situation?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, I do not know what it is the member is trying to say. He knows full well—he knows as he sits there that the youth unemployment rate dropped from 22 to 17 percent over the last month. I thought he would share our joy in that revelation, but he chooses totally to ignore that fact.

I also point out to him, as we do with respect to Manitoba vis-à-vis the rest of the country, we have the highest participation rate—in other words, measuring those who come forward to present themselves to the workforce—of any province in Canada. So, Mr. Speaker, we do measure a greater share of those youth who want to work, and that is again a revelation and a reflection of the work ethic that exists in this province.

I would think that that would be a meaningful statistic to the member opposite, but he chooses to ignore it and instead dwell on the negative. I say to

him, I hope by Friday, when he comes forward to ask another question on the employment stats, that he will be more positive in his tone.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Speaker, there is nothing negative about asking for more jobs for Manitoba's young people. We stand for young people. The fact is, even taking this last month, the youth unemployment is higher than it was last year at this time. You cannot go from February to March with actual data. You know full well you have to use seasonally adjusted data. Year over year, we are in a worse position—

**Mr. Speaker:** Question, please.

#### Northern Youth Program Reinstatement

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my final question to the same minister.

Will the government consider reinstating the northern youth program, which was abolished by this government a few years ago, since that area of the province has by far the highest level of unemployment? Let us give the kids up north a chance.

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, the question reflects the difference in philosophy. When the member was part of a Treasury bench which made these executive decisions, what they tried to do was to build their numbers. They went and borrowed billions and billions of dollars to buy their numbers.

What our government is trying to do is to put into place a climate which will attract industry, and when we do so in the member's backyard in Brandon, GWE, he jumps down on those jobs as being inferior, and the beneficiary of those types of jobs would be the youth to which the member directs the question.

So I say to him, Mr. Speaker, this is obviously the difference in philosophies, and I say, Manitobans today support the policy and the philosophy of this party because, indeed, that is what they see, the long-run potential, and, indeed,

one based not on increased taxes in the future, but one based on the wealth creation that Manitobans can provide to each other.

### **Distance Education Telecommunications**

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, last week, I asked the Minister of Education why he was terminating long-term civil servants and replacing them with political contracts like that of Beth Cruickshank, and he said he would table that contract in the House when formally asked to do so, and I would ask him today to do that.

Today I want to ask the Minister of Education another question related to the Manitoba Telephone System and pursuant to the distance education task force report that was tabled with the minister in October of 1993. The task force specifically highlights the role of the Telephone System and asks that expertise and leadership be developed in the Telephone System to help and assist in developing the electronic highway.

I want to ask the Minister of Education, or the Minister responsible for the Telephone System (Mr. Findlay), what provision is his government making to ensure that the electronic highway will be owned and controlled by the people of Manitoba through the Manitoba Telephone System and that the rate charged will be equitable and fair?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Well, Mr. Speaker, dealing with the latter question, as far as fair rates, I mean, we approach the Manitoba Telephone System and we ask them for the most competitive rate they can offer, realizing full well that if the rate is not competitive, it is going to be very hard for our school divisions to provide, at a reasonable cost, the service I think the member opposite wants too, and that is to provide greater technology for the provision of distance education.

As far as rates provided by the Manitoba Telephone System, those are determined internally to that system. I am hoping that we are provided within Education the most competitive rates going.

Mr. Speaker, that is the essence of the member's question then, as to whether or not Manitoba Telephone System—are we going to give them a monopoly to carry distance education? We would expect that they will have a primal role. Whether they have the total and monopolistic role that the member would want, I point out that there are technology advancements that are happening very, very quickly and rapidly, and it may not necessarily be that hard wire is going to be the only way of moving the signal carrying distance education.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Speaker, clearly the essence of the question was, will it be owned and controlled by the Telephone System and would reasonable rates be guaranteed and how the government was to do that.

I want to ask the Minister of Education to tell us why he has ignored the expertise of the Manitoba Telephone System with regard to the development of the technological developments in this province by instead engaging in a contract with an American communications company, AT&T, to provide the expertise or development of the needs for Manitoba in a study that he has undertaken. Why did he ignore the expertise of the Telephone System and instead go to an American company, AT&T?

\* (1410)

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know of what the member speaks.

I can tell you that certainly in trying to build the distance education system and the electronic highway to service Manitoba, we very quickly realized this has to be more than education. We are looking around for an integrated model that will reach out to services across the board.

I must say that that expertise in that area does not really exist in the province of Manitoba in any dimension. We are trying to seek greater help wherever it may exist with respect to integrating —[interjection] No, Mr. Speaker, there is only one group of people in this House who are down on Manitoba, and that is the doomers and gloomers

across the way who talk down to Manitoba in every dimension that we try and bring forward.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Speaker, if this minister is not down on Manitoba, why did he not tender that contract in Manitoba? I want to ask him today to table the contract, to give us the cost of that contract that he is developing, his so-called plan that he referred to in last week's Question Period, this American plan for our technology in this province. How much is that costing? Will he table that contract in the House?

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Speaker, the member misses the point completely. A plan that I was referring to has nothing to do with the integrated model. The plan that I was talking about has to do specifically with distance education.

What we are trying to do, of course, as the government, and, indeed, demanded by society today, you cannot build a system purely for a one-service area. There has to be more of an integrated model.

The plan I was referring to was specifically the distance education model.

#### **Child Care System Absent Days**

**Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Family Services.

In the wake of the budget, the minister has announced a reduction in the number of absence days for which subsidized daycare parents will be entitled to have their children's daycare costs covered.

Can the minister advise this House whether the 10 days which parents will be required to take off without pay as a result of the extension of Bill 22, over which the parents have no control and will be deprived of their income, will be exempted from the reduced number of absence days?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in answers last week to questions that were quite similar, we have determined that 39 absent days in the subsidized child care spaces is a good number.

That translates into four weeks of vacation plus 19 sick days. I believe that is an adequate and a fair number of days to allow parents to have their children absent.

If there are individual circumstances that might cause us to look at that policy, we would do that on an individual basis.

**Ms. McCormick:** Mr. Speaker, to deal with the impact of reduced revenue to centres and family daycare providers, which is the anticipated outcome of this reduction? Will her department be urging centres to overenroll beyond their licensed capacities, to lay off daycare staff, or, alternatively, discontinue service to children who have the misfortune to fall ill, go on holidays or whose parents are forced to take 10 days off without pay?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** My short answer to that question would be none of the above. In fact, we have a very generous child care program in the province of Manitoba where we have increased significantly the amount of funding that we spend on child care.

We will, in fact, be allowing children to have 39 absent days throughout the year. Those will be covered by subsidy by the taxpayers of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we feel that is fair and that is adequate. That means that children will be able to take a four-week holiday still paid for by the taxpayers plus 19 sick days.

As I said in my first answer, if, in fact, there are exceptional circumstances and individual parents and individual families have difficulty with undue circumstances that might be presented, we would look at those.

**Ms. McCormick:** My final supplementary is to the same minister.

Mr. Speaker, as MCCA and the child care community are concerned, what specific steps will the minister or her department take to monitor the impact of these cost-cutting measures on the child care community, children and their parents, to confirm that no negative impact will be felt?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Speaker, I have every confidence the policy that will be in place with 39 absent days still subsidized by the taxpayers of Manitoba in most instances will be extremely adequate. I have said before and I will say again that this will allow for a four-week holiday period plus 19 sick days for every child that is in the subsidized system.

I have indicated, too, in my last two answers that, in fact, if there is an individual unusual circumstance whereby a child needs to be absent for very valid reasons over and above that, we will look at those cases on an individual basis.

#### **Olarewaju Family Deportation Intervention**

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, Felicia Olarewaju and her four children have been in the province of Manitoba for 13 years. They are an exemplary part of the community and have shared much with the province of Manitoba. We have received calls and questions and concerns from students at Gordon Bell, the University of Winnipeg Students' Association, the school of nursing, calls to the MLAs, to the media and to community groups, asking that the government do something about allowing these people to remain in the province of Manitoba.

I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship what action the government is prepared to take today to urge the federal government to make an exception which would allow the Olarewaju family to remain in Manitoba and continue to contribute to the life of this province.

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship):** Mr. Speaker, the member quite correctly has referenced that this is an issue that is before the federal government. Our department continues to meet with the Department of Immigration to come forward with an agreement on immigration. In fact, we have officials in Ottawa this week dealing with that. I have no difficulty urging the federal minister to give any citizen fair treatment by the rules and regulations that they have.

The question, I am sure, has been noted by the other opposition party. I know the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) has an interest in this and last year was urging our government to change the rules and intercede on behalf of people. I know the former member for Osborne has some interest in immigration issues and perhaps can use his influence in Ottawa to make a significant difference.

#### **Manitoba Sugar Co. Labour Dispute**

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** Mr. Speaker, the lockout at Manitoba Sugar is causing serious problems for farmers in southern Manitoba who will not be able to include sugar beets in their plant rotation if a settlement is not negotiated soon. This will be disastrous for both the sugar beet producers and, as well, will result in thousands of dollars lost out of the Manitoba economy.

I want to ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon) if he has received a letter from the workers' representative and what steps he will be taking to address the situation so that farmers can proceed with their spring planting plans and include sugar beets in their rotation this year.

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to indicate to the member today that the government has received a request from both the representatives of the employees and the employers to appoint a mediator. I am pleased to announce today that Professor Wally Fox-Decent, who was requested by both parties, accepted during the noon hour and will be formally appointed this afternoon.

**Mr. Speaker:** Time for Oral Questions has expired.

#### **Introduction of Guests**

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to asking for leave for the honourable Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), it has been brought to my attention that this afternoon sitting up in the public gallery we have Ms. Amanda Fridfinnson. She is up in the gallery today. Amanda made a presentation at the official signing of the proclamation declaring May

22-28 as Missing Children's Week. Her presentation was about runaways.

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

### NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

#### St. Vital Curling Club Awards

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the honourable Minister of Government Services have leave to make a non-political statement? [agreed]

**Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services):** Mr. Speaker, it was my pleasure as an honorary life member and now as patron to the St. Vital Curling Club the honour of attending the banquet recently past Saturday. I know the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) joins with me in honouring the award of Sport of Excellence that was presented to two of our teams.

Mr. Speaker, as you are aware—in your fondness of curling to have won many, many bonspiels yourself, you know how important it is to congratulate these particular teams.

Our St. Vital Curling Club, which has been in existence for approximately 65 years, had its first Briar rep, and that was the Dave Smith rink composed of Dave Smith, Peter Nichols, Scott Grant, Charley Selina and Dave Nichols who represented our club and did very well in the Tankard.

Also, we had a second continual winner of the Manitoba—the national junior women's title, and they also won the Canadian title. Mr. Speaker, that particular rink was skipped by Jennifer Jones, Trisha Baldwin, Joe Officer, Donna Malanchuk, Nancy Malanchuk as coach.

We also will be honouring shortly a long-standing member of that club, Mr. William Hems, who will be awarded at the first of the month the Bill Lumsden trophy.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the St. Vital Curling Club on the hard work they have done in establishing their junior program that is now showing the fruits of their many, many hours of work. Thank you.

#### Missing Children's Week

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

**Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake):** Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the pleasure of attending the official proclamation of Missing Children's Week.

As you mentioned previously, Amanda Fridfinnson is here from Arborg, a Grade 8 elementary student from Arborg, whose speech that she had presented and won with first place in her 4-H Club was chosen to come this morning and make that presentation.

I know members in the Assembly want to wish her the best and congratulations, and everyone is very proud of her. Thank you.

\* (1420)

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### BUDGET DEBATE (Fourth Day of Debate)

**Mr. Speaker:** On the adjourned debate, the fourth day of debate, on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that this House approve in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the official opposition (Mr. Doer) in amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), who has five minutes remaining.

The honourable member has indicated that his time has expired. All right.

**Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to make a few comments on this, the seventh budget of this government.

I listened attentively to the remarks of the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) on Friday. He was wound up pretty tight on Friday, and you know he insisted, with five minutes left, in fact demanded that he get his five minutes on Monday, so I came here expecting to hear a final five-minute blast from the member, and now I find out that he is not going to conclude.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to welcome the new members elected in last year's by-elections: the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg) on this side of the House, and the member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) and the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), I guess also on this side of the House but to my left.

I wish them well in what may be a rather short session. On the other hand, our sessions in this House sometimes tend to get stretched on a little longer than one would expect.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make some comments on the speech of the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Edwards). I listened to pretty much every word that the Leader said on Friday, and I will give him credit for a very well-delivered speech, and some decent content as well, although I disagree with some of the observations that he was making.

The Leader, in his address to the budget speech, started by attacking the trickle-down economic theory, and I was amazed to see this newfound conversion of the Liberal Party to be anti-trickle-down economics. He went on at some length to be talking about how the trickle-down theories were tried and did not work under Ronald Reagan, and he mentioned Grant Devine and Brian Mulroney, but I think that it is worth repeating that trickle-down theories have been practised by Liberals for a long, long time.

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

I mean, one only has to look back to the federal Liberal government to look at the trickle-down policies that were developed and implemented for this country over the last 20 years.

In fact, if the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) would like to pay attention for a couple of minutes, perhaps he and I could review some of the initiatives of Liberals in this country, Liberals across this country who did their utmost to develop a trickle-down theory of economics in this country.

It was the federal Liberal government, the beginning authors of a huge half-a-trillion federal debt that we now have sitting on top of us. It is these Liberals who developed the tax regimes that shifted the burden in successive years from corporations to individuals whereby over a 20-year period the preponderance of taxes in this country were being paid by individuals and not corporations.

That regime was authored and implemented by the Liberals, the very Liberals who are now standing up in this House and calling trickle-down economics a failed theory. Those same Liberals were the authors of the taxation system that allowed the federal trusts to develop.

We will recall that in the election last year, Lucien Bouchard made quite an effort, at least in the debates and at other opportunities, to point out that the Conservatives under Brian Mulroney last year had extended the tax-sheltered nature of these family trusts for yet another 20 years.

These family trusts were set up by Liberals. They were set up to shelter millions and millions of dollars for the elites in this country in family trusts that would be untaxed money for 21 years. The Conservatives simply extended this particular—

**An Honourable Member: Boondoggle.**

**Mr. Maloway:** —boondoggle, as my colleague points out, that was started by these same Liberals who are now talking about how trickle-down theories do not work. They have been converted a little too late in this particular environment.

The federal Liberals were also the authors of the super depletion in oil. They were the authors of the disastrous MURB program where you had a lot of overvalued real estate being sold to professionals for tax credits. That is the trickle-down theories of the Liberals in practice.

They also defend the same federal government that sets up these taxation measures.

I notice that, looking back 20-some years ago to the introduction of the Treasury branch's legislation in this House, we found the Liberal Leader of the day, Izzy Asper, explaining away the policies of the federal government, explaining that

we could not have banks in this province because the federal Liberals, who were in charge of the federal legislation at that time, were absolutely correct in their lack of desire to have these financial vehicles available in our jurisdiction.

So, when we have had opportunities such as the Treasury branch's initiative back in 1974, when we have had initiatives like that, where have the Liberals been on initiatives like that? They have been defending shamelessly their federal Liberal friends in Ottawa, making excuses for why things cannot be done. Then, Madam Deputy Speaker, that Leader stands in this House the other day, knocks trickle-down theories which he has supported all these years and talks about initiatives that could keep capital in the province such as the prairie stock exchange.

\* (1430)

But where was he when we brought in Treasury branch legislation which would have stopped the outflow of money from the province of Manitoba, would have kept investment dollars in this province? Where was he and his Liberal colleagues on that particular piece of legislation, as opposed to a prairie stock exchange. I think perhaps there is some merit in exploring an idea like that, but one only has to look at the experience in B.C. to see how negatively the Vancouver stock exchange has worked where it has drawn all sorts of fly-by-night operators investing in oil wells that do not exist and other sorts of ventures. This Liberal Leader is somehow suggesting that Manitoba should have something like that, a prairie stock exchange that is really going to be operating not as a mainline type of exchange.

On the other hand, if the Leader would take the time to look at the benefits that could be accrued to the province through a treasury branch system, a Treasury branch system that has operated in Alberta now since the 1930s, successfully putting excess monies back into the Province of Alberta Treasury. Back in 1986, the Treasury branches, I believe, had put back something like \$30 million just in the last five or six years prior to that time.

In Ontario, Madam Deputy Speaker, the Treasury branch equivalent there had put something like \$70 million back into the treasury of Ontario. So what we have here are examples of a near-bank system, a near-bank concept, and that is what we are talking about. We are talking about the equivalent of a Manitoba bank. This idea has been around for a long time. The legislation for it was brought in in 1974 and passed. The reason that it was not implemented at the time was because the government had the agreement from the local banks here that they would do several things, that they would step forward and involve themselves in areas that were underserved.

Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, just last week we had a situation when the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) on our side of the House stood up in Question Period and asked one of the ministers over there as to why a certain branch of a bank was being closed down in his constituency. Well, that is what the banking institution in this province promised the government back in 1974 if they would withdraw the treasury branch legislation.

They promised that they would service the public and that they would take care of the needs of the public wherever possible even if it meant losing the odd dollar here or there. The Royal Bank promised a branch in East Kildonan. It has never come through with that promise. The promises were made that the credit union system would set up the Northlands bank, and the member for Lakeside who was here at that time, and probably long before that time, knows full well that the credit unions—it was the threat of implementation of the treasury branch system in Manitoba that caused the banks to come forward and say they would do better. They would correct their problems. There was this promise on the part of the federal government to support the idea of Northlands bank which was owned by the credit unions. Well, that has all gone for nought over the years and the Northlands bank is no longer around.

But once again we are in the same rut of having to think and develop vehicles for retaining investment capital in Manitoba, more of which is

invested outside the province than is invested inside the province. On that basis the government, to its credit, has developed the HydroBonds and then went on to the Grow Bond idea and those have been very well thought out and good programs that of course should be continued.

Under a treasury branch system, Madam Deputy Speaker, it is those treasury branches that would in fact be handling things like the Grow Bond sales and the government accounts and other such situations, but the basic idea behind it is to make venture capital available to businesses in this province. It is not at odds with the credit union movement, because a credit union movement is really designed for small personal type of banking and personal type of loans, whereas the treasury branches are really geared to the same sort of desires that the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Edwards) is talking about when he talks about his prairie stock exchange and what this government should be looking at as well, the retention and the reversal of the outflow of investment funds from Manitoba into Manitoba where it can be invested successfully in this province.

Now that, Madam Deputy Speaker, is where this Liberal Leader should be reconsidering, where this Liberal Leader should perhaps be reorienting his thinking, as opposed to where it is right now.

Now the Leader of the Liberal Party also dealt with another area that I found rather interesting. I have to agree with some of his observations on what he had to say about government involvement in monies to businesses. He quoted at length—the Leader of the Liberal Party—the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I do not have the quote handy here. He picked a certain section that basically backed up the theory that I always thought they followed, that is, that government should stay away from handing out money willy-nilly to private businesses.

**An Honourable Member: Why?**

**Mr. Maloway:** Because it does not really work as a system.

He went on at some length to explain his agreement with that. I think those observations

were reasonably valid, because I have always had that view as well. I know there are members on the other side who have that view as well: when the government gets in the business of handing out grants to businesses, what they do is they cheese off the rest of the businesses. When you have four or five businesses in an area all dealing in the same sort of commodity and one business gets a government grant, what in effect happens is that just gets the other ones mad. That one just gets the rest of them mad at the government.

If the government thinks for one minute that it can get away with handing out \$16 million, or whatever the amount of money it was, to businesses and hope somehow that is going to create jobs and get some positive returns for them and maybe allow them to run some more ads on TV promoting what good managers they are—an excuse for an ad, I guess, that is the way to describe it—if the government feels that is going to work in their favour, then I would suggest to them that they think again. That particular type of initiative, Madam Deputy Speaker, is not what their own supporters, what their own people want to see.

I could understand that in a growing economy, in a situation where the fiscal position of the province was such that we had a surplus situation, where we had the \$14-billion debt paid off, I could see the government doing what it is doing in handing out money to business people. What we have here is a serious situation where this government is leading us into worse and worse financial situations each year.

While we agree that they should be increasing their spending on vital areas such as education and health care, I cannot agree that they should be—and the businesses should not either. The businesses should be responsible enough. They should be following the Canadian Federation of Independent Business resolutions and refusing to take government money. They should come forward as the good entrepreneurs and capitalists that they are and say: I do not need this; I am doing well on my own. Why should I take money that

should be used to feed poor kids or educate people? Why should I do that?

\* (1440)

Madam Deputy Speaker, since 1988, according to their own figures here in the Budget Address, the total debt of this province has gone up 37 percent. It has gone up from \$10 billion to over \$14 billion. The former Minister of Finance likes to draw some support from that and say, well, we are good managers. What I am trying to point out is that a lot of this is just smoke and mirrors. This is a bogus exercise that this government goes through each year, trying to convince the public, trying to convince the taxpayers, that they are really good managers and that it is managing very well in keeping taxes down, when in fact we know that is not true.

We know that this government increased its tax revenue last year by expanding the sales tax base on certain items. So it is all show. This government is big on, you know, the canoe during the election and the lottery ads we see right now, all sorts of excuses to run ads. We have in this budget an area of some interest to some people—we have had a couple of calls; I have had a couple of calls on it—the area of the budget dealing with the renovation program. On the surface of it, this sounds like it might not be a bad program, but when you look more closely at it, it appears to me that it might not be, at the end of the day, any more than an excuse to run more ads, you know, the canoe-type ads, the campaign-type ads, the sort of kick start to the Conservative election campaign.

Maybe it will be that when the lotteries money runs out for the advertising campaign, we will have another group of ads with the canoe and whatnot, talking about the renovations program. The Home Renovation Program calls for \$1,000 to be contributed by the government when a homeowner puts up \$5,000 for renovations. Well, I can think back to the Schreyer government's program of Critical Home Repair in which we took care of critical home repairs for a tremendous number of people, critical-type home repair that was required to be done to keep people in their homes.

This program is a middle-class program designed to help the Conservatives in seats that they want to look good in and want to hold on to. I would suggest to you, Madam Deputy Speaker, there are not that many people that are going to—and I could be wrong on this. I am prepared to admit that I might be out a little bit on this one, but I think the uptake on this program may be less than what some people expect. I do not see a lot of people putting up \$5,000 in a very tough economy to renovate, do certain renovations, and those that do will be more middle-class people who tend to be in the target seats that the Conservatives are particularly interested in. If there is not a lot of uptake, we are going to see the excuse to run ads, we are going to see all these TV ads.

Another observation, and I think the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Edwards) observed this as well, is that the \$4,000 renovation now became \$5,000. That is another interesting observation of some of these programs, where the contractors get involved and simply adjust their fees to take advantage of the program.

I can cite you the case of the Minister of Education's Workforce 2000 grants, where certain people, trainers, have been charging say maybe \$60 an hour for the training, and then when the grant gets put through Workforce 2000 the trainer is now a \$120-an-hour trainer. So these programs sometimes do not have the effect that they were intended to have.

Madam Deputy Speaker, had this government expanded essentially the Critical Home Repair Program, as established by the Schreyer government, run very successfully—and I might add this program was cancelled by the Conservatives under Sterling Lyon. It was brought back by the Howard Pawley government. I was happy to see that when this government came into power, albeit it was a minority government, it kept the Critical Home Repair Program alive. What it has done over the succeeding years is it has just let the program die. Today the program has been further cut in this budget to now where I think it is maybe \$10,000. The Critical Home Repair Program that the former government had has been

all but phased out. Unlike the Lyon government which just axed the program when they came in in 1977—they axed the Critical Home Repair Program—this government continued the home repair program and now have let it die a slow death over time.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that is the type of program that gets results. Its uptake is assured by people who really need the money. It allows for people who want to put a thousand or two thousand or three thousand into their homes to stay in their homes. There are a lot of older people who would like to stay in their homes, but they need some critical home repair work done, and this type of program would benefit them in a major way and would benefit society, because it would keep the people in their houses longer.

This government has gotten rid, for all intents and purposes, of that program and they developed now a new program with a threshold that is so high that none of those people who could have qualified under the old system can now qualify. I stopped short of calling it critical home repair for the rich, because it is not quite that, but it is critical home repair for Conservative areas.

Well, I guess there were some Liberals around in those days as well, but back in the older days, just to indicate to you how the Conservatives of old governed in Manitoba—and the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) was certainly around then—you know, we still have the old project working papers by which the government's, the old Conservative government, looked at each program that was brought in based on its political effect in solid opposition, solid government, volatile opposition, volatile government, marginal opposition and marginal government seats.

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** That is you.

**Mr. Maloway:** Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Education is making comments about the seats again. For three elections now, at least three, he has come up to me in the hall and said, you know, we got you this time. The last time

around he said he has just given up because it is pretty hopeless.

\* (1450)

They have tried everything in the last three campaigns and nothing seems to work, so he has finally given up the ghost and gone on to try to save his own seat, because that government over there is more worried about saving its own seats in the suburbs than it is worried about picking up my seat of Elmwood. I can assure you of that. As a matter of fact, I think they like having me around here. That has to be the secret. That has to be the secret as to why they have never been successful, because they had the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) own constitutional expert running last time. They have thrown out everything, and nothing has worked.

Madam Deputy Speaker, they are obviously trying to get me off track here because they do not want to hear the rest. They do not want to hear about the way they conducted government in times gone by. They had a system, and they said that they have put all the programs into a systematic framework, which deals with all programs in all ridings simultaneously. They have based the political analysis on the inventory of government programs; the expenditure items considered are concrete and easy to manipulate and describe in the same terms that administrative decisions are taken. Thirdly, they built the political analysis into the formal process of cabinet priority review, and through this process they developed a system of values.

They conclude at the end of the day by saying that implications for cabinet are obvious: the programs having a high sensitivity index must receive first attention in allocation of funds. This is essential for the political security of the government.

So the question is, Madam Deputy Speaker, where does this Manitoba Home Renovation Program fit into this political sensitivity of the government? Whether it was under project working papers back in June of 1968, or whether it is under the current government approach, we can rest assured that this government is essentially

looking at these programs and designing them with the idea to how they are going to sell and how they are going to affect their political fortunes in certain constituencies and certain areas of this province.

Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, once again having lost track of my time, I have a couple of observations here that I just cannot end the day without making.

I know that members opposite are always happy to hear comments and observations made about the Liberal Party in this Legislature, and the Liberal Party in the federal House, and we have dealt with the Liberal Party at some length in the first few comments that I made, but was really pleased a few months ago to turn on the TV and hear that one Brian Mulroney had come back to life and made a speech to a group down in Toronto. He could be quite an entertaining guy at times.

This speech of Brian Mulroney was quoted across the country. He made the observation that, in just three or four short months, the new federal Liberal government had appointed friends and relatives to good jobs in high places; that this new Liberal government had passed the NAFTA agreement, the North American Free Trade Agreement, which it had complained about and said it was going to do something about, over and over again, during the election. He said that this new federal Liberal government allowed the cruise missile testing, which they had, over and over again, Lloyd Axworthy leading the charge, saying that they would never involve themselves with when they were in opposition. Then he finished by saying, and for a moment there I thought I was back in power, and he brought the house down with that comment.

It only took three or four months for the federal Liberal government to start acting the same way as that old, calcified Conservative government after two terms had begun acting. You know, the point is, there is a certain honeymoon that involves any new administration. The federal administration of Liberals know very well that the honeymoon is going to last for a little while and they can do all these nasty things, they can do all these hypocritical and inconsistent things that they, just

months ago, were promising that they would not do.

But those of us who have been around, they should too know that time will cure the Liberal problem. Just the other day we had—and I do not have it here. I know it is in my files somewhere—but we had either The Globe and Mail article or some newspaper quoting Paul Martin, the new Finance minister, saying that, well, we might have to accelerate our deficit reduction targets. You know, things just are not working out so well after three months. We may have to cut, I think it was cut billions.

**An Honourable Member:** No, I think he said millions.

**Mr. Maloway:** No, it was not billions. Well, hundreds of millions. Well, Paul Martin, Madam Deputy Speaker, was talking about lots, as the new member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) says, of money that he was going to have to surgically remove from the deficit and from the budget.

So I think we all in this House look forward with interest at what time this group of seven here, the group of seven Liberals—I believe it is—what?—seven casinos for seven Liberals? There are three casinos, and they want four more. The group of seven over here start trying to separate themselves and take that ball and chain off of them that is put on them by their federal cousins.

As I indicated before, whether it was back in 1974 on the Treasury branch's legislation, the provincial Liberals were making excuses for their federal cousins. The federal Liberals still have this group of seven well under control. This group of seven are still supporting their federal Liberal cousins in spite of all the inconsistencies, in spite of the NAFTA, in spite of the cruise missile testing. Now we have a potential of one of their members of their group of seven being appointed to the Senate.

**An Honourable Member:** Who, who?

**Mr. Maloway:** Well, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) does not know who it is that could be appointed to the Senate. Could it be that is why the group of seven are so well behaved that they do not

step out of line? When Lloyd says sit, they sit. Could it be that there is a little competition going on in that group of seven for that Senate appointment? Maybe they will have a lottery, a Liberal lottery for the Senate.

I am coming up with these ideas to help them because a year ago they were talking about elected senators. Now there is no real interest in electing the Senate. [interjection] To the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), they know that if there is an election none of them would have a hope. In the lottery they have at least one chance in seven.

As the member for Lakeside said the other day, he said, I believe, let us wait a while together. I think those are perhaps wise words, because the Liberals are going to find themselves more uncomfortable in this House as time goes on, as they continue to stand up in lock step with their federal cousins.

When that Paul Martin budget comes down next spring I think we are all going to be very interested. We are not going to be happy with it. We are not going to be happy with the next Paul Martin budget, because it is going to hack, it is going to slash, it is going to really emphasize, for the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. Edwards), just what trickle-down economics is all about, the trickle-down economics that he decries so much in here. He will see in spades, as the federal Liberals scurry back to that comfortable position that they have held over the last 20 years in the economic sphere in this country as the main authors of all the trickle-down theories that the Leader says have failed across this country and across the world.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have a lot of time yet to watch the Liberals in this House and pick out inconsistencies. We will be able to show, I think, very clearly to the voters of this province that the Liberals really are not new, the Liberals really have not changed. They are the same old tired Liberals that we have had to deal with now for the last hundred years. As was the case back in 1988-1989, we took care of the Liberal problem at that point in time, and I am sure we will be able to do that again.

\* (1500)

I have some other areas I wanted to deal with that I thought might assist the government in developing some areas of revenue, but I think—

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Elmwood's (Mr. Maloway) time has expired.

**Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services):** Madam Deputy Speaker, it is my pleasure and a privilege for me to rise in this House today and address the seventh budget of our government.

First of all, I did not get a chance to speak in regard to the throne debate. I wish to welcome the Pages and, of course, welcome the new Lieutenant-Governor, his first participation in the House, along with the new members of the House, the members for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), Osborne (Ms. McCormick), Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) and Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg).

I have not had a chance to talk to too many of the new ones; however, we often talk about the differences going on in the House and the numbers that are here, but I know the Speaker, if he is listening, will realize that when we were introduced to this House in 1986, we have never known this particular room to be overflowing in any one way, whether it be opposition or government side.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I had the privilege of recognizing some St. Vital rinks earlier today in a nonpolitical speech, and also I would like to congratulate and talk shortly in regard to some of the people that I went about visiting in my constituency since we last left the House, presenting many of them with the 125 medallions. Maybe I could just take a minute to tell you the ones that I did present and had the honour to present. We had Bea Sharpe from MSOS; we had Al Loveridge from MSOS; Sister Gabrielle Cloutier from St. Amant; Ed Applin from the Mustangs; Lou Spado from St. Vital Mustangs; Vic Rose from the St. Vital Curling Club; Ron Koskie, a teacher and a worker at Norberry

Community Club; Pat Decksheimer, who is also with the community club; Harold Newis; Cam King; Billie Lucas; Rev. Msgr. R.J.H. Larrabee; and Gladys Rothwell, posthumously; and of course the person I recognized earlier today, Dutchie Hems.

Also, I would like to mention that under the infrastructure program we were glad to receive in my old alma mater—Glenlawn Collegiate will be participating in a new structure that will be taking place, a much-needed structure in that part of the city, a structure that will be probably one of the nicest art centres and complex in south St. Vital. It has been long awaited by the arts community. I will watch it go up from my office across the street at 753 St. Mary's, and I will make sure that it goes up and everything is looked after well.

Madam Deputy Speaker, let me begin by first thanking my colleague the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) for bringing forward the budget. I would also though like to acknowledge Mr. Clayton Manness, the member for Morris, who throughout the years that I have been a minister worked hard along with the whole Treasury Board in developing this complex. We told him several years ago, six budgets ago, that we would be bringing forward and gradually bring forward a plan of action for Manitobans. This is a fulfillment of their hard work.

I can say one short thing about the previous Minister of Finance. I did not always agree with the decisions that he gave me as a minister, but I will tell you one thing, he was fair at the Treasury Board table and he reacted to every minister the same way when we dealt with one issue. He made sure that we were always heard, so I thank him for that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, since our government took office in '88, we have worked very hard at building a stronger Manitoba so that we may provide opportunities for our families in future generations. We have worked diligently in managing the scarce and precious financial resources of government to ensure Manitobans can enjoy the vital services that we cherish in our

society, most notably, health, education and family services.

