



First Session — Thirty-Fourth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

37 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fourth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIBERAL
ANGUS, John	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BURRELL, Parker	Swan River	PC
CARR, James	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIBERAL
CHARLES, Gwen	Selkirk	LIBERAL
CHEEMA, Gulzar	Kildonan	LIBERAL
CHORNOPYSKI, William	Burrows	LIBERAL
CONNERY, Edward Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
COWAN, Jay	Churchill	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James Hon.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Emerson	PC
DRIEDGER, Herold, L.	Niakwa	LIBERAL
DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIBERAL
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Laurie	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
EVANS, Leonard	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen Hon.	Virden	PC
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Ellice	LIBERAL
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HEMPHILL, Maureen	Logan	NDP
KOZAK, Richard, J.	Transcona	LIBERAL
LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.	Inkster	LIBERAL
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANDRAKE, Ed	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
McCRAE, James Hon.	Brandon West	PC
MINENKO, Mark	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
OLESON, Charlotte Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald Hon.	Pembina	PC
PANKRATZ, Helmut	La Verendrye	PC
PATTERSON, Allan	Radisson	LIBERAL
PENNER, Jack, Hon.	Rhineland	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
ROCH, Gilles	Springfield	PC
ROSE, Bob	St. Vital	LIBERAL
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
TAYLOR, Harold	Wolseley	LIBERAL
URUSKI, Bill	Interlake	NDP
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
YEO, Iva	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, August 15, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition and it conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and it complies with the Rules.

Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? Dispense? (Agreed) (The petition of the Manitoba Motor League of Gimli, praying for the passing of An Act to amend An Act To Incorporate The Manitoba Motor League.)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Aluminum Smelter Construction Federal Funding

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

Over the weekend we heard the Prime Minister of this country announce that he would be promoting the site of Sept-Iles for the construction of an aluminum smelter. In that Manitoba has been negotiating a similar project, and in that meetings have taken place between the Cabinet on the other side and Ministers of the federal Cabinet with regard to economic development, can the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) tell this House what funding has been committed from the federal Government to the building of a smelter here in Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): We have indeed discussed the potential of the development of an aluminum smelter in Manitoba with both the Prime Minister and with the other federal Ministers as a result of our meetings. In those discussions we did talk about the prospect of federal funding and that is part of an ongoing discussion that we are having with the federal Government. We expect that with funding being offered for an aluminum smelter in Quebec, that similar funding can and will be offered for an aluminum smelter in Manitoba.

Mrs. Carstairs: With a supplementary question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

In that it is questionable that the world market situation could take the building of two mega projects of this nature, both in Canada at the same time, can the First Minister assure this House that Manitoba will not be taking second fiddle to the Province of Quebec?

Mr. Filmon: Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker.

* (1335)

The fact of the matter is that we have always been aware. In fact, the information that I had received from Manitoba Hydro some time ago, when we were in the midst of discussion about the Alumax proposal, the briefing that I received from the Chairman of Manitoba Hydro at all times indicated that Alumax were looking at both Quebec and Manitoba as potential sites for their proposed smelter. The fact of the matter is what we have to ensure is that there is a level playing field, that whatever support federally is offered for an aluminum smelter, that federal support is the same regardless of whether it is located in Quebec or in Manitoba or in British Columbia.

Mrs. Carstairs: With a supplementary question to the same Minister, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

The Minister makes reference to one or the other. The concern in Manitoba today is that it will indeed be one or the other and the smelter will be built in the Province of Quebec. Can the First Minister assure this House that throughout his discussions with the First Minister of Canada that Manitoba will get a preference position over Quebec?

Mr. Filmon: I think that the difficulty that all of us have is that we would choose the federal Government not to get involved in choosing which regions of the country to give preference to in the location of a smelter; that what we are looking for is that the same programs, the same support, the same financial incentives are offered, whether the smelter is located in Manitoba or whether it is located in British Columbia or whether it is located in Quebec.

If the federal Government were to get involved in choosing where to place things of this nature when, in fact, we have to make our own best case and we have resources at our disposal, we obviously have certain considerations about location and other things, that we have to convince a producer such as Alumax that we are the best location. What we do not want is for the federal Government to offer money to somebody to locate somewhere else rather than here. That is the point that we are making with the Prime Minister.

Mrs. Carstairs: With another question: I, too, agree with the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) that we would prefer the Prime Minister not get involved, but indeed the Prime Minister did get involved. Can we have a commitment from this First Minister that he will invite his First Minister for Canada to come to Manitoba and make the same commitment in this province?

Mr. Filmon: When we had discussions about other matters in the past, I believed that all Parties agreed that what we do not want is for the federal Government to give preferential treatment to one area versus another. We want the federal Government to recognize the strengths that we have. We are, therefore, discussing a variety of different issues here in Manitoba, including the further development of the health care industry.

Western Diversification Fund Projects Approval

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

I was pleased to hear that we had continued to raise the aluminum plant as part of the Western Diversification project. It was one of the 11 energy-intensive projects that we, of course, had on our list earlier.

I was listening with great interest to the First Minister's (Mr. Filmon) answers, and I wonder, in light of the fact that we have Liberal Leader John Turner visiting Mr. Bourassa this week, we have seen Mr. Mulroney visit almost on a monthly basis, when the First Minister would invite the Prime Minister to Manitoba to give us the same kind of financial promises that indeed he is making on a weekly, if not daily basis in the Province of Quebec.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to tell the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) that we have had a number of productive meetings with the Prime Minister—meetings, discussions between ourselves and his Ministers and he. We believe that the Prime Minister is indeed committed to do much more in Manitoba. We have seen examples of that because Western Diversification projects have been approved in record numbers here in Manitoba just since we have taken Government. As a matter of fact, those approvals keep coming week after week after week. That is something that did not occur when the New Democrats were in Government because of the poisonous atmosphere and relationship that they had established with Ottawa.