Over the course of the past year, we of government have endeavoured to communicate our dedication to this beautiful province and the people we serve. This year, as we celebrate the International Year of the Family, I think it is appropriate to reflect upon the gifts that our families have brought into our lives. It is their strength that propels our energies to strive, to innovate and to build our communities, our province and our country. Let us not forget that it is the family which is the infrastructure of our society. It is the family that is the nucleus and nurturer of our values, and it is the family which is the heartbeat of our society. These are the precious resources of government, Manitobans working together with their families and their communities in building a stronger Manitoba today and tomorrow.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as was stated in the recent throne speech and the budget speech, the foundation of our province's economic strategy is the principle of fiscal responsibility. The 1994 budget demonstrates our commitment and our allegiance to that responsibility despite many external factors that are beyond our control.

Madam Deputy Speaker, since taking office in '88, our government continues in making Manitoba more competitive and attractive for businesses to locate here and create jobs. As the Dominion Bond Rating Service cited, Manitoba has been and I quote, the most fiscally responsible province in Canada, 1987 to present. We have demonstrated our ability to keep government expenditure down and live within our means. I am extremely proud of the fact that our government has had the longest tax freeze in Canada.

Madam Deputy Speaker, today I wish to highlight the many accomplishments in the Department of Government Services and the activities undertaken by the Seniors Directorate. The reason why I am devoting that speech because I did not have the opportunity of participating in Estimates. We did not seem to discuss the many things that happened in Government Services—I

guess because it is many, many things, that is the good news of this government. Sometimes the opposition does not like to talk about the good things. As a matter of fact, not normally do they talk about the good things of the government.

Madam Deputy Speaker, last year in my address to the budget, I announced at that time that the Accommodation Development Division of my department carried out an extensive inventory of all government leased and owned office accommodations throughout the province. That was the first time that such an inventory of government accommodations had ever been undertaken. The data that we have collected provides us with solid and factual information so planners and managers are better able to control and manage costs more effectively. Client department occupants of government facilities also now have more detailed and better information on their actual program accommodation costs.

The most tangible benefits from this initiative are already being realized with the implementation of accommodation cost recovery system, which is Phase 2 of our process in managing more responsibly. Armed with this new information, we are working with our client department occupants more proactively than was previously possible to reduce underutilized space and accommodation-related program costs.

We are also continuing to work at reducing the leasing budget through a review of all of these properties to identify opportunities for reduction. By conducting the review, we will be able to determine whether space is sufficiently utilized and whether the client department occupants still require the existing allocated amount of space.

\* (1510)

Our goal in reducing the leasing budget is to fully utilize our own space. When the opportunity exists at the time of a lease expiry, our plans are to terminate that lease by moving the occupants to another longer-term lease premise or to an owned premise.

One recent example I will give you, Madam Deputy Speaker, is the Legislative Counsel Legal

Translations' move from 444 St. Mary Avenue to the Woodsworth Building, the annual average cost saving of \$220,000. A larger example of reutilizing vacant owned space by back filling from leased space has been the reoccupancy of the Norquay Building as a result of the Information Systems Management Corporation moving to its own building. The final planned move of Labour, Workplace Safety and Health from leased space to the Norquay Building in June of '94 will result in another estimated saving of \$315,000 per annum.

The leasing budget will continue to be reduced again, as announced in the budget in '94-95 by the ongoing relocation from leased to owned occupations and the continuation of a more aggressive lease negotiation process to attain more favourable lease rates reflective of today's market conditions.

As you know, it is probably a good time to buy and lease space and bank this type of space today. A reduced payment also will be continued to Manitoba Properties Inc. We all know that story, and we are living with it now. I know the previous Minister of Finance knew all about that. Why anyone would ever sign such a disaster—I am not going to mention whose names were on that lease, the ministers and the Premier of the day, but we all know that it was a complete disaster. This saving will also occur as a result of restructuring of property assets held by the corporation.

Also, we have endeavoured to work with our Telecommunications branch and have made substantial progress in the establishment of the province's telecommunication network.

I must mention, I have had the honour of working with an individual that we brought in a couple of years ago, John Helston. John, who has just retired, has worked with us, along with assisting with the province's introduction of important services such as the Drug Program Information Network and the Department of Family Services' ability to readily access child care information. It has resulted in considerable cost savings to Manitoba taxpayers in the form of reduced government communication costs. The existence of this network will now provide

unlimited opportunities for improvements in efficiency of government operations and enhanced geographic neutrality and the provision of government programming to all Manitoba residents.

Madam Deputy Speaker, also, recently Manitoba hosted the Western Provincial Telecommunications Conference in Winnipeg, where the various components of the information infrastructure were addressed and discussed at great length. Each provincial and territorial government compared technologies with the purpose of becoming more cost efficient, and that is what our government has done—more cost efficient.

Another important objective that was achieved at the conference was the forming of sharing agreements between western provinces, with the intent of lowering telecommunication costs for each government.

The Telecommunications branch has also achieved significant savings on behalf of government departments, through the use of the Manitoba Telephone System's much-worked Preferred Advantage direct distance dialing plan. Essentially, what this means is that every government telephone number in the province was placed on one plan to obtain a larger discount on our long-distance bill. As a result of being on this plan, the government will realize a 45 percent discount on all original long-distance bills, with an additional 14 percent savings on the remaining bill because of our volume.

Consequently, again, in our budget, we will be saving an approximation of almost \$1.5 million on communication costs.

Madam Deputy Speaker, Telecommunications has also participated in a pilot presentation of video conferencing for Distance Education. This very important initiative is enabling the delivery of a modern-day electronic communication services to rural and remote areas. This technology has enormous potential for the future. As my colleague the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) stated in his address, and I quote: "Our

government has had success in bringing greater pride and performance to specific services through the introduction of special operating agencies."

The Fleet Vehicles Agency in my department was the first agency created at the provincial level in Canada. Its achievements thus far in managing the bottom line are indeed outstanding, and I congratulate them.

The Fleet Vehicles Agency was created to provide a centralized fleet management program, while achieving economies of scale in lowering overall fleet costs to the government. I believe the key to the success of this particular agency is the accordance of direct responsibility for results in management flexibility in making decisions affecting all areas of the business.

What I found most interesting and noteworthy for government operations is that operating goals and objectives are not permanent and will change from year to year as objectives are met and new initiatives become important. The agency is dedicated to a policy of continuous performance improvement.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the following is one striking example of how we have reduced costs, the things that we do not seem to talk about during the course of the debate or questions from the House. As a result of staff being directly responsible for results, vehicle repairs over the past two years have been reduced by \$1 million. This cost saving is attributed to the new rate structure which holds departments more accountable for the use of their vehicles. Departments are now choosing to return vehicles to avoid paying these repair costs. The point that I am trying to highlight is we are spending taxpayers' dollars better today than we did yesterday and especially since we became government in 1988.

The second success story in Government Services is the creation of the second special operating agency, the Materials Distribution Agency, a now full-cost recovery operation which charges back all costs from the purchase inventory, warehousing, transportation and administration of

stock commodity. The force drive of the agency is providing value-added client service while building partnerships with clients to meet their individual needs.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as my colleague, again, the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) has stated, Manitoba has been lobbying the federal government for a national infrastructure program long before the present Liberal government was elected. It is very exciting for Manitoba to be the first province to have a large block of projects approved under the infrastructure works agreement.

Among the scheduled projects, along with the one I previously mentioned, close to home with me was Glenlawn, but also the one that touches home was a project that I worked with as a member of City Council as well as Urban Affairs minister was the walkway along the Assiniboine and then along the walkway behind the Legislative Building, and then at the final year of the Core Area Agreement, we did the walkway. While among the scheduled projects of the infrastructure program, construction will begin this summer on the south legislative grounds. The Assiniboine River walkway will be extended past the south grounds of the Legislative Building. The project will be completed by 1995 to honour Manitoba's 125th anniversary in Confederation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in keeping with our government's policy of sustainable development, my government has made significant progress in working towards the goals that we have outlined in this House. In 1989, our government introduced a policy aimed at encouraging suppliers to develop and provide recycled environmentally sensitive products on a competitive basis, as well as to encourage industries to develop the supply of such products. In each of the three years since the policy was announced, the Purchasing branch has procured well over a million dollars' worth of products containing recycled content.

Madam Deputy Speaker, under the objective of increasing the government-wide purchase of environmentally sound and economically sustainable products, the following were reported

in '92-93. We spent approximately \$433,000 on reuseable office stationery supplies which represented approximately 20 percent of all our office stationery supply; 20,000 litres of recycled oil purchased and approximately 30,000 recycled solvents purchased. There was approximately 302,000 litres of gasohol purchased by the government for their vehicles, which was approximately \$130,000, or 3.7 percent of the total government motor fuel purchased; also, approximately \$1 million of recyclable stationery products purchased by Manitoba Government Services '92-93 representing a 33 percent increase over '91 and '92. This is approximately close to 10 million sheets of stationery.

\* (1520)

Madam Deputy Speaker, \$86,000 was spent on fabricated metal products, 25 to 100 percent recycled; almost another quarter of a million spent on recycled medical supplies, of that, 15 to 40 percent recycled content; and \$186,000 spent on glass beads made from recycled glass for our highway market.

Government Services also co-chaired a national committee which is looking at ways of increasing government procurement of environmentally sensitive product. I think this information provides substantial evidence of our government's commitment and our efforts in this area.

To achieve a 50 percent reduction of the '88 per capita waste flows to landfills by January 1, 2000, as set out by my colleague the honourable Minister of Environment, Government Services implemented various waste reduction programs. Presently these programs have achieved an average of 31 percent waste reduction in government owned and operated buildings.

In the area of waste management, we have had some paper rescue for nonconfidential paper. There are presently, I believe, 47 government owned or leased locations which have participated in the program. There is approximately 85 tons of paper being collected from the Winnipeg locations alone which generated revenue in I believe the vicinity of close to a million dollars. If you

calculate that I believe to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger), we probably saved almost 1,400 full-grown trees.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we go through an estimated 3,900 cubic yards of cardboard, and it was collected from approximately 18 government-operated buildings by the waste removal contract. This cardboard, for those who are not aware, is shipped to mills in British Columbia and Ontario. One hundred percent of just the telephone directories that we have around the particular government offices were collected and recycled throughout the province.

There were 14 government-operated buildings that joined the newspaper recycling program. As you look around, all the cafeterias have collection bins for aluminum and soft drink containers for recycling.

Our government-owned buildings have implemented even a cooking oil recycling program. A plastic No. 2 HDPE bottling recycling program was implemented at the School for the Deaf building. Seven government locations are using various methods to compost kitchen food preparation waste. These locations are right here in the Legislative Building, along with two or three other buildings throughout the province. Approximately 12 tonnes of waste were composted in Winnipeg, producing about 112 cubic metres of compost. In addition, this waste composting is also carried out at other locations in the city as well as at the Selkirk Mental Health Centre.

As I am speaking to you today, I pick up a glass of water, and we all know the importance of the water supply in Winnipeg and throughout Manitoba and especially to the city of Winnipeg. In this area we often talk in regard to the area of water consumption, and those who travel throughout the United States and other parts of Canada realize the importance of water preservation. Reports received to date indicate that, in our particular department, savings varying from 4.9 to 51 percent have been achieved in our various buildings.

Buildings that currently have no water-metering devices are being retrofitted so that the water conservation performance can be verified. Existing faucets in government-operated buildings are being retrofitted with water conservation devices. Flush meters are being adjusted to use less water. There is also an emphasis on preventative maintenance practices to reduce water losses through leakage. For example, Madam Deputy Speaker, the Agassiz Youth Centre in Portage renovated the pull drainage system and projects annual savings of close to a quarter of a million gallons of water. The Portage Correctional Institution reduced water by 28 percent. The Manitoba Building had a 29 percent reduction, and the Woodsworth Building just across the way had a 19 percent reduction in water consumption.

Madam Deputy Speaker, these initiatives further demonstrate the caring approach to conservation and the saving of public dollars. It has been a continued work from our department since 1988.

In October of '91, I as minister requested the Property Management Division of the department to consider introducing the concept of total quality management philosophy to staff. Since that time, I am pleased to advise that the introduction has proceeded well. Today there are in excess of 40 improvement teams consisting of management and staff working on procedures which will improve efficiency and save money.

The following examples are some of the improvements suggested by employees through this process. For instance, while analyzing operating costs, one of the employees in the Provincial Building in Beausejour, Technical and Energy Services staff discovered that electricity costs were high and they were climbing. This meant that we had to explore better ways of heating that building. It was determined that savings could be obtained by installing a natural gas boiler. Accordingly, the mechanical section of the technical resources designed a new system that will heat the building by natural gas provided that gas continues to remain cheaper than electricity. If in the future the price of gas is greater than electricity, this system can be converted back in a

few hours. The capital cost of that project was in the vicinity of \$25,000, and the annual savings in energy costs over two years of operation was and has been approximately \$40,000.

Another example of co-operation is demonstrated when a team consisting of trade staff, security staff and management co-operatively modified their working hours to enable them to provide a service to client departments earlier in the morning and later at night to ensure that they do not interfere with client operations. In addition, trade staff will be expected to work one Saturday in a four-week period without overtime to minimize disruption if systems and/or equipment should require shutdown.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I have just tried to give you indications and examples of how our government has been working to reduce costs. As you probably appreciate, as we reduce in Government Services, it allows money to flow over into our other departments that, as you know, eat up the majority of monies that are available. I have just tried to give you, even with this one example that I just mentioned, the kind of teamwork that can save Manitoba taxpayers a lot of money while improving service to our clients.

Let me illustrate one particular example which further drives the point home. To give you an example, one Friday evening the supervisor on security on duty at the Legislative Building received a long-distance call from a travel agent in Florida. Several elderly citizens of rural Manitoba were mugged while waiting to board a cruise ship, and one couple lost all their identification, including passports. They were not able to board the ship, which was scheduled to leave the next morning. Their representative in Florida called Ottawa. They called Toronto and the Canadian department of foreign affairs offices and the state offices of Florida and Texas, Madam Deputy Speaker, all to no avail. No one could help or assist them.

The staff on shift at the Legislative Building advised that they were not able to take any action until Monday morning. The supervisor, however, upon hearing this, suggested that perhaps the Vital

Stats branch could assist and advised the caller in Florida that he could attempt to locate the official responsible. After waking several members of the Vital Stats branch in the early morning hours, a proof of identity was forwarded by fax to Florida and the couple successfully proceeded on with their trip.

\* (1530)

Madam Deputy Speaker, this is the type of co-operation my staff—and we call it benchmarking. This is to say, they are meeting with also corporations who are recognized for their excellence in whatever they do. They are meeting with organizations who have implemented practices where they are recognized as leaders in their field, and we are adopting these procedures for use in government operations. Staff are also corresponding with other jurisdictions to ascertain what type of procedures are carried out in other building management operations across Canada.

Madam Deputy Speaker, during this process, in benchmarking and meeting the private sector and other governments, we have found the private sectors have also congratulated us on some of the inroads that we have taken and have used some of our ideas, so it is a two-way street, and it shows that governments have not always been behind even the private sectors in everything that they do with their employees. Our employees are always looking at ways to look after and to make things more efficient.

This action I speak of has led this division to hold meetings with large clients to determine if the services we are providing are meeting the needs of the client department. In short, the concept that we all know, TQM, may be defined as, and I quote, a way of doing business that stresses co-operation and relies on the talents and capabilities of employees and management working as a team to constantly improve the services we provide.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I did mention that we have initiated to work on the Legislative Building shortly. There will be work shortly to repair the exterior staircase at the north end entrance of the Legislature. There is advanced corrosion of the

steel reinforcement of the structural slab. The supporting walls and staircase are no longer watertight and numerous cracks are throughout the wall area. This has developed over a long period of time. Then we will start working on the restoration of the upper part of the building.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in the short period of time that I am going to be allowed, maybe I could carry on with these types of programs that we have talked about when we get to Estimates. I just wanted to highlight some of the important issues that we do at Government Services.

The Seniors Directorate which is under my responsibility and brought up earlier in the House, there were questions in regard to Council on Aging. I say that the Seniors Directorate continues to work hard in order to fulfill their objective of being a central source of contact for seniors, seniors organizations and other government departments.

Throughout the past year, many individuals have contacted outreach staff or called the toll-free seniors information line to obtain information and assistance regarding seniors programs and services. Madam Deputy Speaker, can you tell me how much time I have?

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** The honourable member has eight minutes remaining.

**Mr. Ducharme:** Madam Deputy Speaker, the Seniors Directorate has also continued to work very hard to address elderly abuse in the province of Manitoba. This year, as a result of our ongoing work over the last several years, a manual was drafted for the development of multidisciplinary teams as a response to particularly challenging cases of elderly abuse.

Over the past few years, service providers throughout the province have expressed interest in the multiteam approach, and the Manitoba Seniors Directorate has responded by providing another how-to community-based manual. Essentially, the manual is a resource tool for professionals who work with the elderly. This multiteam approach requires the participation of a broad representation

of professionals who are involved with situations of elderly abuse in our communities.

I hope that professionals will find this new manual useful. It will serve to bring together a variety of disciplines to provide more informed and co-ordinated communal-based alternatives and respond to these deplorable societal ills. Madam Deputy Speaker, there is no set formula for the composition and manner in which the team will function, rather flexibility and adaptability are the key to making the process work. It should be fashioned and tailored to respond to the needs of each particular community.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I am extremely pleased that the Council on Aging is relocating from the Department of Health to report directly to the Minister responsible for Seniors for several reasons. The direct link between the minister and council will be re-established, as I believe it was originally intended in 1980, when it was originally set up by the minister, at that time, the Honourable Bud Sherman. The mandate of that council has not changed. It remains a council to assist government in developing policies and programs to accommodate the changing needs and demographics of the population.

This move reaffirms the fact that seniors are actively involved in all areas of society, not only health. Seniors interests include housing, transportation, economic security, education and family life. Since the council reaches and speaks with many seniors, it will be able to relay the issues and concerns of seniors directly to the Minister responsible for Seniors, thereby strengthening the seniors' voice at the cabinet table.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the council will be able to work more closely with the Seniors Directorate in producing research and information material that is a very, very necessary benefit to the seniors. Links between the directorate and the council will be strengthened, and any duplication or overlap eliminated.

Our government values the advice and guidance of the council on policies and programs for seniors. In 1988, when our government took office, we

made a commitment to specifically involve and consult with seniors. This move reinforces that commitment. As well, we shall continue to build and strengthen our partnership with the senior population of our province.

I wish to thank you for the opportunity of highlighting the accomplishments of my department today. I will further elaborate again when we get to the Estimates, and I hope that we get to spend some time at Estimates this year, as we were long forgotten last year. We have made great strides in improving service delivery to our clients. We will continue to work hard to further improve the way in which we do business and make government work better. We will continue our vigilance of being fiscally responsible and managing our financial resources so that we may build a stronger Manitoba for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity of addressing the Budget Debate.

I must say that I did not mention again that I have enjoyed, and I continue to enjoy, corresponding with my constituents in the Riel area. I continue to do so, and as people remember, as they talk around the house and they mention different things that go on, I can assure you that I continue and enjoy the seven elections that I have been involved in in the Riel area. The main purpose is to keep in touch with those people in Riel.

Every one of us knows that this particular budget that we have brought forward was just a part of our whole program and our whole process of developing budgets through our last seven. That is our plan, that has been our plan, and the people of Manitoba will know by the result of this budget that we will do what we say in continuing to have a balanced budget in the next several years. Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** I appreciate the opportunity to speak in today's Budget Debate. I want to first of all recognize, since I did not have the opportunity during the throne speech debate to speak, to welcome the new Pages here today to this

session. Joanne Jacyk, for example, one of those who is new this year, is a colleague of my daughter at Beliveau School in St. Boniface. She has been, I guess, in the same grade as my middle daughter for a number of years, and I have known her for about 10 years or so, have had the opportunity of seeing her grow up, and it is a real pleasure to have her in the Legislature. I know she will gain a great deal from this and be an excellent Page.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to discussing the budget. I think that some of the members who spoke before me, the member who just spoke for example, went over a lot of accomplishments in his department as his means of addressing the budget speech. I think one could look at that and say, well perhaps it is interesting for him to put that on the record, on the under hand not necessarily very relevant for this particular budget.

\* (1540)

I think we have to deal with this government's record over the last six, seven years, and it is something they do not want to hear about. They are pretty embarrassed about it. In the light of day, in the truth of this Chamber, they do not like to hear about that dismal record because in fact it has been dismal over the last six or seven years.

It has been a very difficult grind for Manitobans, generally, to have to endure this government as they had to endure the Lyon government. Of course, the Lyon government coming in the late '70s and early '80s ushered in a recession to Manitoba, and a number of the students of that recession are in the cabinet today and, of course, continue those policies right through. Even those that were not actually in the government at that time worshipped at the shrine of the Premier at that time. Of course they wanted to continue with those policies.

The former Minister of Health who now has difficulty occupying himself, getting into little mischievous things and playing games in here because he is never asked a question, was in the cabinet at that time. He at that time was learning, I think, very well how Sterling Lyon was governing

at that time and wanted to finish the job. He has had an opportunity, unfortunately for Manitobans, to finish that job as Minister of Health and do a lot of damage and destruction to the health care system in this province.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Manness), while not in government at that time, Mr. Speaker, was on some boards and commissions and, of course, was watching carefully, ensuring that he would have an opportunity to get into political life later on and carry on the legacy of one Sterling Lyon and his government at that time.

Of course, the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) has had a hand in Conservative governments over the years right from the time that Duff Roblin and Walter Weir were Premiers of this province to the days of Sterling Lyon and now the Gary Filmon government. I do not think that things have changed a great deal.

I heard actually some interesting stories about the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) when he was a new minister at the time of the Duff Roblin government, and at that time the member for Lakeside was, I think, the minister responsible for mines, energy and mines at that particular time. There was a delegation from northern Manitoba that came forward and wanted to see mine inspectors located in all of the northern communities where mines were located.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, there was only one mines inspector, a safety inspector located in Winnipeg at that time. As I heard the story—[interjection] Yes, the minister at that time, the member for Lakeside listened dutifully to all the presentations for about an hour and then he put his feet up on his desk and he said—[interjection] The minister now denies that he did that. Well, maybe he will not deny this. He said my job is not to worry about safety of miners. My job is to encourage investment in this province and to get companies in this province, and he refused to deal with it.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, that was later said in debate, and I was told, as the story goes, that—[interjection] Yes, of course, I was not here

at the time—the member challenged the member of the Legislature, Mr. Barrow, who was the member for Flin Flon at the time, when he repeated this story in the Legislature, he challenged him to go outside and say it outside, and he did. The member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) probably recalls that particular incident and that issue very well because I think the person who relayed that story to me relayed it very accurately and the member for Lakeside knows that.

There is a great deal to say, I guess, about what the government has failed to do, how they have hurt the economy of Manitoba over the last number of years. If we look at their deficit, Mr. Speaker—we can look at the deficit that this government has had in place over the last number of years. I find it rather galling that they would stand up, and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) would stand up and blame, throughout the budget speech, the condition of Manitoba's finances on the previous government, even now seven budgets into this government. It is rather shocking to see that kind of performance, because this government has run up the largest deficits in the history of this province.

As a matter of fact, in '92-93, they said it was going to be—listen to this. This is the Honourable Clayton Manness, at that time Minister of Finance, who predicted in '92-93 that the deficit would be \$330 million. I do not think you want to ask what it actually was. After predicting that it was going to be \$330 million, it came in at \$762 million. As a matter of fact, there was actually another \$100 million; the former member for Rossmere said that, because of the additional \$100 million owing to the federal government, it was actually \$862 million.

The member for Morris (Mr. Manness) bows his head in shame because he is not very proud of that particular prediction that he made. He has been off in his employment figures and investment figures for the province in a similar way, but he certainly has been off in the deficit—\$330 million, he said, and it came in at \$762 million or \$862 million, depending on which figures you want to use.

Then the next year he thought he did pretty well. He predicted \$367 million, and then his successor, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) at the present time, had to announce during the budget speech that it is actually \$461 million, nearly another hundred million dollars out, over 25 percent out in that particular budget, following on the previous miscalculation of some \$400 million to \$500 million in their budget.

These are the kinds of facts we have had put before the people of Manitoba in this legislative Chamber. Of course, Mr. Speaker, we have to doubt their \$296-million figure, which has been reduced by some \$90 million by lottery revenues, which is their latest tax that they have placed on the backs of Manitobans—\$296 million, because we are not certain at all that the government is going to be accurate in this prediction, even though the ministers have changed faces, changed places. In fact, we hope the new minister is better able to predict what his deficit might be than the previous minister.

The fact is, since it is the same government and the same cabinet and the same Treasury Board, \$296 million may well be more like \$400 million or \$500 million, especially considering that this is very likely an election year, and they are doing everything possible to show those figures much lower than they actually are.

Mr. Speaker, their deficit record has been terrible. It has been dismal in terms of being able to forecast. It is a tragedy for Manitobans, and it reflects a total lack of priorities in their spending, because their economic policies are damned by that record. That shows precisely the failure in their economic policies over the last six or seven years. They would not have had to announce red-faced to the public that the deficit had skyrocketed from \$330 million to \$762 million or \$862 million, as the case may be, depending on what figures you use. They would not have had to announce that red-faced if indeed their economic policies were working, and they would not have had to announce the other day almost a hundred million overrun in their deficit again if their employment policies in this province, their

stimulation of the economy, their economic policies, were working, because it would not have been higher, it would have been lower. More people working, more people paying taxes and an invigorated economy means lower deficits, and they did not have that. So we do not have to look too much further than that to get the results of their economic record in Manitoba.

We look at their tax record. They stand up, and this is one of their pride and joys, they like to say that they have not increased personal taxes to Manitobans over the last six years. It sounds very much like they trumpeted the hydro freeze in 1981 after putting the four-year freeze. They went around Manitoba telling them we did not raise hydro prices, vote for us, do not stop us, and now we are sitting on a gold mine. I know they are going to pick up on that slogan. It sounds like it might be appropriate again this year.

\* (1550)

I know that the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Manness) and the Minister for Energy and Mines (Mr. Orchard) probably bring it forward in committee saying, oh, yes, we have to go with that. Do not stop us now, we are sitting on a diamond mine. The member for Pembina, he has been saying, let us change it. Let us change it a little bit. It is a diamond mine that we are sitting on. Now the old gold mine, we do not want to go back to that. We want to go with the new slogan.

Now the Minister of Energy and Mines was on CJOB some time ago, and he was telling the people of Manitoba with a relatively straight face that maybe—[interjection] On radio—well, I assume it was a straight face, because he was not laughing when he was saying it. I think he was probably on his phone telling them that, yes, he is probably going to win a lottery in about 10 years. They are going to strike it rich in Manitoba. They have explorations going strong. [interjection] Well, he did not say that there are thousands of different kinds of kimberlite that might hold diamonds.

There are very few that hold diamonds, but you first have to find a kimberlite, and then you have to

find the kind that might be diamond bearing and the odds of that happening are like one in ten thousand or a million in Manitoba. Then, Mr. Speaker, by the time they get it operational, even if they found it in commercial quantities, it would be at least 10 years before any mine. That is what the officials of the company said later on.

But there is the Minister of Energy and Mines out trumpeting this new development for Manitoba. Does it not sound like potash of 1978, '79, '80? Does it not sound like potash? It sounds a lot like the gold mine, only now it is a diamond mine. I know the people of Manitoba are not going to be fooled by that. They go by the record of this government, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately for them, fortunately for the rest of us, not by what they are saying, and that is why they are not going to be re-elected in this province. It is probably why a number of them have decided not to run again. I notice that many of these members have been receiving compliments from each other, as if they are making their farewell speeches, and I noticed that most of them have been singling out the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness), and it is almost as if as Minister of Finance he is the same minister that ran up these record deficits. That is right, the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) is patting him on the back.

Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, that same minister has been receiving all these accolades. It is as if he might have said to the caucus, I have to tell you in confidence that I will not be running next time, and now they are letting it out of the bag. Now, I am not going to start that rumour. I think the member should do that himself, but I have been wondering why they have all been talking about the former Minister of Finance as if they were never going to have another opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I guess you are the one that can decide whether they will have another opportunity or not to make another speech in this House. That is the interesting thing.

In the area of taxes, this government says that they have not increased taxes, and you look at the situation there, you see about a hundred-million giveaway in tax breaks to corporations over the

last number of years, as a matter of fact, about that much per year. Well, it reflects priorities. The idea, of course, is that these companies are going to provide all kinds of benefits to the people of Manitoba, that the benefits are going to—Mr. Speaker, you have heard of this—trickle down to the people of Manitoba, that jobs are going to be created, that investment is going to take place but, in fact, it never happens.

When they give these tax breaks to big business, they take the money and say, thank you very much, my friends. They do not reinvest it in greater numbers and create all these jobs. If they did we would have lower unemployment rates instead of nearly the highest unemployment rates in the city of Winnipeg in this whole country, and we would not be the fifth lowest in unemployment in this province, away from the traditional first or second lowest as we have been when the New Democrats were in government.

The fact is, historically, we have been the first or second lowest in unemployment rate. Now they have to be satisfied with fifth or sixth lowest. That is the dismal record of this government, and that is why the people of Manitoba are not going to elect them again, because their economic policies have failed, because they have chosen as their priorities to give tax breaks to corporations who do not in turn pass those on to the people of Manitoba in the trickle-down theory that this government has said works so well, and has not worked.

They have increased the sales tax. That former Minister of Finance increased the sales tax by a huge amount last year, some \$48 million by broadening the base.

Oh, we have not increased the sales tax. It is just an aberration, it is a mirage. How is it that the funding for sales tax has increased so much? Now, who are we trying to kid here? They increased the sales tax by some \$48 million last year. They also increased the property taxes for all Manitobans, but they like to say, oh, no, no, that is the municipalities, that is their fault that we took \$75 away from the tax credit. That is not our fault, the tax credit, \$75.

Well, there are some members sitting in the back there saying to me that I should talk about this budget. They do not like the member for Morris's (Mr. Manness) last budget and his last six budgets in this House, they want to talk about this budget. But the fact is that we have to put this in perspective, this budget. It is part of their overall plan. We saw more tax cuts to corporations in this budget. It is part of their overall plan. We saw more tax cuts to corporations in this budget. It is all part of the same thing, some hundred million dollars now per year.

**An Honourable Member:** But is it working, John?

**Mr. Plohman:** Well, I have gone over that, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). It has not worked.

I am just saying that average Manitobans have had increased taxes. The sales tax has been increased; property taxes have been increased, and senior citizens have been hit the hardest, have been targeted for property tax increases because of the Pensioner's School Tax Assistance Program now being geared to income. Many senior citizens making more than about \$18,000 a year are no longer getting the \$175 in Pensioner's School Tax Assistance, so we have an increase last year of \$250 for many of these people in property taxes.

That is the kind of tax increases, but they are sneaky about it. They are very sneaky, very sneaky. They do not do it above the table. They find little ways of offloading this thing and to make it look like they are not really increasing taxes, so they can say that they are pure on their income tax and they are pure on the percentage for sales tax, but in fact it is not pure at all, just like the minister's education finance model is far from pure and far from fair in the Province of Manitoba in its application. I will speak about that later.

If we look at all of these indicators and the issues of deficit, if we look at the issues of taxes, if we look at the issues of employment or unemployment, we see a downgrading of Manitoba's position, we see a slipping backward in terms of fairness. If we look at services, well, it is the same

thing there. If we look at health care, it has been cut back dramatically and drastically in the last couple of years—

**An Honourable Member:** But you want us to spend more.

**Mr. Plohman:** The Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) now, former Minister of Finance, is fond of saying, but you want us to spend more—spend, spend, spend.

I wonder why he does not listen and understand that it is precisely because of the failure of his economic policies that we are in this mess. We could spend more on health care, spend better, spend wiser if in fact we had the revenue as a result of successful economic policies. This government has not had any successes in that respect. That is why they do not have the funding to do it. I have gone over why that has happened because of the lack of priorities on jobs, because of their reliance on the trickle-down theory of economics to do the job. It has not worked. It did not work with Sterling Lyon; it did not work in the earlier years in the history of this country, and it certainly is not working in Manitoba at this particular time.

\* (1600)

**Mr. Speaker,** if we were to look at the issues surrounding education and funding, I have attempted to ask the minister whether in fact he is being realistic when he says that funding is not an issue for education, on many occasions. In Manitoba, funding is not an issue, he says. Bill 22, is not an issue. Bill 16 is not an issue. Funding is not an issue.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that fairness in funding is a very big issue in education because this government has forgotten about those divisions hardest hit by their formula, and they will not deviate from the formula because the minister says he wants to keep it pure. The purity of the formula is the most important consideration that he has. He is not concerned that some school divisions are having to cut basic programs. I have to wonder at this minister's commitment to the public education system when he does that.