We were also discussing the expansion and extension of the ERDA Agreement so that when those come up for renewal in March of 1989, we will be in a position to have others to take their place, more federal money for us to provide for Manitoba's priorities. Those priorities include a whole host of issues upon which our future economic development depends. We are working very diligently and we are getting very good cooperation from the federal Government, evidence of which has already been seen.

Mr. Doer: Perhaps the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) can use facts rather than just rhetoric. He knows full well that the share of procurement in all of western Canada has been below the population averages in 1984 when Mr. Mulroney took office and has in fact decreased since the Mulroney Government came into office following 1984. It is now down to about 12.4 percent for 29 percent of the population.

* (1345)

My question to the First Minister is, given the fact he has made this commitment in Quebec for one of the firms that we are negotiating with now, when will the Prime Minister visit his good friend in Manitoba and give Manitoba the same amount of money on the table, guaranteed on the table, so we can negotiate in a comparable way with the company?

Mr. Filmon: Without having visited us, he has already given us a good deal more in the way of cooperation

What we do want to have is where it is potentially possible for an aluminum producer to locate in one of several regions of the country. You know that there are aluminum smelters in British Columbia; you know that there are aluminum smelters in Quebec. We believe that there is a potential. Feasibility studies have been done in the past that say there is a potential for an aluminum smelter to be located here in Manitoba. We want the federal Government to treat every area equally, to give the same support, the same financial incentives regardless of whether the choice is Manitoba, Quebec, or British Columbia, or anywhere else in the country. That is what we are working on and that is what we have communicated to the Prime Minister.

Mrs. Carstairs: We are again getting mixed messages from the Chairman of Hydro and the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld). It impacts very severely upon this smelter construction.

Can the First Minister explain to the House why—after assurances from the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld) that there is nothing in the Free Trade Agreement that impacts on the sale of energy—can he tell us the Chairman of Hydro is indeed getting a legal opinion, and will he table that legal opinion when it is finally achieved?

* (1340)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I am not certain as to the nature of the question that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) wants answered vis-a-vis the Free Trade Agreement. If she can be more specific as to what aspect of the Free Trade Agreement she wants to have examined, I will determine whether or not that is the nature of the legal opinion being sought by Manitoba Hydro and whether or not that legal opinion is able to be shared.

Free Trade Agreement Hydro Price Setting

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). The Chairman of Hydro has indicated that he wants to study whether the free trade deal will make it impossible for us to offer preferential rates to a construction project such as the aluminum smelter. The Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld) has said there is nothing in the Free Trade Act which will make that impossible. Why then is the Chairman of Hydro asking for a legal opinion?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): The question is not whether or not the Free Trade Agreement makes it impossible. Many things can be done and be subject to countervail. That is the case today with gas. In fact, if energy is offered at a rate below its cost of production, on an incentive basis or a subsidized basis, the reality of the matter is that is countervailable today under gas. That has not changed as a result of the Free Trade Agreement. So I do not know what point the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is attempting to make.

and actual money on the table with Western Diversification approvals only in the past couple of months, something that the Leader of the New Democratic Party was not able to achieve in all of his years in Government, he and his predecessors in 6.5 years.

We have had the cooperation, we have had the agreement of the federal Government to come here and discuss with our Ministers, which they did last week, a number of major projects, a number of initiatives. Some of them have already been announced, much more is about to come, and I am sure that in due course, as well, the Prime Minister will be here to bring us other ideas and other suggestions of cooperation and new initiatives that will be good for Manitoba.

Mr. Doer: I absolutely find it sickening that the Prime Minister of this country will visit a Premier of a province and continue to give out largesse to one particular region of this province, particularly where his own constituency is, at the expense of—

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have a question?

Mr. Doer: —other regions of this country. It is time we stood up with the Prime Minister.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have a question?

Mr. Doer: Yes. I would like to know when the Prime Minister is going to visit the Premier of this province in Manitoba and when he will get the guarantee of the same amount of money from the federal Government as he has given already to the province of Quebec.

Mr. Filmon: Despite the fact that that is an absolute repetition of the former question, I will give the Leader of the New Democratic Party the same answer I gave him; and that is that we have already fared better than we ever did under his Government in office here in Manitoba, that we have gotten a great number of approvals under the Western Diversification initiative, that we have had a Minister-to-Minister meeting with three federal Ministers and three provincial Ministers at which we have outlined mutual priorities, a number of major economic development initiatives, and there is much more to come.

Mr. Doer: I would have hoped that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) would have obtained the financial guarantee on the aluminum plant this morning after he read the Free Press. We already know an extra aluminum plant has gone into Kitimat in British Columbia. We know that we are competing with the same company in Manitoba.

When will the Premier have the guarantee that we will get the same amount of money to put on the table in negotiations with the same company for the aluminum plant in Manitoba's part of the Western Diversification? When will he be able to table the same offer as we heard publicly proclaimed this weekend in the Province of Quebec by our Canadian Prime Minister?

Mr. Filmon: Of course, the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) is very sensitive to the fact that we had an agreement in principle to have Alcan locate a smelter here in 1981 and his New Democratic administration blew that agreement and Alcan took all of their investment and all of their capital and left Manitoba because they could not deal with the New Democrats in Government here in Manitoba.

We will not have that problem. We are dealing in good faith with Alumax and we are dealing with the federal Government in a way that we believe is productive and will result in the same dollars offered here in Manitoba as are offered in Quebec or anywhere else to a company that wants to form an aluminum smelter here.

M.P.I.C. CEO Search

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation (Mr. Cummings). We are under the impression that Mr. Graham Lane was hired to become chief executive officer of the Workers Compensation Board as of August 2. My question to the Minister is: Who is the chief executive officer of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation?