I want to just give him some examples. I have raised some of these: Lord Selkirk School Division has cut 5.4 percent; Transcona, 3.5 percent—this is on a 2.6 percent model, 2.6 percent cut; and then we have Interlake at 4.06 percent, even with increased enrollment; and Evergreen, a 6.87 percent cut; then, of course, we see others like Pembina Valley, 1.5 percent increase, not a large one but there is an increase there; Morris-MacDonald, 1 percent—of course, the member for Morris (Mr. Manness) would not have had anything to do with it. He is just dealing with a large model. I am sure it just happened that way—Portage la Prairie, a 1.6 percent increase.

If you look at those over two years—we are doing a major survey of all the school divisions, and I think the minister—[interjection]

**Mr. Plohman:** We are going to look at '92-93 and '93-94, put them both together.

**An Honourable Member:** You will come back here and apologize?

**Mr. Plohman:** The minister is so confident of that. Lord Selkirk was cut 2.03 percent last year. That was more than the average of 2 percent, more than the amount announced, and then this year they got hit with 5.88 percent. [interjection]

Mr. Speaker, let us look at the facts here. We are looking at nearly an 8 percent cut in that division, and they are not an unusually affluent division. The minister cannot point to excesses in program and spending, and if he looks at Interlake, they received a similar kind of decrease. They have the fourth lowest expenditure per pupil. Not fourth lowest assessment, as the minister tried to turn this around during the discussion that we had in Question Period, but the fourth lowest expenditure, I say to the minister, and they were cut by 4 percent, even with increased enrollment this year. Where is the fairness in that kind of a model that sees those kinds of reductions for those school divisions?

You know, the minister said, well, it is because of reassessment. The wealthier divisions and those that have increases in assessment have had reductions in provincial funding to reflect the fact

that they are actually wealthier. They have the higher assessment. That would be true under normal conditions, but it is not true this year. It would not be true last year, because the government, this minister, his predecessor had put in place, when this minister was Minister of Finance—actually he was speaking to those bills—put in place a cap that prevents these school divisions from raising that money to offset what the province has cut.

While the government is penalizing those school divisions, reducing their funding to reflect the higher assessment, they are not allowing them to recoup that back, even from the local taxpayer, so in fact they are sitting with a major net loss that reflects the reassessment rather than being in a stronger position. I know the minister is banking on that being rather difficult and confusing to explain to the public, and he hopes that message will not come out. The fact is, in those school divisions they know it. They are starting to understand.

It seems that when the government developed a new assessment formula and the new education funding formula, any school division that had assessment increases of in the 10 percent range received the same amount of money or more if they were under that, and those that went over 10 percent in increases in their assessment were decreased, were hit with major decreases. So Interlake had a 19.42 percent increase in their assessment, and they were hit by hundreds of thousands of dollars. [interjection] Most of it in Stonewall, the minister says. That is right, most of the higher assessment.

Lord Selkirk had a 21.17 percent increase. [interjection] Well, the minister—you see, there is the issue. The minister thinks, now that is great. Those people are doing really well, and under normal conditions they would because it would take fewer mills to raise the same amount of dollars because of higher assessment, Mr. Speaker, but this is for all Manitobans that I am speaking now. For the Minister of Education: What did we see from this government for Lord Selkirk School Division? They had a 21.7 percent increase in their

assessment. You know, they could only raise \$226,000 more because of the cap, and the reflection of this increased assessment was the government and the 2 percent—that is what they made—2.6 percent cut this year. Their base support went down \$574,165 and their supplementary support went down \$497,998—over a million dollars in that school division on a total of \$17-million budget.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the Lord Selkirk School Division was hit both by cuts in the base support as a result of this government's funding formula, and reassessment supplementary support was reduced. They were now deemed to be a have division instead of a have-not division. They were a wealthy division, they did not need supplementary support anymore. They could only recover \$226,000 of this; one-quarter of it could be recovered from the local taxpayers to offset the government's cuts. So what did they have to do?

**An Honourable Member:** They have to turn to the teachers.

**Mr. Plohman:** Well, Mr. Speaker, now we are coming to it, because we have always wondered about this minister's devotion to the public school system, his loyalty to the public school system, to the professionals that work within that system, and he has spent time. He said, oh, I am glad that members opposite acknowledge that I have been out meeting with the people involved in education, whether it be parents or teachers or superintendents or school trustees and students. I have been out there and they acknowledge it. The fact is, you would think he would learn from that and he would understand the dedicated group that are out there working in the public school system, but he has never given them credit. He has not even given the public school system credit when he goes out to speak. He does not talk in glowing terms about the successes that we have had and the record we have had in public education in this province. He does not talk about that. He says, he senses all is not well. Things are not going too well. We are not doing the job that we have to do. It is always negative.

This is coming from the minister, the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness). He does not come out and say, look, we are doing a fine job, but we have to do better. We have got to do better to meet the goals that we want for our children to find the kind of work that they need to find and the economic stimulus in this province. We need an educated workforce. We have got to do better with changing technology. He never says those things. Why is that? I am struck by that because, if I was Minister of Education, the first thing I would say is that I would ensure that the people involved in the education system understand that they are appreciated and that they are doing a darn good job, and that we are going to work together to make it possible for them to do an even better job in the future. I would not start by tearing down that education system as this minister attempts to do at every turn.

Do you ever hear this Minister of Education refuting illiteracy statistics and dropout statistics that are bandied around by the private sector, by private business, in their attempts to get control of the public education system? Do we ever hear the minister stand and say, that is not true. Those statistics about a 35 percent or 38 percent dropout rate are not right. The illiteracy rate—

**An Honourable Member:** Harry heard me talk about those fallacious statistics the other night.

**Mr. Plohman:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I wonder which ones the minister talked about. We will see. I want to reference the literacy survey that was done. Statistics Canada in 1989, literacy survey, the Economic Council of Canada claimed that we have a 38 percent illiterate rate. The survey that was undertaken by Statistics Canada, literacy survey, showed that 60 percent of Canadians cope easily with everyday reading; 22 percent can cope but are neither particularly able nor enthusiastic readers; and 16 percent have significant difficulty.

\* (1610)

Statistics Canada never used the term illiterate, but yet the Economic Council of Canada took the two numbers that showed that some have some difficulty with coping and not being enthusiastic

readers and those that have significant difficulty, added them together, got 38 percent and said, we have 38 percent illiteracy in this country. That is the kind of figure that is not challenged by people like the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness). I would not think that it is in our best interest for the Minister of Education, for this government, to allow or to be a part of those kinds of statistics being thrown around freely. I think they should be the ones standing up, the former Minister of Education should have been standing up, the Minister of Education, and saying that is not true.

I want to talk a little bit about that. Is it really possible that in the public schools a third of our children or students in the public school system are just being allowed to coast along and one-third of them are illiterate? It is ridiculous. They never say that over half of the illiterates are over fifty-five years of age before the reforms that took place in the education system in the 1950s. Do they ever say that many of these were not even educated in Manitoba, that we are being blamed for illiteracy rates that have nothing to do with Canadian schools? They were not educated in Canada, some of the people that are part of the illiteracy figures. And Heather Jane Robertson, when she was speaking about Criticism and Crisis in our Schools said that the actual figure for Canadian-born nonliterate between the ages of sixteen to thirty-five is approximately 3 percent, a figure which includes even those with the most severe intellectual and sensory impairments.

These numbers are a far cry from one-third of each class that is being bandied about as the illiterate rate for our schools in Canada, and by way of that, in Manitoba. We have to stand up and say that those figures are not true. Let us not try to leave the public school system shouldering the blame for something that is a myth.

If we look at other figures—now the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) went to school about the same time that I did in the public school system in this province. He knows very well that very few students, comparatively, in rural Manitoba graduated from high school in those days. All there was was the academic entrance program. Perhaps

he was a little more fortunate in the Domain-Sanford area than I might have been, I do not know. All we had was the academic entrance program in the early 1960s, and if you did not make it with your academic program there was no alternative. You just dropped out; you left school, and so many of us went through high school with the same students, started with 40 in Grade 9 and have four or five graduate in Grade 12.

It was a phenomenal loss of people from the high school system, only 40 years ago.

**An Honourable Member:** Forty years ago?

**Mr. Plohman:** Well, thirty. I could add. Forty years ago was probably even worse. Thirty years ago it was improving, Mr. Speaker. How can we say that things have gotten so bad that now we have a dropout rate of 38 percent, or in that neighbourhood? It is not true, just like the illiteracy rate is not in that neighbourhood either.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that we now have a much higher number of students staying in our schools than we ever had in previous years, and that is something that we have to be talking about in the public education system in this province. We have to talk about it because it is a fact, and we cannot allow those who have other agendas for our public school system to get away with those agendas when they are not based on fact.

In 1960, 67 percent stayed in high school; in 1988 it was 90 percent; 5 percent went to colleges, like the old MIT or MTI and in 1960; now 20 percent in 1988; in university, 7 percent in 1960; and in 1988, it was 27 percent. Major increases in students staying in high school from those '60s that I talked about some 30 years ago.

If we look at all of these statistical pieces of information, we find that those with other agendas for the public school system are not relying on facts when they bring those forward.

In terms of international standardized tests, in standardized tests, again, we have to be careful how we make those comparisons. Last year we stood in this House and said that the national test that was being written was not fair for Manitoba students because it was not based on the correct

Manitoba curriculum. There was no national curriculum. There is no western Canada curriculum, although the minister says it is getting close in mathematics for some of these areas. The fact is that last year the test was based on information that students were taking in the curriculum in Grade 12 in many instances, but our Grade 11 students had to write the test. They were being tested on something they had not been taught yet because there is not a common curriculum.

What was the purpose? Why would we do that? Why would we put Manitoba students in that kind of predicament to be faced with having—all of us have been in that situation looking at a test and seeing information that has not been taught or maybe we are not familiar with. That is a very frustrating experience. It is frustrating for the teachers. It lowers the morale. Why would we do that? Why go through with that to say, see Manitoba students are doing poorly, unless we want to undermine the public education system? That is why I have to look at the minister's agenda here and his predecessor, because they seem to want to get involved in things like this so they can say, see, the public education system is not doing its job, so we are going to have to straighten it out. Then they bring in their own brand of reform—competition.

The minister says that the public education system is no longer going to be immune from competition, the competitive realities. We are not going to have the school system just drifting along without competition. So where is the competition supposed to come from, the private schools? It looks like that may very well be the agenda over the last while, because in fact the private schools have received huge increases in funding, not only by way of the letter of agreement that was made to bring them to 80 percent.

**Mr. Manness:** Huge.

**Mr. Plohman:** The Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) says, huge. Comparatively speaking. Look at it, 12 percent increase last year for the private schools. While a number of our public schools were getting 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 percent decrease, and then you add on another 7-8 percent this year

and you start to see what we are talking about. There is a problem here. The funding is being shifted.

Now there are other things though. I think the minister might want to be looking at charter schools, where he can say, well, he is involving parents. That is probably one of the reasons why he wants to have this forum this weekend, maybe talk about that concept a little bit. He hopes it comes forward, and I hope there is a good cross section of representation at that forum—

**An Honourable Member:** We need some people from Dauphin; that is when I would feel better.

**Mr. Plohman:** It makes it difficult when you have the forum in Winnipeg. You should have forums and consultations in all of the communities in Manitoba, the major communities at least. It looks like, Mr. Speaker, too little, too late for this minister to try to leave the impression that he is consulting when in fact he has no intention of altering his own agenda, but to move forward.

I am very much concerned that this government is not committed to strengthening the public school system to greater involvement of parents in decision making and budget making and to ensure that the standards are in fact higher, when they have decimated the Curriculum Branch. Then they say, curriculum is important, it is a priority now. They say the standards are important, and they have fired or gotten rid of all of the professionals in the particular areas that have been doing that. They are replacing them with political people, Mr. Speaker.

This is why we have our doubts about this government, about this minister's commitment to the public education system, and we will continue to bring forward alternatives that are viable for the public education system.

Thank you very much.

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** It is a privilege to rise in the House today, Mr. Speaker, to speak in support of the Budget Address presented by my colleague the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson). I do so with a tremendous amount of eagerness and tremendous

amount of enthusiastic support, but I also do that with respect and appreciation.

Before I get into the contents of the budget speech and my remarks in respect to that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to the new members who have joined us in the House. I certainly wish them well in their tenure in the House here, and I certainly hope that their experiences are ones that are fulfilling. Indeed, I look forward to their contributions in the House.

\* (1620)

Additionally, I would like to also congratulate and welcome our new Pages in the House, Mr. Speaker, and wish them well through this particular session.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I wish you well as you again take the Chair and so ably do so in fairness as you have over the course of the last number of years.

This is a budget that has considered the strengths of our past, the challenges and opportunities of the present day, and with foresight presented the framework for Manitobans to move forward into the 21st Century in better shape than any other province in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the member who just spoke, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), took a little exception at the fact that members on this side of the House have congratulated the former Minister of Finance for the budgets that he has presented, the last six budgets. I, too, would have to say that I appreciate and certainly congratulate the former Minister of Finance for the excellent work that he has done in presenting budgets which have seen no major tax increases for Manitoba. That same course continues with no major tax increases for Manitobans.

The job, Mr. Speaker, that any Minister of Finance has faced over the last while has been somewhat monumental, especially when we came into government in 1988. We were faced not only with a monumental task but one that was somewhat demoralizing. But over the last six years the commitment of sound management to Manitobans today are starting to reap benefits, because Manitobans once again appreciate the fact

that we have returned to some fiscal responsibility, some fiscal management in this province that is going to put our province ahead of many other jurisdictions in this country. We have brought our spending under control. Although it was not easy, we were committed to that task, and indeed I have to say that by and large we have brought our spending in this government under control. The former Minister of Finance has positioned our province to achieve a fully balanced budget quickly without any tax increases and without any further reductions in overall programs.

But let me say that above all it is the leadership, the leadership of our Premier, Mr. Gary Filmon, that has made the difference to the people of Manitoba. In 1988 the Premier of our province detailed a plan for setting Manitoba on a fresh new course based on the principles of accountability and integrity, responsible fiscal management and the preservation of our valuable social safety net program. It is Premier Filmon who has stopped the financial disaster that was created by the New Democratic Party of the 1980s.

Mr. Speaker, I have to take just a few minutes of this time to deal with a situation that has become more than a little preposterous, perhaps even laughable. I ask my colleagues to think back to the beginning of this session when a story in the Free Press appeared, a story that talked about how the Leader of the official opposition party—I might say the two-time losing Leader of the opposition party—holding a gun to the Premier's head about the next election and when it was going to happen.

In another story published just about a week or so before that the Free Press put that party, that Leader, at 22 percent in the polls, the lowest ranking since they were kicked out of office by the good people of Manitoba. So it begs the question, a gun to his head? What kind of a gun is this? A water pistol? A cap gun? A little bit of noise or a lot of noise? A little bit of smoke and absolutely no results—no results whatsoever. It must be terribly disheartening for my colleagues opposite to know that they have little or no hope of retaining their seats in the upcoming election. Manitobans know who is responsible for good government.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that not only Manitobans know about the good government in Manitoba, but you ask people outside of this province and they know that Manitoba certainly leads the way on many fronts.

**An Honourable Member:** You do not ask Manitobans. You better go out to other provinces. You will not find any here.

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Speaker, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) keeps "chirking" from his seat.

**An Honourable Member:** Chirking?

**Mr. Derkach:** Chirking from his seat, Mr. Speaker. But let me say—

**An Honourable Member:** That is chuckling.

**Mr. Derkach:** Let me say that the member for Dauphin really could not understand the facts if he were staring at them. He has certainly demonstrated that in this House every time he has stood up to ask a question and indeed in his remarks. [interjection] Well, that is true too. We will agree with that.

Mr. Speaker, the budget talks about the stability our province has now seen under this government. It talks about the creation of sustainable jobs for Manitobans. It talks about rebuilding the trust of people in a government and it talks about being able to sustain our social programs that we have enjoyed in this province.

It means that we have to undergo some changes. We cannot just simply continue to do things the way we have done them in the past, because that certainly is not always what Manitobans expect. Indeed, if we look at our deficit, Manitobans have told us very clearly that they cannot afford the deficit that this province has. We have to address it, and so the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) has done that. He has made a commitment that in the course of the next few years we will see our deficit reduced to zero.

Mr. Speaker, when we inherited government, you know where our deficit stood at. You know the kind of interest payments that have to be made

because of the mismanagement of the former administration.

It is unfortunate that Manitobans have to deal with that, but there is no other way. We have to pay those interest charges. We have to reduce that deficit so our children and our children's children are not going to have to continue to pay a debt that was put there by administrators such as we had in the former administration.

We have heard statements from the opposite side, from the Leader of the Opposition. We have heard statements, the half-truths, the scare tactics, the quick-fix solutions, but there are no long-term solutions coming forth from the other side. There are no real solutions about what should happen in this province.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the other part comes forward very quickly. They are not happy about the creation of jobs.

I could not for the life of me understand why the member for Brandon East (Leonard Evans) would make statements about a company that was moving into Brandon that was going to create some 115 or 120 jobs, and he was talking to the media and standing in the House here and criticizing this company for creating the jobs in Brandon East. Now who does he stand for? Who is he standing up for? Is it the people of Brandon? Is he really interested in what is happening in Brandon East, or is he simply toeing the party line? I think it is very evident what he is doing. A senior member on that side of the House who has been here for many, many years should really stand up for the people of his constituency, and he should be supporting the fact that there are jobs being created in his constituency instead of doing what he was doing in the media and indeed publicly.

\* (1630)

Mr. Speaker, I do not understand it. Members opposite seem to take delight if there are jobs lost in this province, no matter where it is, and I do not understand how the party opposite could tolerate some of the statements that have been made by some of their members. I guess, coming from rural Manitoba, I am a little sensitive about what is

happening in rural Manitoba, and some of the statements that are made that impact negatively on rural Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, last year just at the close of the session we heard about a situation which was developing where a member opposite was aligning herself with a radical group and trying to stop and curtail a very good economic opportunity in our province, and that was the Ayerst plant and the PMU producers. We saw that again this year, for once again that member was aligning herself with some—

**An Honourable Member:** With the against group.

**Mr. Derkach:** With the against group, as my colleague says—with the against group to the PMU industry. I am astonished by the silence of her other colleagues, especially the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), who should not be silent about something like that because she herself represents an area that has many PMU producers, where the economics of the PMU industry are so important to the Swan River Valley. I have not heard her say a word, or have not heard her indicate that she does not support her colleague who has come out so strongly against Ayerst and the PMU industry.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Swan River know that. The people of Swan River will judge her by that as well. And it all goes on and on.

#### Point of Order

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** Mr. Speaker, the member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Derkach) has just put false information on the record, and I would like him to correct it. He has indicated that I have not spoken out on the PMU issue or on the Louisiana Pacific, and, in fact, I have spoken very clearly on those. I have stood up for the people of Swan River, and I would ask him to correct the record.

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

\* \* \*

**Mr. Derkach:** I have never heard the member for Swan River speak out against the member for Radisson who has come out clearly not in support of the PMU industry and indeed not in support of the Ayerst plant in Brandon. The silence is deafening.

Mr. Speaker, we can go on from there. We have another potential for great economic activity in Manitoba and rural Manitoba, and that is Louisiana Pacific, who have indicated their intentions to build a state-of-the-art facility in the Swan River area again, one that will create hundreds of jobs, a tremendous amount of activity, not only for the Swan River Valley but for Manitoba as a whole.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

I wonder where the member from Swan River stands on Louisiana Pacific. If you read what has been written about her comment with respect to Louisiana Pacific, I cannot say that she supported that. Neither does her party, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Where do they stand, Mr. Acting Speaker, where do they stand? I think Manitobans and especially the people from Swan River will understand exactly where they see the member standing on this particular issue—[interjection]

Well, the member for Swan River is a little sensitive, because she says, why do you not speak on the budget? This is the budget. This is creating jobs for Manitoba. This is creating opportunity for Manitoba. This is creating an economic benefit for rural Manitoba, and if she wants to be against that, Mr. Acting Speaker, I do not know where she is coming from.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we will not be swayed by these professional protesters. We will not be swayed by the pundits, the unions, the special interest groups because we know that they all have their own particular agenda. We will not reduce our horizons by the narrow visions of the opposition. We will not listen to those who have the popgun solutions. I have to tell you that we have tried very hard to ensure that individual

Manitobans have every possible opportunity to increase their stake in this province, to increase their family's opportunities in this province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have to tell you that others recognize that—[interjection] I hear more comments from the opposition about the youth in our province, and let me talk a little bit about the youth, let me talk about the rural youth. I will not forget when a new program was announced for rural youth. Again we go to the critic who was the member for Swan River at that time, who stood up in opposition to a youth employment program in rural Manitoba. She saw no benefit from it. Again, the usual rhetoric, a predictable position from the opposition, yet we saw tremendous numbers of youth coming forward, being employed in that program. Once again, if we could have had greater amounts of money, more youths would have been employed in rural Manitoba.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, when we talk about opportunities for youth, this party has certainly done its job in providing opportunities for the youth, and I have to say that that was evident about two weeks ago at a rural development forum in Brandon, when we had more than 200 youth gather at a forum where we were talking about opportunities for youth in entrepreneurship, opportunities for Manitoba youth in becoming part of the economic life of this province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, our youth delivered a message, and I will be only too pleased to share the result of what the youth said about Manitoba and what they said about the education system and what they said about opportunities for youth in our province. I think it is time that we started listening more to our youth, and this government is listening to our youth. We are bringing them together so that they can be heard and so that they can be part of the life of this province.

Well, we can continue, Mr. Acting Speaker. As I mentioned previously, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of our province has repeatedly demonstrated responsible control of the public trust, effectively controlling government spending. At the same time, our government has maintained and

strengthened the important, vital services required by all Manitobans both urban and rural.

If you look to the east and look to the west you will see what is happening with health care services in these provinces. Compare that with what is happening in Manitoba. Since 1988 the amount of spending on health care has increased by something like \$500 million in Manitoba. We have not closed any hospitals in rural Manitoba. We have not closed any facilities in rural Manitoba.

But what has happened in Saskatchewan and what has happened in Ontario? Yet, the Leader of the opposition (Mr. Doer) says that is the model we should be accepting. How preposterous.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I do not know where the New Democrats are going and where they would take this province, but it is certainly not the direction that we have seen. We do not want to go in the direction that we have seen Saskatchewan go, and we are not going to lead Manitobans in that direction.

I live close to the Saskatchewan border, and I can tell you and I can tell the members of this House that the people from across the border are coming to our province to get health care services because their hospital is closed, and there is difficulty over there. I say that, I guess, with some sorrow in terms of what is happening in Saskatchewan, because they have a huge debt and they have to manage it somehow.

But because we have addressed the situation in Manitoba in a practical way six years ago, we have not had to take that course. If we had listened to what the New Democrats have constantly been calling for, as well as the Liberals, today we would be faced with the same kinds of challenges and probably faced with the same kinds of actions that are being taken in other jurisdictions.

Yes, Mr. Acting Speaker, we have taken a different course, a more practical course, and that course is recognized not only by Manitobans but is also recognized in other jurisdictions as well.

\* (1640)

If I could just for a moment indicate to you that even in *The Globe and Mail*, Manitoba was recognized for its leadership in terms of how it is addressing the fiscal responsibilities that it has. Diane Francis, the editor of *The Financial Post*, has written, and I quote: Premier Filmon in essence is doing what all Premiers should do, ignore political rhetoric and simply create a climate for prosperity through fiscal restraint. And she went on to say that, Prime Minister Jean Chretien, please take note: Filmon has turned an NDP antibusiness culture into a pro-business environment.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that is not a Manitoban saying that. That is someone who is looking at Manitoba from the outside, someone who recognizes that perhaps in Manitoba we are on the right course, that perhaps other provinces should take that same kind of example and follow. We have seen that happen.

The New Democratic government in Saskatchewan has done what most New Democratic governments do not do. It has finally adopted a fiscal responsible position and, yes, they have had to make some difficult choices, but there was not another way to go.

Mr. Acting Speaker, as the Minister of Rural Development, I have to tell you that we have been working hard to try and do something about revitalizing our rural economy. The programs that have been introduced by this government have certainly gone a long way to helping rural Manitobans revitalize their rural communities.

Whether we look at the Grow Bonds program that has created something like 250 more jobs in rural Manitoba, a tremendous amount of investment in rural Manitoba in capital and has taken companies that would traditionally have located in larger urban centres out to rural Manitoba. The program has been a tremendous success in the last year and it will continue to be a success.

Now, I am not going to tell you that each and every project that is supported under the Grow Bonds program is going to become an overnight success, because there is going to be a lot of hard

work that will have to be done for these projects to become successful. But it is a beginning where Manitobans can invest in themselves, can invest in their communities. They can take money that has gone traditionally into banks and into eastern Canada and outside of this country where it has been invested outside of our province, they can take that money and start reinvesting it right here at home in our rural communities. It is working, Mr. Acting Speaker, and Manitobans are happy to do that because they believe in their province, they believe in their communities and they believe in the initiatives that have been undertaken.

Mr. Acting Speaker, to that same extent, REDI has been a good program for Manitobans. REDI is not a program that you will find anywhere else in North America. I understand that Ontario has now undertaken a program that is similar in many ways to the REDI program, and, again, it is designed to help economic development in our rural communities. It is to help those small businesses get started, and I want to ask members to help support the initiatives undertaken by REDI because many rural Manitobans are getting on board, they are making things happen in rural Manitoba, they are creating employment in rural Manitoba. I can say that REDI, the program itself, has helped to create something like 600 new jobs in rural Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we could go on and on and talk about successful endeavours in our province, in rural Manitoba. We have to continue the task that we have begun. We have to continue on the same path that we have been on for the last six years. One thing that Manitobans do not want is increased taxes. They have said they cannot afford increased taxes anymore. For that reason we have to find different solutions to some of the challenges that we face. We have to find different ways of delivering programs so that people in Manitoba can have the best programs possible.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if you take a look at the area of education alone, in the last few years we have seen our population decline, which means our rural school populations have declined as well. Rural students do not have the same opportunities

that students in large urban centres do. That is a given. How can we provide better opportunities for youth in small rural schools? Our Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) has taken some very proactive steps to do that, and today I was surprised in Question Period by a question from the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) who in his—the nature of his question was that he was once again criticizing an approach that was being taken to deliver programs to some of our youth in our small rural schools.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have to tell you that distance education is very critical for rural Manitobans. We have had some smatterings of Distance Education programs across the province which have shown that students are interested in accessing opportunities that are not available to them in rural Manitoba but only to students in urban Manitoba. If we can continue to develop our distance education model of delivering programs to rural youth, we will provide those young people of Manitoba an opportunity that they do not have today, and perhaps will allow those small communities to leave their schools open. They do not have to close those their doors because there is an alternative in the way we deliver programs.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the same is true for our health care system. We have embarked on a reform program of our health care system, and I have to reiterate that over the last six years we see \$500 million more going into health care than we saw in 1988. Now that is an enormous amount of money being expended on health care. If we continue that kind of process, and we do not somehow reform our health care system, will this province be able to afford it in the next six years? I do not think so. I think Manitobans have told us that it is time that we looked at the health care system and how we deliver programs so that we change it, so that it is much more efficient and much more effective, so that we address the concerns of rural people, so that we address the concerns of people who are at home. We are doing that and we will continue to do that.

Mr. Acting Speaker, you cannot ignore the fact that the system has to change. If you do, you are

really not looking at the truth. You are not listening to people then, and you are not understanding what the fiscal realities and the fiscal capabilities of this province are.

I had mentioned the fact that we had placed some emphasis on our youth, and I would just like to go back to a program that was started by this government and has been a very successful program. In the past we have seen the Junior Achievement program as one that operated only in our urban centres. A very good program. It is one that is run by the chambers of commerce and business people in our province in the urban areas, and one that showed some success for our youth. We wanted to see the same kind of program delivered in rural Manitoba, but Junior Achievement told us that they did not have the funds to be able to deliver that program in rural Manitoba. So we decided that we would help the chamber of commerce and the rural school system by offering to support the Junior Achievement program in rural schools by a small amount of money. I think it is something like \$900 per school that accesses the program.

In this past year, Mr. Acting Speaker, we had 100 rural schools participate in a Junior Achievement program. In this coming year we have another additional 47 schools who have applied to the Junior Achievement program and will see programs delivered in their schools. I think this is very positive because it shows that now we are bringing the education community and our business community and our parents together, something that has been lacking in many of our schools. It is time that we brought the community together as a whole.

I am looking forward to the kind of results that we have seen in this year continue in the next year in the Junior Achievement program because we know that Manitobans have an entrepreneurial spirit. Our youth are no different. We know that we have a tremendous work ethic in our province, and our youth are no different. We have the skills to deliver programs like that. The skills of our business community can be harnessed to deliver

programs like the Junior Achievement program to our schools.

\* (1650)

Mr. Acting Speaker, we also have a diversified economic base necessary for a thriving economy with abundant jobs and the potential of jobs and investment opportunities in this province. We do not have to take second place to anyone in Canada. We can be No. 1, but we must believe in ourselves. I think it is time that the opposition started to look at Manitoba as a very attractive place in which to live, a very attractive place in which to work, and a very attractive place in which to raise our families. All I hear from the other side many times, many times too often, is a criticism of naysayers who continue to put our province down and, indeed, continue to say how bleak the situation is in our province.

Well, let me share with the House this afternoon what some other Manitobans—they are not Manitobans yet—some other people from outside of our province have said about our province. A little community of Rossburn, 600 people, decided that they needed to do something about their community, and they put a little ad in the Toronto Star, and it said, come and look at us. We have clean air, we have clean water, we have wonderful recreation opportunities, we have a safe community. And people from Ontario came to Rossburn, a little community that is 200 miles west of Winnipeg, and they loved it. They fell in love with the community, and they fell in love with the people of the community. In less than a year we have seen 41 people from Ontario and Toronto move to little Rossburn, Manitoba.

I have had the opportunity to talk to some of those people, and I have asked them about Manitoba and what they thought about Manitoba and the community of Rossburn, and their remarks were all very positive. They are very high about Manitoba. They are very high about their little community of Rossburn. And why? As one parent said to me, for the first time I do not have to escort my children to school. I do not have to supervise them when they go and play in the backyard. I can have them go down to the next neighbor's place

without being supervised, and they can even go downtown and buy a quart of milk without having an adult accompany them.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that is the wonderful part about our province, and that is something that we take for granted day in and day out.

**Mr. Plohman:** It is going to get worse with you guys in government.

**Mr. Derkach:** Now, I know that the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) is a little sensitive to that, but even in Dauphin we have that same kind of climate, those same kinds of people because all people in Manitoba want to provide a secure and satisfying living condition and jobs for everyone. Manitobans want our children to be taught the fundamentals and the new skills that they will need for the next century. Manitobans want our health care system to be a high quality one. They want it to be accessible, and they want it to be fair, and they want it to be protected as one of its most important assets. That is what this government is doing.

Mr. Acting Speaker, as a government, we want our cities and our rural communities, our farms and our businesses, all those that create jobs to prosper and to grow and to do so in ways that are consistent with the principles of sustainable development. We want our streets and our neighbourhoods to be safe, whether it is in our urban centres or our small communities. We want them to be safe during the day and during the night, for our young and for our old alike, and we want our heritage and our multicultural province to be honoured and respected, and we also want that our public businesses can be conducted in ways that are efficient and accountable. Whether we like it or not the opposition cannot ignore those kinds of wants by Manitobans and indeed by this government.

Mr. Acting Speaker, for seven straight years and seven straight budgets we have kept our promise to Manitobans. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) has kept his promise. There is no other jurisdiction, province or state in North America that can claim the statement of holding a promise to its people.

That is why here in Manitoba we are attracting world-class companies to the city. We are attracting companies from outside of this province to rural parts of our province because our commitment is to the people of Manitoba. We have a commitment to bring them responsible government, and we have lived up to that commitment over the last seven years. [interjection]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau):** Order, please. I am having a little bit of difficulty hearing the honourable minister. If we could just keep the decorum down to a mild roar. For those who want to have a little talk, you can go to the loges or outside in the hall.

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Acting Speaker, thank you.

There was a little sensitivity by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) the other day to a video that was produced about Manitoba, and he made light of it. Mr. Acting Speaker, so that he might perhaps get a better understanding of what the video was trying to tell Manitobans, I am going to share a copy of that video with him, because I think it is a video that talks about Manitoba and talks about the strength of our province, the strengths of our people and the opportunities that we have in front of us. I am going to send a copy of that video over, and I ask that every member in this House take that video with him and show it to Manitobans and show it to people outside of this province because, indeed, it does talk about the strengths of this province and what our people in this province are all about.

Mr. Acting Speaker, a strong economy does not just happen. This government has worked to a plan, a plan that was laid out to Manitobans and one that Manitobans accepted. That is why this government was returned to office in 1990, and will be again. What has given us the edge? We were given the edge because of the ability to provide programs that work, that work for the people of this province. It worked whether they were in urban Manitoba or in rural Manitoba.

We have gone to rural Manitobans, and we have talked to the grassroots, the people who count, and

they are the ones who have told us time and time again about the things that are important to Manitobans and the things they want to see, and we have responded in like kind. We have made programs that Manitobans have asked us about. We have developed programs that Manitobans can live with and ones that will help this province become a strong province, stronger than it is today and one that will lead us, as one of the finest provinces, into the 21st Century.