* (1350)

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to indicate that the selection process for a new CEO is well under way, and we will be having announcements within the near future. Presently, Mr. David Kidd, being the senior vice-president, is operating the corporation.

M.P.I.C. General Insurance Division

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): A supplementary to the same Minister. Could the Minister inform us what studies, if any, have taken place inside the corporation to determine the feasibility and the viability of winding down the General Insurance Division?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act): Mr. Speaker, I notice some enthusiasm on the other side with the idea of wrapping up the corporation. I wonder if the Member is advocating that we get on with that, if that is what he would like us to make an announcement on. We were talking about scaring the hell out of civil servants, what about the employees of the Crown corporations?

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member knows unparliamentary language

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw any unparliamentary remarks.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Member.

Mr. Cummings: We have been accused of savaging the public service. What about the innuendo that comes now about wrapping up the Public Insurance Corporation? I can tell you that the board—and I will tell the Member opposite—is examining the position of the corporation, taking into account all of the financial reasonings that come forward in studying that corporation. If they will be patient, they will see that we are applying sound management and we are operating with a non-interventionist manner at the corporation.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary to the same Minister. I believe it was his campaign promise to divest the corporation of the General Insurance Division. Our position was we wanted to know if there was any social responsibility attendant to that function. My question to the Minister is: Does he believe that there is a social responsibility attendant to that function? What studies are in place? And when will he put in front of this House his Government's plan and intention?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, we have indicated that we are gathering all of the pertinent information, and part of that pertinent information is to assure that no one in this province will be left without insurance. I think that we have to be very conscious not only to be responsible in our pronouncements but be responsible in our actions. When we have the information together, we will be providing full and adequate information to this House, to the people of this province and to the employees of the corporation.

Universities Funding

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): The recent Budget presented by this Government provided insufficient funding of education with only 3.3 percent increase given to the area, well below the rate of inflation. The situation is particularly desperate with our universities. For example, at the University of Manitoba, freshman enrollments are anticipated to increase by 9 percent, and yet this university will receive just over a 3 percent increase from the University Grants Commission. As a result, important courses will be unavailable to many students.

Therefore, I ask the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach): What does he intend to do for students and for the university community at large to correct this serious situation and to prevent erosion of course excellence?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, I would like to first of all inform the House and the Member opposite that the level of funding to education was not 3.3 percent. It was 3.3 percent if we took the actual amount that was spent but, when we compared it from line to line, it was 4.7 percent.

* (1355)

Our commitment to education is serious. We are committed to supporting education in the best possible terms according to our resources. We have in fact committed monies to the university at the level of

inflation, which we said we would do through the election campaign. We will be looking at the situation to ensure that in fact Manitoba students do have access to university and courses. We are delighted to see that there is rejuvenation in terms of enrolment at the university, and that our youth are getting serious about becoming educated where they can be resourceful and achieve gainful employment in this province.

Student Aid

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, this Government also showed a lack of interest in the area of student aid. As it has now come to light that students are facing in the area of a 10 percent increase in student fees, what action will the Minister now take to strengthen the student bursaries program?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that in fact there have been some significant increases in the amount of money that is being allocated to the student aid area. Recently, there has been something like a \$1.5 million increase given to the bursaries program for those students who are applying for student aid. In addition, we are also actively looking at how we can better accommodate those students who find it difficult to repay their student loans and who need some extensions in time and that sort of thing. The whole area of bursaries, of student aid is going to be re-examined so that we can better provide for those students who are really in need of helping to fund their education.

Rural Student Aid

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): I ask the Minister of Education: Will he remove the requirements for students living on farms to list the family farm as a parental asset in that most farm families will be cash poor for the academic year '88-89?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): Mr. Speaker, that is a real concern that has been brought to our attention. Previously, we have talked about this through the election campaign but, when you take office in the middle of a fiscal year or well into a fiscal year, you cannot change the rules overnight. We know that rural parents and rural people have difficulty in affording to send their students to university in economic times such as we are experiencing now. The Department of Education and my staff are actively looking at what we can do to help the situation in the current year and in the following year. As soon as we are ready to announce a program, that announcement will be made.

Aluminum Smelter Site

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I direct the question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). My colleague, the Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), and myself are only too well aware that hundreds of job opportunities were lost when the Alcan smelter was deliberately discouraged from locating in the Interlake.- (Interjection)- As well, I am sure Manitoba Hydro in its current financial crisis would be only too pleased to

have Alcan pay for half of the Limestone project, which they were about to do.

My question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) is: Can the First Minister assure me and my colleague, the Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), that the considerable advance and preliminary work done in site location which came to the conclusion of the most probable site for an aluminum smelter being located in the Interlake, will that information be made available to Alumax of California, now currently interested, or indeed any other aluminum company that is interested in locating in Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I wish to give the complete assurance of myself and our Government to the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) and the Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) that indeed all of the previous information that was accumulated in dealing with Alcan in an attempt to convince them to locate their smelter in the Interlake will be provided to any interested party who wants to locate an aluminum smelter here. Alcan did extensive studies. The Government of Manitoba was involved with those studies and has a great deal of information to share. We would be delighted to have an aluminum smelter located in Manitoba. If the Interlake were the best prospective site, as I believe that it was deemed to be in 1980-81, then I believe that information will be provided to ensure that an aluminum smelter chooses the best location which, in all probability, would be the Interlake.

* (1400)

Day Care Federal Funding

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): I have a question for the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson). Mr. Speaker, a plan for ensuring that Manitoba receives its fair share of funding under the national day care plan was previously submitted by the former NDP Government, by my colleague, the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill). Could the Minister indicate to this House what concerns she has with that plan, what she finds offensive in that plan already submitted to the federal Government?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): The plan that was put forward by the former Government has, of course, been looked at by myself and staff. It was a proposal put forward at the request of the federal Government, as the Members know, as an indication of the need in Manitoba. We have looked at that. We have noted that there are some things that we would like to see added to that plan. We are using it as a base for negotiation and will be negotiating as soon as possible with the federal Government.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: While the Minister is making note of those points and studying the matter, Manitoba has gained the reputation of being one of only two provinces that has not submitted a plan to the federal Government. Will the Minister for Community Services

(Mrs. Oleson) give assurances to this House today that she will be submitting a plan immediately and that she will table that plan in this House, as well as tabling the plan previously submitted by the former NDP administration?