I ask members opposite, whether they are in the Liberal ranks or in the New Democratic ranks, to support this budget, because this budget sets the foundation for a strong province, and I ask all members of the House to join us and vote in support of this tremendous budget that was presented by my colleague the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson).

**Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake):** Mr. Acting Speaker, it is a pleasure to be able to rise this afternoon and address this fiscal year's budget.

Before I do that, I would just like to take this opportunity, as other members have throughout the throne speech and some in the budget speech debates, to welcome all the members back to the Assembly and, of course, we sincerely welcome the newly elected members: the two Liberal members from Osborne (Ms. McCormick) and from The Maples (Mr. Kowalski); and, of course, with extreme pleasure to welcome our new members on this side of the House, the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg) and the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), who I found to be an absolutely wonderful, wonderful person, and I know that we will be working together on aboriginal issues throughout this time.

\* (1700)

Mr. Acting Speaker, also a warm welcome to our new Pages, and I wish them well during this session and, of course, in the future, and I know that they will be picking up on a lot of interesting events and situations that will come about in the next few months.

I would also like to welcome our new interns, who will also be with us until the end of this session.

I also want to again offer my warm welcome and congratulations to our staff, starting with the Clerk, for the help that they provide us here in the Assembly to make us work smoothly and efficiently.

To the Sergeant-at-Arms also a welcome, and I would like to assure him and his wonderful wife, Jean, that their family, who live near in my constituency and near Fisher Branch, that they are well, well represented, and I welcome the opportunity to meet with them at different times.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have heard comments throughout this debate—

**An Honourable Member:** What is going on in Fisher Branch? How are things? Things are all right in Fisher Branch?

**Mr. Clif Evans:** Things are very good in Fisher Branch.

We have been listening to both sides, the government side, our side, I have. I find it ironic that the government has gotten up on its high horse after this budget and it has been like a knight in shining armour running through Manitoba waving the budget speech in one hand, and things are going to be better for this province in the other hand, Mr. Acting Speaker. Well—

**An Honourable Member:** Must be an election coming.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** Yes, there is an election coming, I am sure. Mr. Acting Speaker, I wonder just where they get off after six years—and I was not here for the full six years. I have just been here since 1990, and I have seen the cuts, I have heard the people. All of a sudden out of the blue we have this we-will-save-everybody budget speech, we are the end of all ends with this new budget.

Now things are fine as far as the people in my area—and I would just like to take the opportunity to bring up some of the things that my constituency has been trying for the last four years, last three and a half years, trying to do—[interjection]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau):** Order, please. I am really having a lot of trouble hearing the honourable member for Interlake, and I would like to hear him. Those members wanting to carry on conversations should do so in the halls. I would appreciate it and the members who want to listen would appreciate it.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

In light of what has been happening within the Interlake—and just to show you, the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) talked about how rural people have the skills and the ambition and the need to do things and to provide education, to provide infrastructure, to provide for the people who live in the small communities in the Interlake.

In the past three and a half, four years the community of Riverton has worked very hard and has come to a point of bringing the need for an improvement to their infrastructure, to their roads, to their main street, to their community. They have met with the government many times over the past few years asking for support, asking for assistance, assistance not only morally, Mr. Acting Speaker. Of course, asking for assistance in some sort of grant to be able to provide an upgrading of their infrastructure so that they can provide a community for the young people to continue living in, for the small businesses that are in the community to thrive. Nothing has been done.

You would think, Mr. Acting Speaker, that you would want to have and work for as a government, something for the whole of the province, not spotty here, spotty there, spotty there, not slough that community off or that community off, but be serious and work, provide some hope, provide some future for these communities.

But no, that is not happening. Riverton has in the last couple of years come to this government and worked very hard at this, looking for a personal care home, not looking for it, but having a project to provide a personal care home within the community.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the Minister of Rural Development talked about how people are coming back to rural Manitoba. Well, they are not coming

back. When it comes to the elderly, what we see is a filtering out of people, not only seniors, but also young people, and a personal care home, for an example, in a community such as Riverton, such as Fisher Branch, that has also worked very, very hard and is hopefully ready to go with their project, is very important.

I remember very diligently, and I have said this before in the House, the previous Minister of Rural Development stating to the people from the Interlake that it is so, so important to provide for our seniors, to provide for that population sixty-five and over.

We also have now the other situation, the bottom side of it, the young. But I will get to that. We need to provide. We need to keep our people in the community. We are not doing that. We are not having the opportunity to do that, because this government is just not listening to the people and to the people's needs.

We need things such as personal care homes. We need infrastructure programs that my communities and the communities in the Interlake are doing their fair share in providing what is necessary from their side to be able to achieve these goals, whether it be the roads, whether it be the sewers, whether it be the personal care homes.

We have been in the process now for a few years of dealing with this government on natural gas. We have been dealing with this government for nearly five years.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this does not necessarily come from myself. I will repeat what people in my community have said about this. Why is the government sitting on their hands with the natural gas issue? They have been sitting on their hands with natural gas in the community and for the community. We get one excuse. We get another excuse. We get a meeting. We get a forum. We get a seminar. We get a this and a that.

Let us hope there will be an announcement for the people in the Interlake. [interjection] Excuses—excuses and meetings and seminars.

Now, something like natural gas coming up into the Arborg and Riverton and Interlake area and

hopefully in the future being able to go off into the Fisher Branch area and expand is very important. The people within the area have developed a project to develop a dehyd plant near Arborg. Natural gas is very important for the project.

They have come to this government for years looking for the right answer. And what is the right answer? Have they given the right answer? No. They have waited and waited and sat on their hands with it. Yes or no. We will or we will not.

Now, we have with the infrastructure program, that through the federal government has come about, we were hoping that this natural gas extension would come up and come through and up to Arborg. Through the first round of the infrastructure program, nothing. I hope, and I have spoken to the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) about this, and other ministers, and I do hope that there is going to be support for this program, for this project, before the infrastructure money runs out.

\* (1710)

Mr. Acting Speaker, this government has talked about taxes. They brag about the nonincrease of taxes, personal income tax and taxes over the past seven budgets and they continue to do that. This government continues to want to think that the trickle-down effort from government down, down, down is going to solve the problem. Well, it is not, and it has not. For six years it has not and it will not. The trickle-down effect by this government is not a good one for this province. It is not a good one for any other jurisdiction. It has been proven that it is not a good basis for the way to handle the province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the government talks about the lack—not the lack of, but the maintenance of taxes. They have taxed everything now that they can possibly tax. Basically, they have increased the taxes to the people of this province. The people do not believe the rhetoric that is given out, the fact that we are not raising taxes. Our property taxes have been increased; our education taxes have been increased; taxes on ice cream cones have been increased. Taxes on every little thing that you

can imagine—but we have not increased taxes. [interjection] Well, the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) says major taxes. Right. But all the minor taxes—and when you go out to the rural areas, if you go out to some of the rural areas they laugh at you. When they talk, they laugh at you; they say you have a big, big hullabaloo that you are not raising taxes. Ask the people, ask the young people in rural Manitoba. Ask the school divisions if you have not raised taxes. Ask them. [interjection] Well, I am glad to hear that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) agrees with me on that, because that is what is happening out there, Mr. Acting Speaker. The people in the rural communities are smart. They realize that. You are right. They know what government is trying to do.

I was just out in Poplarfield on Friday. I sat down and one of my constituents came up, and he said, Clif, what is this government trying to prove after six years, six budgets? Are they trying to say to us that we actually do not realize what is going on, that we are just dumb? Those are the words of a constituent. He said, we are not dumb; we know what is going on. Six years of cuts in education, six years of cuts in health—

**An Honourable Member:** That is not true, Clif.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** It is true.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the people are saying that they are fed up. No, let us—health care that is adding here, adding there, but cutting down there and cutting down there. What do you get? A bottom line cut, cuts in services.

If what this government was saying was fact and happening, then I do not think I would hear any complaints. I do not think I would be getting phone calls about situations in my communities. I do not think I would be getting phone calls about wanting and asking me how it would be possible to get in for an operation sooner. How can you get an operation sooner?

A constituent who was in so much pain with her knee that she needed an operation as quickly as possible to ease that pain, taking medication in the hundreds of dollars so she would not suffer so

much pain and asking her doctor—he said there is no room available for us to take you in, and you are going to have to wait three to five months. An elderly woman in my constituency, Mr. Acting Speaker, has to wait three to five months because there are no beds for an operation that is needed. Now they say they are helping health care.

The solution that the doctor provided—one of the solutions that he provided or was able to tell her was the fact that she could pay an extra thousand dollars and he would have her in a clinic next week. Where then, on the other side of it, is this one or two income, low income family going to get a thousand dollars for an operation? Somehow that does not make sense to me nor to the people in the Interlake nor to the rural people. It is system for one or system for the other. Mr. Acting Speaker, that is one example of what was happening.

When last year's budget—and we are still feeling the effects of them cutting the dental program to the school kids. Still we are hearing about it. To this day I still hear about the cuts to the dental program that this government implemented last year, taking it away. So let them not be on their high horse that they are doing the almighty thing that they can do when it comes to health because it is not happening.

Another issue, when this government brought in Filmon Fridays—this touches home. A young child in my community was ill, and it was on a Thursday. Her mother took her to the local clinic in Riverton, and he took some tests. She had been ill for a few days, and she took some tests, and the mother said, when will we find out what is wrong? If there is anything wrong, when can we find out? The doctor informed her that because of Filmon Fridays that probably the tests would not be done nor the results back until Tuesday. So a young—

**An Honourable Member:** That is not true.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** It is true. A young child having to wait and not know, Mr. Acting Speaker, the doctor not knowing, the mother not knowing and the child not knowing just where it is happening with this

government, and it is not happening. That is happening out there.

**An Honourable Member:** I am a little surprised at you, Clif.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** I would not be too, too surprised.

**An Honourable Member:** Well, I am surprised at you today. You usually come in here and always tell the truth.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** I am telling the truth.

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Oh, sure you are, right?

**Mr. Clif Evans:** Does the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) want to get up and say that I am not telling the truth? Do you want to get up and say that?

**Mr. McCrae:** I am saying that you usually tell the truth. There are rules against me saying what I feel like saying anyhow.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** Would you like to get up? I will give you the floor. Would you like to put it on record? Would you like to put on the record that I am making false statements? [interjection] Would you like to repeat what you said?

**Mr. Acting Speaker,** I would say that this government also talks about deficit—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Acting Speaker, the honourable member wants me to put something on the record, and what I would put on the record is that what the honourable member is saying is highly questionable.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau):** Order, please. The honourable minister did not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

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**Mr. Clif Evans:** Mr. Acting Speaker, I am sure, as usual, the Minister of Health danced around that one.

I would like to get away from the Health issue right now, and I would like to just talk about the deficit. Now I have heard the rhetoric from the other side about the deficit, about the debt services,

and it amazes me, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the government would just continue to use and use.

Well, they have had six years. You would think, as any business, that a government or anybody would do what is possible or what is necessary to be able to bring some revenue in. This government has not done that. They have cut the taxes to the corporations. They have cut people's jobs. They have cut services and then they blame the annual deficit or the debt service that they have to pay on someone else. The deficit last year, they tried to hide the actual deficit from last year. They are trying to do it again this year, so let us not hear about other—I do not want to hear about other provinces and other jurisdictions. We have our own problems in this province created by this government for six years.

\* (1720)

**Mr. Acting Speaker,** I would like to know and wonder how in fact this government—what they are doing to be able to provide some revenues. You would think now they have the VLTs, and I will go on record—the opportunity to provide some economic benefit to small businesses in rural Manitoba came in 1991 under the condition, according to this government, that everything was going to be returned back to rural Manitobans. All of a sudden, the signs change on top of the machines. Now, this government is getting up and saying we are going to—that it has helped some of the hotels. I must agree and I do agree, and I put it on record that it has helped some of the small, rural—[interjection] Yes, it has helped some of the small, rural hotels and businesses in the community, but it has also taken a toll on some of the people and some of the other businesses, and it has. I have seen it myself.

It is hard on the one hand to know that it is a benefit for businesses that are starting to drop off in rural Manitoba because of depopulation, because of whatever, and on the other hand, seeing the fact that there are some people out there who just cannot and should not operate and play the machines. But it is there. There has to be some way, and I will do whatever I can to help this government or any government in providing some

sort of program as such to be able to help the people who have taken it too hard and are spending much too much.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to make another comment on a program that was in the budget, a program that I had hoped—and still perhaps there is some hope for it and that is the Home Renovation Program. Since they brought this budget out, the question out there is: How can the people in most rural communities really be able to afford the \$5,000 first off? There are not a lot of people out in the rural communities who can come up with the \$5,000 that is needed. There is lot of work out there that is needed. I see it going through my communities. I see it all the time. I see it everywhere, but who can really afford \$5,000?

Mr. Acting Speaker, the RRAP program that is in place—and I have helped constituents with this program. I think it is a good program. I think the RRAP program is a good program, and I have been able to help constituents with it in being able to renovate and to fix some of their homes so that they can live in a decent way. This program, I will watch it. I will see. We will see just where this program will get us and will get some of the people in this province when it comes to renovations. I mean, not everybody can just write out a cheque for \$5,000 and get some work done and receive the rebate back. It is not going to happen. I hope that it is there long enough for people to benefit from it, those who can. I want to see that.

I wonder if this government should not have implemented some sort of a program on income and need. The RRAP program addresses it. Is the RRAP program going to be in place? Is it going to stay? We do not know, but I do have questions about the Home Renovation Program. I guess the main question is, Mr. Acting Speaker, are people out there going to be able to afford it? [interjection] Well, I can always support a certain program. I can always add my support for certain programs, certain things, but not necessarily will I support, nor do I support, the full budget that this government has put forth.

Well, the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) discussed earlier about the youth in our

province, and I must say that I had the opportunity this year of attending the two-day forum. Firstly, I would say, on a kinder note, that I would certainly appreciate the fact, and do appreciate the fact, that there was the youth out there who wanted for the first time to be heard and to tell the people in our communities what is needed.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there were two students from my community who attended the forum. When I discussed it with them after, they were pleased with what they had seen and heard.

Before I continue I would also like to say and put on record that I was treated very, very well by the minister's staff—

**An Honourable Member:** And by the minister.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** And by the minister. It felt sometimes like I had a ball and chain on my leg, but at least we came out of it unscathed, and we were able to discuss the program and other things. It took about four days for me to get the irons off my leg.

**An Honourable Member:** Clif, he did not want you out of his sight.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** That is exactly what it was. He did not want me out of his sight.

I want to reiterate and also echo some of the comments that the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) made as to what I found during the program when the youth were able to provide all their answers and suggestions to the questionnaires that they had. It was very disturbing to hear the two things they said that were not what they would want to see or have now most in rural Manitoba communities. That is of course jobs—you can hardly get a job anywhere in rural Manitoba—and education.

The Minister of Rural Development was there. He listened, he heard. I think he will agree with me, because we discussed it. The youth of our province and the youth from rural Manitoba, those are two main concerns they have. This is over 200 —[interjection] We are talking the youth and for the future, the young people.

To the Minister of Highways (Mr. Findlay), how about some Highways jobs out there. How about maintaining some of the roads out there. How about, quit worrying about Highway 75. How about the roads that are needed in rural areas. Are they being done? Are they?

**An Honourable Member:** Yes.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** Yes? Let us see them. You bring up the record of what you have done in rural Manitoba, in the Interlake and some of the others. Let us see it. If it is going to be, so be it.

The Minister of Highways knows and can appreciate the fact, and the previous Minister of Highways knows that this member has done lobbying on behalf of his constituency for roads and roads and roads and roads in the Interlake.

**An Honourable Member:** So have I.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** I am sure we all are.

**An Honourable Member:** I begged him, I pleaded with him.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** Perhaps next time hit him over the head with a bat. I do not know. Perhaps pleading is not the answer to wake him up.

Mr. Acting Speaker, jobs are jobs, but we are getting away from what the young people said. They want to see the future. A lot of them want to stay. This was the topic of why you would not want to stay in your rural community. I have seen that, being in rural Manitoba for seven years, eight years. I have seen it. The young people are leaving. The advanced education for some of these young people is not there. They have to leave the communities for it. They have to come into the larger urban centres.

\* (1730)

The Rural Development minister had stipulated the fact of how much is needed in distance education. And yes, the distance ed I do support. As a matter of fact, I had the pleasure and the honour of being there for the opening ceremonies in my home community in Riverton and, at the same time, being able to speak to people in Gimli, Fisher Branch and Arborg. It was wonderful, and it should be continued, and it should be supported,

and it should be encouraged, and it should be increased. It should be increased further.

Now, distance ed—and I see it in my small community, in the past seven years I have been there the population has decreased upwards of near 100 people. Of course, the Distance Ed program, I know, will work and could work in our communities, and I know it could be expanded. It could work much better. I would like to see that because I think it is important. The youth of our province said it was. They said that we need a better education system potential for past our high school years, and the program is there.

This program that is in place now in the four communities was worked on and put together by Evergreen School Division. But can we assure ourselves that this government is going to enhance and enable this program to expand into first or second year university? We do not know that, but we do know that it is a very true and important aspect and future for the education in our province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, when we want to talk about economic development and the future of the communities it would be remiss of me to not mention the commercial fishing industry in our province. In my communities, and the communities in my colleagues' constituencies of Swan River, Thompson and others, the fishing industry is perhaps for some communities, and especially for mine in Riverton, probably, if not the most important, the main industry.

The past few years, the industry has taken a toll and has been in some trouble. I know that the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach) will work along with me on this one and, hopefully, tomorrow he will be able to answer some specific questions on the fishing industry. But it is very important; very, very important.

Mr. Acting Speaker, in the past few years with expenses being so high, with gasoline being so high, with the prices being down, there are fishermen out there who cannot fill quotas, fishermen out there who need some sort of assistance. On the one hand, too, and I have not as yet taken any kind of liberties with the Liberals,

but the question out there is since the new federal government has been elected, right away as soon as the announcements were made about UI, I was getting calls from leaders of the fishing community, leaders of fishing organizations. How are we going to survive now, how, with the attitude that the federal Liberals have taken upon the fishing industry? They do not say anything. All they do is cut, cut, cut, too. [interjection] Well, I certainly hope so.

I would like to comment that the fishing industry in my communities, Mr. Acting Speaker, is of great importance. We have to, to provide the fishing jobs, to provide economic benefit for our communities, the fishing industry has to be picked up one way or another whether it be enhancing the costs, enhancing the market price for the fish that they are fishing or a system with a subsidy. And the subsidy—[interjection] I will give the Minister of Natural Resources an opportunity perhaps tomorrow to answer the question about the northern freight subsidy that has been cut by the previous—[interjection] No, no. It was cut by this government, and I remember the previous Minister of Natural Resources saying he was going to get on his white horse and head to Ottawa and talk to the Minister of Fisheries and get some assistance back for that freight subsidy. It has not happened.

**An Honourable Member:** Someone shot the horse.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** Someone shot the horse. Well, that could very—is that what the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) said?

**Mr. Acting Speaker,** in closing, I would just like to say that really this province has the potential in the future. We need a government that will take action, not a government such as this, not a budget such as this, not a smoke and mirrors budget, but a government and a budget that is going to provide for the well-being and the people of the province of Manitoba. Thank you.

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources):** Mr. Acting Speaker, the luck of the draw, I suppose. I will be working in split shifts

between now and six and I guess after eight o'clock. But that is—

**An Honourable Member:** We will give you another 40 minutes after eight o'clock.

**Mr. Driedger:** Well, you might want to reconsider that.

Anyway, Mr. Acting Speaker, it is always sort of exciting to get up and participate in either the throne speech or the Budget Debate. I had the privilege to listen to the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohma) as he was wailing away there, and some members have the knack and the tendency to bring out sort of the negative in everybody in the House. My feeling, I have been in the House for so many years that you sometimes wonder whether you should respond to his comments or not. I always have that feeling when the member for Dauphin speaks, when he is in trouble, yell loudly, you know, and he does that capably. But I am going to make some reference to some of the comments that basically he was referring to. I could not help overhearing some of them.

I want to take this opportunity, as well, like everybody else, to welcome the new members to the House. It is surprising, almost every session that we have, there are always some changes taking place, either new members in, certainly there are always new staff people involved somewhere along the line. It is surprising when we have new members coming in, usually after a general election, you know everybody sort of cuts their own, or tries to cut their own, niche in terms of how they speak on issues that they want to address, and that develops over the years. The member for Dauphin, I still have not figured out what his niche is, but he has been working at it for a long time.

I have to tell you that I have sensed this with some of the new members coming in that they have certain specific interests, and they are following that.

\* (1740)

**Mr. Acting Speaker,** you know I have a few more little tidbits for the member for Dauphin. He was really pulling deep today when he went back

to the Sterling Lyon years. So I want to take the liberty to go back a little bit, too, and go back to the Pawley years and the role at that time.

(Mr. Bob Rose, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Speaker, I can recall the six and a half years that Premier Pawley and his people were government, during a time when actually the economy was doing well. The income for the government was in the two-digit numbers and stuff of that nature, and the spending was wild by the government of the day. They actually, during those good times, were getting themselves into trouble, and basically it has been said many times, but we are still paying that price to some degree.

I can recall sitting in opposition there when then-Minister of Finance Vic Schroeder brought in that payroll tax, because they were in financial trouble. We thought that they would have to sort of raise the sales tax, and they sort of moved in terms of the payroll tax. I have to tell members opposite that, at that time, we were sort of sitting figuring that because we were not happy with the government, and most Manitobans were not happy with the government, they would do something foolish, and then when the election came, we could defeat them. Well, it took a little bit longer than that, I guess, until we finally had that opportunity.

I just want to say that during the years that we have been in government, since 1988, the economy turned around a little bit the opposite way. We have had great difficulty making tough decisions in terms of what we do, and it has been an agonizing process, I can tell you that.

I recall I was Minister of Government Services at the time when we had the fires in '89 and the heavy dust storms, issues of that nature that went on, the dust bowl, I think we called it. Somehow, Mr. Acting Speaker, when you sit in this House for quite a number of years, not like my colleague the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), who has been here seemingly forever and will be here forever, but you sort of get a sense as to what is happening in the House, how people feel. You can almost sense when somebody feels the government is in trouble and when it is not in trouble.

I have to tell you that I find the sense is not there for the members of the opposition that they feel comfortable going into an election. I tell you, I am not necessarily saying the Liberals at this stage of the game, but if the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and his colleagues want to—they have toned down their yelling for an election, and there is a good reason for that. They know the same things that we do, that in the event that there is going to be an election, they are going to be in a tough spot. I will leave it at that.

I want to come back to basically the new members in the Legislature here, not that I am trying to necessarily spout some wisdom, but you know how things evolve out here within this House and you listen to them as they sort of bring up their certain areas of strength that they have, depending on their background. For example, my background was agriculture, and from the rural area. Mostly these were city members and one from the North, of course, and I think it is a natural thing to sort of evolve along the things that a person feels comfortable with.

The theme that I got from the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg) and the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), I believe, I listened and I believe the member for The Maples has an enforcement background. He was talking about how he got together with the youth and was trying to find out what was creating the problems. I found that of interest, the comments that he made when he said, well, they said because the kids in the class, there are too many of them, they do not get the attention and they were not getting the recognition to some degree, and they had difficulty with jobs, et cetera.

I was thinking about those remarks a little bit and I want to go back a little bit again. I guess the problem is, Mr. Acting Speaker, when you have been here for a while and you get older, you start reminiscing a little bit. I have heard some of the other people basically say that one of the reasons why we have youth crime is basically because there are not opportunities, people are poor.

That is what made me think by and large about being poor. I was raised poor. At the time we

maybe did not realize we were poor but there was very little available at that time. We talked about our communities in the North, comparatively to what we enjoy at the present time, the standards that we have do not have the same standards, but they say because they do not have inside washrooms, hot and cold running water, that these are the things that actually help develop crime and a bad attitude toward society.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

I want to go back to my childhood days and just maybe bring forward a few things in that period of time that have happened. We did not have hot and cold running water, Mr. Acting Speaker. We did not have inside washrooms. We had very little things at that time and we were poor but we were happy. What I am trying to illustrate, at that time we did not have daycare. We went to schools that basically had eight grades in one school and maybe 35-40 kids and one teacher. Crime among youth was not a big factor at that time.

When we say that being poor is instigating a lot of the youth crime, I say hold it. Think back a little bit, because being poor does not necessitate the fact that there should be youth crime, or does it? If that is the case, if we pump more money into the system, does that mean there is less crime and there are less problems? I cannot see it that way, because what has happened? Just look at the spending that has taken place in Education and the Attorney General's department. Whatever we do, everything has been escalating. The more money we spend, the more problems we have.

Then I think a little bit, why is it that way? Basically because we have changed our principles in society. We have changed our principles in society where everybody has the right to be equal. I think that is not a bad ambition. That is not the reality of life, but we promote it to the point where those who are less fortunate then feel they have to do something to be as fortunate as some others.

I believe in equal rights, but I also believe there has to be order in the country. There also has to be order in the province. Why do we have this

escalation of youth crime? Because it has come to the point, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the general public is becoming very sensitive about it.

You can always feel when these issues get up to a point, all of a sudden everybody is into it and talking about it. Maybe it is a matter that we have lowered our principles. We are recognizing the Year of the Family this year, which I think is a very important thing. Maybe that is where part of the problem stems from, that we do not put enough value on families.

I have been fortunate enough to be raised in a family with three brothers and three sisters. I refer again to the fact that we were not well to do. We have all managed to get our education. It was difficult. We did not have subsidies. I went to university one year and I could not go the second year because there was no assistance available at that time. I never did go back to finish my diploma course in agriculture. If the parents did not have the money, you just did not go.

We have means available now for virtually everybody to get educated if they want to. The fact that we do have that system in place, by and large, has not garnered success. That is why the general public and the people who pay the taxes are getting unhappy. They say, for the kind of money that is being spent, why do we not have better results.

When I listen to some of the comments—aside from the usual political bantering that goes on, but, by and large, people say, well, if you spend more money, it will resolve the problem. I even heard the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg) saying that. He also said, address the reform or the education system. But I also heard the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) saying, we should spend more money. We should have fewer pupils in the classroom. We should do certain other things and then things would correct themselves.

The record shows, history shows, that is not the case. So necessarily throwing money at the problem—and that is easy to do in opposition. I sat in opposition six and a half years—

**An Honourable Member:** Too long.

**Mr. Driedger:** Yes, it was too long. I thought it was. Really, at that time you can virtually criticize everything that the government of the day does. But I tell you, based on the budget that was presented now, those of you who are elected and you get out there and talk to your people, listen to them now. They are not unhappy with the budget.

\* (1750)

The majority of people accept the budget which does not make it necessarily comfortable for the members in the opposition, because as we go into an election these are issues that are going to be—and we are very close to it now. We are going into the last year or so, whatever the case may be, and these things get to be sensitive. But it is not a political budget.

**An Honourable Member:** Sure it is.

**Mr. Driedger:** No, it is not. It is in keeping with what has happened all these years. I have seen political budgets where at the tail end you pour out all kinds of little goodies to try and appease the public. That is not the case here.

Again I repeat, if you go back to your constituents and ask them—you can ask, of course, with a bias—how they feel about it, you will get a positive response. You want to compare that to across the country in other provinces. We have a great record here. I dare say every province in the country of Canada would envy and would want to have a budget of this nature. Just compare.

Now, we get influenced here because you have people that always go along the same rhetoric. For example, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) or the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) whom I have heard many times. You will be hearing many of these things going back and forth, at least during the Budget Debate and throne speech. Ultimately, you find out that the public is always right. I might not always agree with the public, but the public is always right.

I recall the yes-no vote. I can recall all kinds of things, even when they defeated the Sterling Lyon government. I thought they were wrong. The public is always right. They were also right when they finally threw out Howard Pawley in 1988, and

for that reason I feel confident, Mr. Acting Speaker, that when the time comes for us to go to the public, it is going to be very hard for the members sitting there, some of them, to really return back to this House. And virtually one-third of the members of this House change every election, sometimes more, but virtually anywhere from 17 to 20 change every time.

Just a further little word of caution—I want to get into the Natural Resources end of it, but I would be remiss if I did not just sort of do these things a little bit.

**Mr. Plohman:** Oh, it is okay. Do not apologize. It is not really effective anyway.

**Mr. Driedger:** The member for Dauphin says it is not effective. If he would go back and read through all the speeches that he made over the years that he has been here and find out what effect his have had, his comments have never worried me to any great degree anyway, you know. [interjection]

The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has been here for four years less than I have been here, and I, tongue in cheek from time to time, will put it on the record that we made reference to him as landslide, but he has been a very good member for his area over that period of time and has come back time and time again, but that will change. That will also change. Everybody's turn comes, and what goes around comes around. Ultimately—

**An Honourable Member:** When are you leaving, Albert? If this is your swan song, I would like a few good things too.

**Mr. Driedger:** It is not my swan song; I can guarantee you. [interjection] That is right.

But I want to say to members that things like the budget in the last year are very important, because many seats will change with less than a hundred votes. That is why I say, do not be smug. I have noticed that calls for election have died off quite dramatically. Since the budget, I have not heard anybody except—the only one I have heard calling for an election is the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry).

The official opposition has cooled off their calling for an election. Since the budget came

down, Mr. Acting Speaker, the calls from the official opposition have wilted in terms of calling for an election. I do not know whether they ultimately did some polling of their own or whether somebody gave them some information, but I would suggest that they be very concerned that the government of the day stay for a while yet. But then of course some people are known to commit their own hari-kari and maybe the NDP would do that. I think the member for Thompson certainly has a good feel for where things are at, and I think he would want to take a little time in getting too excited.

Now that I got that out of the way, I want to get down to Natural Resources. Mr. Acting Speaker, it was September 10 that I had the privilege of moving into the responsibilities under Natural Resources. I have to tell you that I had the privilege of being the critic of Natural Resources for six and a half years prior to the '88 upset at that time. I thought at that time that I knew more about the department than the ministers did because, in the six and a half years, they went through five ministers. They kept changing them in Natural Resources. I honestly thought I—

**An Honourable Member:** You did not go through them, Albert.

**Mr. Driedger:** Well, no, Pawley kept—

**An Honourable Member:** They quit despite you.

**Mr. Driedger:** Just to show maybe the priority that the then-Premier Pawley put them, every year he would put a new one in there. Sort of as they got to their last leg, he put them into Natural Resources. I do not think it really did the department any good to have that many changes take place.

What I want to tell you is that it is surprising how things have changed from 1988 to September of last fall when I got into the department, how things have changed in the Department of Natural Resources. I could attribute a lot of that to my colleagues before me, the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) or the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), who were both ministers, but generally the

general public has changed dramatically in terms of how they view our natural resources.

I am very proud of that department. It is a good department. It affects everybody in the province either through wildlife, through fisheries, through forestry, through water issues. Everybody is very conscientious of it, and rightfully so.

The thing that has changed most, Mr. Acting Speaker, is the fact—[interjection] Yes, I will make reference to that in a minute just to show how things can work sometimes. The attitude of the general public in terms of environmental issues has changed dramatically. Since 1988 until now the environmental issues have been one of the big things that came forward, and it creates some anxiety. I am not saying that it is wrong, but I think you have to use a little bit of a balance in terms of when we deal with the environmental issues.

The thing that I am doing at the present time in that department, because we have the groups that can do economic development and maybe have limited concerns about the environment end of it, then we have the environmental groups who do not want anything to happen, I am walking on the middle of these trying to make sensible decisions. That is why we have a process in place now called the environmental hearing process. My colleague from Neepawa, basically, the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) is the one who carries that hat. That has been a very challenging process that we have gone through over a period of time.

How do we deal with that? If people looked at what happened over a period of time with the environment, a major concern, everybody was concerned. The pendulum swung extremely hard. That is tapering off to the point because we now have a system in place that will address these concerns. That does not mean you do not still have extensive lobby groups that basically feel there is still the niche for them to make their concerns known, and that is fair. In the public's terms the environment is not on that high agenda anymore that it was.

I can recall here, the member for—the Liberal member, what was his name? The critic who always used to fight with—[interjection] Yes. He represented which riding? Help me out a little bit.

**Some Honourable Members:** Wolseley.

**Mr. Driedger:** Wolseley, okay. I remember the member for Wolseley and the member for Portage, who was then the Minister of Environment, the interesting debates that flowed back and forth between Question Periods and what have you. I think that was almost the peak of becoming aware of the environment. The fact that we have a system in place now gives the general public some comfort level that these issues are going to be dealt with right and fair and that everybody has a say in the matter and it takes off the edge. Like I say, there are still those—[interjection] You have thrown me off my train of thought here.

In conjunction with that, the other thing that I think is important is sustainable development. Do people know what sustainable development is? They did not initially, but they do now. Everybody is becoming aware of sustainable development, that we do not proceed with projects economically or otherwise without making sure that we treat the environment properly. This is an ongoing thing that evolves. In fact, I expect that within the next little while that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) and the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) are going to be coming forward with some further very positive things that the general public has been waiting to hear.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau):** Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., in accordance with the rules, I am now leaving the Chair and will return at 8 p.m., at which time the honourable minister will have 16 minutes remaining.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 25, 1994

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