Mrs. Oleson: As I said, the staff are working on the plan. We will be negotiating with the federal Government. To my knowledge, no province has signed an agreement with the federal Government. We are not going to be behind, as she has indicated before, or lose out, or any of those red herrings that she raised when the plan was announced. We will negotiate in good faith and we will be signing a document with the federal Government as soon as possible.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: A question again to the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson), Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Manitoba is still one of only two provinces not to have submitted a plan. Other provinces are busy adjusting their plans to take advantage of federal funding through this national day care strategy. Would the Minister for Community Services tell this House exactly what assurances she is getting from Ottawa to ensure that Manitoba does not lose in terms of funds available through the federal Government? Will she tell us how many spaces she has asked to be set aside for Manitoba so that we will at least be sure that there will be some guarantees for maintaining the leadership position established by Manitoba right across this country?

Mrs. Oleson: The plan we are putting forward is being negotiated with the federal Government. I have had the assurance of Mr. Epp that Manitoba will be treated fairly. He will treat all provinces fairly, I am sure. He is that kind of a Minister. I do not think that the red herrings raised by the Member about being late, there will absolutely be no money lost. There are two years in which to negotiate the plan. We will not take two years. We certainly will not, but there are two years available in which to negotiate the plan.

Teenage Pregnancies

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): We today congratulate the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) and the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) for their willingness to move and deal with the issue of reporting of suspected child abuse in the school system. However, there is another issue related to reporting in the school system, which I am sure the Members on the other side of the House would be pleased to hear about.

My question is, Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). Teenage pregnancies occur at the rate of 80 per week in Winnipeg. Many of these pregnancies are girls who are in the school system, either junior high or senior high. It is incumbent upon school personnel to notify Child and Family Services and public health nurses about these pregnancies. Could the Minister of Education tell this House what his department's policy is for school personnel reporting pregnancies to the appropriate agencies?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): I thank the Member for that question. I will take that

question as notice and get back to the Member as soon as possible.

Ms. Gray: A supplementary for the same Minister. What formal mechanism does the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) have in place to ensure that important social issues such as these, where responsibility spans across three departments—Health, Education and Community Services—are dealt with expeditiously and comprehensively?

Mr. Derkach: Matters like the Member raises are certainly of a very serious nature. There has been consultation between the Departments of Health and Community Services to deal with these issues, because they are of a very serious nature.

In the last few days we have seen in the newspaper a couple of incidents that have been raised with regard to child abuse, which is a very serious matter in this province. We have moved as quickly as we can to put into place an investigation process which will indeed inform us whether or not authorities followed the proper procedures. If proper procedures were not followed, we want to investigate why those procedures were not followed, and then action will be taken. Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that the matter is being dealt with as expeditiously as possible.

Ms. Gray: We look forward to information from the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) about the formal mechanism he will develop.

Family Life Education Program

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): A supplementary question, given the increased number of teenage pregnancies, when is this Government going to make Family Life Education in schools compulsory?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): I would like to make a correction in the question that was asked in that there is a formal process in place right now of reporting incidents to authorities. On the question of Family Life Education, Mr. Speaker, there is a Family Life Education program available to school divisions at the present time. It was implemented a short time ago for the province. The program is comprehensive. It does require probably some alterations or additions as time progresses. We are consulting with staff, with people out in the field with regard to how the program is being accepted, and we know that Family Life Education is an important element in the school programming in all schools in Manitoba.

Budget Administrative Costs

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): There has been some question in this House in the last week since the bringing down of the Budget as to actual administrative costs between the '88-89 Budget and the '87-88 Budget.

My question is for the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness): Could this Minister please tell the House

the actual change in administrative costs between the '88-89 Budget versus the '87-88 Budget?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): I am delighted to have a question on a most important document that was tabled in this House last Monday, and that is the provincial Budget. Mr. Speaker, I feel it is incumbent upon me to correct some of the facts that have been presented in the House, most of them emanating from the Liberal computer.

The Leader of the Opposition should firstly have been aware that there was an allocation of \$24 million in the defeated Budget towards general salary increases. That is now included within the Administration line by line through all departments. Secondly, communications staff of around \$3 million was included within the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation. That now has been factored out to the various departments. Certainly, there were some special appropriations, namely, the Native justice inquiry which had no appropriation whatsoever put against it, which is now included within the administration within the Department of the Attorney-General and the health advisory network—\$500,000 within the Department of Health. The net result, Mr. Speaker, to bring this to a final conclusion, is that this year administration-wise versus last year's budget represented a \$3.2 million reduction in administration costs or 4.4 percent in the whole Budget.

* (1410)

M.P.I.C. General Insurance Division

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation because there is a great deal of uncertainty among the public, among future and present customers of MPIC, and indeed among the employees not to speak of the corporation itself, about the future of the General Insurance Division.

I appreciate that the Minister received a question a little while ago about it and indicated that the board is studying the matter. In view of the fact that the Minister was so positive before the election, during the election, and indeed right after his appointment, that the General Insurance Division would be eliminated from the MPIC program, can the Minister, in light of his recent statements and indeed earlier this afternoon, indicate to the people of Manitoba that he has indeed changed his position, that he is no longer insisting that the General Insurance Division of MPIC will be eliminated?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act): Mr. Speaker, as in answering the previous question, I am not a Minister nor is this a Government that is going to jump into making decisions without having all the facts in front of us. We are examining the operation of the Public Insurance Corporation and when we have the information that we believe is pertinent we will supply it to this House and to the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Leonard Evans: The Minister comes forward with what I am sure he believes is a very reasonable answer but given the fact that he has been Minister now, this Government has been in office for about three months or so, and given the fact that he was so positive - (Interjection)- four months—for years in this House . . .

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Given the fact that I have given the Honourable Member the floor, would the Honourable Member please place his question?

Mr. Leonard Evans: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Has the Minister received any correspondence from Manitoba companies who now have general insurance with MPIC stating that elimination of general insurance would put them out of business inasmuch as there are no private insurance companies who are ready to take on that particular liability?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I received I believe two letters from Manitobans prior to being sworn into office that indicated they would have concerns about whether or not they would get insurance because they felt that MPIC was the only company that would cover them. I have said many times and I will repeat again for the benefit of the Members and for the public that we are prepared given whatever the future might be in light of whatever results we get from the studies that are being done that we will assure that no Manitobans who are insurable will be left in the lurch.

Mr. Leonard Evans: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. When will a decision be made and made known to the people of Manitoba; in particular, apart from the assurances to the policyholders and customers, what about assurances to the employees. What job protection if any do the 55 employees in Brandon or indeed many other employees in the City of Winnipeg have with respect to their positions with the General Insurance Division of MPIC?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, obviously the Member opposite would like to make the announcement or have me make an announcement prior to having made a decision. The employees are of great concern to myself and to the Members of this Government. I think it is something that needs to be pointed out to the Member opposite, that the Public Insurance Corporation has under their management suffered a dramatic setback in the number of customers, the number of policies that it wrote. That is what has put in great jeopardy the jobs of the people of MPIC.

Teachers Language Proficiency Test

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): This Government continues to tell Manitoba and Manitobans that they are concerned and support multiculturalism, and yet in the Throne Speech there is not a mention of any initiatives in the area of multicultural education.

One of the important educational programs in Manitoba is the bilingual schools. I believe we can all

agree that pivotal to this program is the quality of language instruction by the teachers.

My question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). Is there a language proficiency testing mechanism in place to ensure that teachers being hired to teach a language other than English are in fact proficient in that language?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): I thank the Member for that question.

As the Member would know, those language programs were started by a Conservative Government, and we are very much supportive of those kinds of programs being offered in our school system. However, we also should be aware, and I am sure the Member is, that there is usually a shortage of people who are very proficient in the languages that are being offered in the schools. So it is somewhat difficult to employ people who are very, very proficient and are educated in a specific language. Therefore, we are growing in that area. As of this moment, I am not aware of any kind of specific examination that is in place to test proficiency of teachers who are going into language programs. However, I will research that and, if that information is available, I will get back to the Member.

Multicultural Curriculum Development

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks has time for one final question.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Even with no specific mention of multiculturalism in education in the Throne Speech, I would like to ask the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) what kinds of involvement and encouragement is his Department of Education going to give to various ethnocultural communities to participate in the curriculum development in his department?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education): It is no secret what my ethnic background is and certainly I am supportive of all cultural programs that are being made available in schools.

I have to tell you that after three months in office, I would hope that the Member would not expect a comprehensive program developed, because I know that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) said that she would approve the baccalaureate program by the stroke of a pen and even though they change their position by the flip of the tongue, we do not operate in that way, and we will ensure that solid programs are developed before we implement them.

Mr. Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): May I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have leave? (Agreed)

* (1420)

Mrs. Carstairs: In the last two weeks, I have had the privilege of visiting 41 pavilions during Folklorama and I know that many in this House on all sides have done the same thing. What I would like to pay tribute to today is the children of this community who participated in those pavilions. It really was quite remarkable, the degree of dedication, their enthusiasm and their gradual requirement of skills, be they dance skills, be they singing skills, or be they theatrical skills. We have reason to be extremely proud of those children, and while it is very difficult to single out any one group, because they were all so excellent, I have to say, Mr. Speaker, it was the young dancers from the Sandy Bay Reserve who performed at the Metis Pavilion, who had a verve and an energy as well as an expertise that was really quite outstanding. I know that all Members of this House would join me in congratulating all children and, in particular, those particular children.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have leave? (Agreed)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to add congratulations to the whole multicultural community, to the volunteers who participated over the last two weeks, and there are some 22,000 volunteers throughout Winnipeg who travel from all over the province to participate in the largest multicultural event in the world.

I do have to say that when I attended the closing ceremonies last night and watched the youth choir that was up on the stage, they were the youth ambassadors—two youth ambassadors from each and every pavilion—dressed in their original costumes, representing their culture; and they sang a song that depicted Manitoba, first and foremost, as a place where all cultural groups could come together and survive and live productive happy lives. I will tell you that I had a tear in my eye and shivers up and down my back when they sang together, united, complimenting Manitoba for its initiative with the multicultural community.

I commend again all of those volunteers and participants who provided such a wonderful two weeks for us. Thank you.

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, is it not wonderful to see that there is an issue on which we could have cooperation of all three Parties in this Chamber? I suppose we could only wish that . . .

Some Honourable Members: Leave, leave, leave.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Does the Honourable Member have leave? (Agreed) The Honourable Member for Logan.

Ms. Hemphill: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to continue to say that we can all appreciate the

feelings of cooperation and good spirit on this issue and only hope that on other ones that are very substantive and very important to the province, that we can, when it is important and when necessary and important to the people of Manitoba, also find a way to cooperate on other issues. I think that there has been mention made of the volunteers and mention been made of the young people, but I think we should talk a little bit about families because Folklorama is a family activity.

When you see the young people out there who are dancing, you need to know that it is their parents and their grandparents who are the ones behind the scenes doing the cooking and doing the organization for their pavilion. When they are out there, they are promoting their culture, they are very proud they are promoting their province and they are promoting their country. I can only say that they are putting our best foot forward to the world.

Hon. James Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): May I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have leave? (Agreed)

Mr. Ernst: I do not want to, Mr. Speaker, prolong the matter except to say this. The fact that we appreciate the multicultural aspect of Folklorama and the kind of heritage evaluation and understanding that it brings to all Manitobans, it is also the only largest tourism attraction in the Province of Manitoba—191 organized bus tours into Manitoba as a result of Folklorama. Mr. Speaker, those people, not only are they putting on a display of their own culture and heritage for better understanding of all Manitobans and Canadians, but they are attracting people from all over the world to see that festival, to partake of that activity, and hopefully over time that understanding will flow outside of the borders of Manitoba, outside of the borders of Canada, to all countries in the world.

We have seen during Folklorama the MC stand up and ask, are there people here from out of town? We have seen them from Austria, from France, from Texas, from Alaska, from Germany, from all over the world. I think it is important that we recognize Folklorama, not just as a multicultural attraction, but certainly as the biggest tourism attraction for the Province of Manitoba.

ORDERS OF THE DAY BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the The Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, if I may say firstly that it is a pleasure for me today to rise to participate in this debate on this Budget. The

Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has brought in what I consider to be one of the finest Budgets in many years in Manitoba that is gaining a great deal of acceptance among the people of our province.

Before I get into discussion on the Budget, I would like to offer some comments about the debate on Churchill which took place in this Assembly last week. I did not have the opportunity to participate in that debate and there are some matters which I would like to put on record in this House, as my viewpoint as a Member for Lac du Bonnet on this important issue.

We witnessed a debate in which many Members of this House, particularly Members opposite, stood in this Assembly and spoke in very glowing terms about the importance of Churchill to our province, how symbolic having a port on the Hudson Bay is to a prairie province. They dealt with those very, very significant moral issues, those issues that catch the imagination of the public. But what I did not hear in this House, during the course of that debate, was any really serious discussion about the issues and the difficulties that keeping the Port of Churchill as an operating port or, indeed, of keeping the community of Churchill as an operating and vibrant community. Those particular issues were not dealt with by the Members of this House, particularly the Members opposite.

I think when you look at an issue such as Churchill in any great depth, or depth greater than the front pages of the Winnipeg Free Press and the Winnipeg Sun, one realizes very quickly that it is indeed a very complex issue with a lot of very difficult factors that have to be dealt with. I would just like to raise a few of them because I think if this Assembly is very serious about that issue, then it has to be prepared to deal with those issues and ultimately to vote to spend the dollars that are going to be necessary to bring about those improvements and those measures.

I should say that there are two Members of this Assembly who have a very vested interest in the Port of Churchill, one being of course the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), and if I represented that constituency I would be fighting as strongly as he is to preserve the jobs that are there in that community. The other is my friend, the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak). One asks why would the Member for Transcona have a very real and vested interest in the Port of Churchill. That interest can also extend to my friend, the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson), and that goes to the root of one of the very pressing problems of the Port of Churchill.

I am not sure if Members opposite fully realize that grain to Churchill cannot be shipped with the use of hopper cars which is now taking by far the lion's share of wheat shipment in Canada. All of the grain that goes to Churchill has to be shipped on boxcars, the reason being is that the rail line, once you get past the tree line, is not able to carry the heavy loads that hopper cars create on those rail lines. As a consequence, the railway has had to use its out-dated and aging fleet of boxcars.

* (1430)

Now, if one looks at shipping in Canada today or indeed anywhere in the world, you see the trend is moving towards hopper cars for bulk product and toward container shipments for other products.

Canada's boxcar fleet, from the numbers I have seen, is declining rapidly. The facility in western Canada that repairs most of the boxcars is the CN Shops in Transcona, so one of the biggest beneficiaries in jobs—to the keeping open of the Port of Churchill—are those rail workers, say, in Transcona, and in the constituency of the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson). Certainly both of those Members have a very real interest in ensuring that that line continue and that boxcar repair work continues to come to their shop. If you look at the long-term future of boxcars, it is not very bright. When that work dries up, something is going to have to be found to replace it.

That brings to light the very important issue of the rail line to Churchill. If this Assembly is indeed prepared, and desires to keep open that port as a facility, then we have to be very much prepared to see money invested in upgrading that rail line so that it can handle modern hopper cars. Some Members opposite may say that is the responsibility entirely of the federal Government. Some could make that argument; others could look at the British Columbia Railway. It was created in B.C. to fill certain regional needs in B.C. That could be a possibility that a Manitoba Legislature would have to deal with, but again at considerable cost to the taxpayers of this province.

Some other issues that I notice that were dealt with, with respect to Churchill: I got the very strong opinion that Members opposite saw that issue as one of simply the Wheat Board coming forward and ordering grain to be moved through that port even though no buyers, who would be prepared to put ships in there and take receipt of that grain, were identified.

That brings to light a very real problem. A sale is very much a two-way street. You will have to have a buyer and a seller. Just because the seller is prepared to deliver to point X does not mean that the buyer is necessarily prepared to take shipment. I would suspect that even Canada's CIDA customers, those whose wheat purchases are very heavily subsidized by the Canadian taxpayer, are not prepared to receive shipment out of the Port of Churchill. That raises the question of attracting buyers. The obvious argument that comes after that is, if we are able to attract buyers and the cost of shipping to Churchill—or the inducement to get those buyers—increases the cost to our farmer of handling and shipping grain, are Members opposite prepared to see or to subsidize that shipment as opposed to a lesser-cost port?

(The Acting Speaker, Harold Gilleshammer, in the Chair.)

We can argue those numbers here in this House all day but I think if you look at the very modern facility in Prince Rupert you come to realize very quickly that the producers of our country are going to have, if they do not have already, perhaps one of the most efficient grain handling ports in the world that can probably move grain for somewhat less than we can ship it

through Churchill. Again, we have to have that willingness as a Legislature, if we wish to keep the port open, to not put it on the backs of our producers, but as taxpayers, particularly in the City of Winnipeg, be prepared to pay that subsidy to our producers. I did not detect any willingness on that side of the House or indeed in this House to impose that kind of levy.

As well, the port facilities themselves: I did not hear one Member suggest that Manitobans are prepared to invest a lot of money in upgrading the port facilities, not just to standards that are going on there now, but to expand the storage capacity so that large amounts of grain can be stored in that port to take maximum advantage of the shipping season.

As well, there was some discussion about the possibility of using that port to ship other products from Manitoba. Again, we would have to build docking facilities that could accommodate those other products. For those of us who have been to Churchill already, we know that port is designed to handle grain and nothing else at this time. So, of course, that issue has to be dealt with.

As Manitobans, there is also another element to this debate that I do not think we like too much perhaps, but we certainly do not raise, and that is if Canada wants to have a northern port. If we, as a country, strategically accept that as a necessity, then we should be looking at a port farther north, perhaps Rankin Inlet or some such place which is much closer to Europe, because Churchill—when you look at the map—is quite far south into Hudson Bay. The obvious question is, is that the most ideal location?

All of those issues, Mr. Speaker, are issues that a Government, whether it be the Canadian Government, whether it be the Wheat Board or this Legislature, would have to deal with if we are indeed very serious about keeping open the Port of Churchill. They are issues that I just raised not because I am an opponent of Churchill, by far the case, but simply because they are the real nuts and bolts issues that have to be dealt with. Nowhere in the course of that debate did I really see a serious dealing with those issues on the part of this Legislature.

With respect to the community of Churchill, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) raised a concern about the Northwest Territorial Government and their health facilities that they have located in the town. The Leader of the Opposition, on her position on Meech Lake, prides herself as being a nation builder. I take great issue with her on that point because I think the issue of those health facilities is by far not just a Manitoba issue but a far greater one and one which we, as Manitobans, may not necessarily be entirely pleased with that issue or with the outcome that I think inevitably will happen.

I do not know if Honourable Members of this House are aware that a little over a year ago the federal Department of National Health and Welfare who has had, since Confederation, the responsibility of delivering health care in our two Territories, turned over to the territorial Government—a majority of which is Native Canadians—turned over responsibility for health care

in the Territories. That is a very significant move because it is a step towards provincehood, and we have heard the Leader of the Opposition reel against Meech Lake because she viewed it as blocking the ability of new provinces to be created.

It is one thing to be supportive of new provinces, the creation of new provinces; it is another thing to be fully prepared to give up, as neighbouring provinces, what we may have to give up in order to see that goal realized. If you, Mr. Speaker, or the Members of this House were sitting on the Territorial Council of the Northwest Territories, we would be asked by our constituents, and rightly so, why health facilities that are our responsibility, the jobs that go with them, the dollars that go with them, the tax revenues that go with them are in another jurisdiction.

We, as Manitobans, may not like the idea that the Northwest Territories is going to pull those services or would like to pull those services out of Churchill, but I think no matter how much we dislike that, it is inevitable because the Northwest Territories will not be able to accept, just as we would not be able to accept, having services that are delivered to our people located in a jurisdiction outside of our own.

I think, as nation builders—which we all in this Legislature, I think, would like to be—have to look down the road for the community of Churchill and realize that the health services maintained there by the Northwest territorial Government or the Department of Health and Welfare for the Territories are eventually, within probably a short period of time, going to be moved out of our jurisdiction. That, too, is going to strike a blow to Churchill.

I would hope Members opposite, when that occurs—and I am sure we will be in Government when that happens—do not get up and reel against us for seeing that happen, because if they are the nation builders that their Leader would like to portray them, then they will have to accept that. Perhaps larger provinces have to give up something to assist smaller provinces, and in relation to the Territories, Manitoba is certainly a larger province.

So when you look at the question of Churchill, you see it as a very complex and difficult one, that the health side of it is certainly going to strike a blow to that community at some point in the future, whether we like it or not; that the issue of shipping grain through that port is far greater than just ordering the Wheat Board to send up the wheat and the barley. It is larger issues that have to be dealt with. I would say this, I would compliment the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) across the way, because during his tenure in transport I could see a very strong willingness to invest dollars in support of that port. I think he is very well aware of those problems. But this House, Mr. Speaker, has to deal with those issues. That is a question that is larger than just wrapping ourselves in the flag of Churchill and spending an afternoon trying to get headlines. We really, I think, as a Legislature failed to come to grips with that issue in a meaningful way.

There are a number of other issues that I would like to raise during the course of this Budget Debate that

I think very much reflect on the financial operations of this province. As a backbencher on this side of the House, I have the opportunity every day to sit and listen to the daily Question Period, the thrust of questions coming back and forth on a variety of issues. Some of them give me great trouble because I think that there is a tendency often on Members—and one goes beyond politics—I think always when Members sit in Opposition, one has a tendency to open the file and go at it without necessarily the in-depth analysis of the issues or taking them to their logical conclusion. That is a disease that afflicts all of us whether we be Liberals, Conservatives or New Democrats. Sitting on one side of the House or the other tends to impact on the way we carry out our business in this Chamber.

I was quite concerned when the Member—I believe it was for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans)—raised the question of free trade, or it may have been, pardon me, Mr. Speaker, it could have been the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) as well as the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) raised the issue of free trade and McCain Foods position opposing free trade. I understand that our friend, the Leader of the Opposition, was wined and dined at lunch one day by the president of McCain's, in which his position on free trade was put, I am sure, very eloquently to the Leader of the Opposition, which she carried in on his behalf to this Assembly.

* (1440)

McCain's has taken a very public view that their operation is in grave danger if we have free trade. Our Liberal friends across the way would appear, from the questions they asked, to have accepted that analysis. I will give them that credit that they accept that analysis and this is fair. But if they accept that analysis of McCain's, then they also must accept McCain's analysis on a national potato marketing agency.

I am not aware if the Members opposite received the letter from McCain's that I received, as a Member of this House, urging me to oppose a national potato marketing agency. Since the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) in her famous lunch with McCain's accepted their points on free trade, I am sure the Liberal Party also accepts their view on the national potato marketing agency. I can tell you if that is the case, then the Liberal Party opposite, I think, has taken a position against the potato producers of this province and in favour of a large potato manufacturer/processor without again analyzing the situation.

Mr. Speaker, I am not saying that a national potato marketing agency is a benefit or not a benefit to the farmers and producers of Manitoba, but that is a decision that they will have to make as producers. When the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) asked her questions and other Members asked their questions, I can tell you that they touched a very raw nerve with myself. In this House, two of my colleagues, the issue of potato marketing boards are very and dear.

In fact, back in 1968-69, my father, Bernie Praznik, a producer from St. Andrews, was president of the Vegetable Growers Association of Manitoba. I can tell

you at that particular time in his life, he was being courted by the Liberal Party in Selkirk to be their candidate in the 1969 election. And the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), indeed an old family friend, was also involved as a potato grower with the vegetable marketing producers at that time, the vegetable growers, and they were involved in a very difficult struggle with another one of my colleagues, the Honourable Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), who was then Minister of Agriculture. That was a long dispute over the right of producers to have organized marketing in the Province of Manitoba.

Having grown up—in fact the first dollars I earned were as a potato producer. It put me through university, farming with my father. I know what it is like when you look at a company like McCain's, and you come in as a small producer who grows 20 or 30 or 60 acres, as we did in those days. It is a difficult, difficult time to negotiate. It is a take-it or leave-it proposition.

When the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Hutton, brought in organized marketing for vegetable growers in Manitoba, it was a tremendous day. My colleague, the Member for Lakeside, had some trouble with it, I understand, when he became Minister of Agriculture, and we had quite a dispute. The Member for Portage la Prairie and my father led a demonstration of farm trucks at this Assembly. I would compliment another former Member of this House, and that is the former Member for Lac du Bonnet, my predecessor, Mr. Uskiw, who was also involved in that particular fight, and Mr. Pankratz, the Member for La Verendrye, was involved with that. We fought that battle and we won for our producers in Manitoba the right to have organized marketing so that we would not be subject to the abuses and the whims of the large consumers and wholesalers of potatoes.

I sat there and listened to the Member opposite take holus-bolus on the issue of free trade, the position of McCain's, only to have a letter arrive from the same company telling me that they were opposed to the national potato marketing agencies. One could only assume that if the Members opposite accept McCain's on the issue of free trade that they do it on potato market. You cannot have it both ways. If they do not accept them on potato market, then they should have some very strong questions for them on free trade as well.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I am very glad that they took that attitude because when I go into my constituency, I am now able to point out that kind of inconsistency to my constituents. That kind of thinking that would have us follow holus-bolus the position of a company like McCain on any issue simply because the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) had a very nice—and I am sure expensive—lunch with the president. I think the large producers in potatoes now, if you look—I believe it is the Keystone Potato Producers who negotiate with McCain. I do not think they are all excited about McCain and find them a very tough purchaser.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this is a lesson for all Members of this House that one should take with, indeed, a great grain of salt those who put forward positions. I would

say, as well, there are Members opposite who, as members of City Council or in the business industry, have dealt with large corporations and one knows that they take positions often because they are negotiating for public money.

When the Leader of the Opposition gets up and defends McCain's in their position without question, I would suspect that McCain's is quite happy because she is strengthening their position when they ultimately come to either the Government of Manitoba or the Government of Canada to seek assistance. She is strengthening their position to negotiate for dollars. I certainly, as a Member of this House, do not want to be party to carry the cause of a large corporation whose position with the producers of this province is not a good one.

I would just leave one comment, Mr. Speaker, to my friends opposite and that is an old saying they have in the Maritimes on potatoes and I say, "Old MacDonald had a farm, now it is owned by McCain's." So just something for them to think about as they jump into bed with a company like McCain's on free trade.

Mr. Speaker, as I have sat here and listened to debate over the last number of weeks, a couple of other issues have come to light that give me some concern and that certainly I raise in my constituency at every opportunity I have. One, of course, is the foster parents issue. Again, I think this reflects on the budgetary policy of the Government. We have heard the very distinguished Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) rise on many occasions to push forward the position of the Foster Parents' Association. We know that this association, which represents a lot of very dedicated and hard-working individuals who have taken into their homes children to give them foster homes, is negotiating with the Government to redress a grievance that they have had as to the funds. I think it is incumbent upon all of us as Members of this House to remember that there is a negotiation process going on. The Government starts off with a position and they have started off with a position, and they will work towards a middle ground.

But what I hear in the questioning of the Member of Ellice (Ms. Gray) continually is: Are you going to give them what they want? How much more, how much more, how much more? Well, I would hope that the Member for Ellice could do a quick calculation. It is my understanding that, in their initial bargaining position, they asked for \$30 a child per day for a child over the age of 11. If you do a quick calculation of that, you find out that, if you have one foster child in your house and we were to agree as a Government to fund \$30 a day, very quickly it would amount to well over \$10,000 tax-free a year. If you have three foster children, it would amount to a tax-free income or tax-free dollars into your home of over \$30,000 a year. That would represent, I would take it, a taxable income of well over \$40,000 or \$42,000 a year.

I do not know if the Members opposite or the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), perhaps the Member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), but the Member for Ellice has a constituency that is full of wealthy people, because the parents in Lac du Bonnet who are raising two and three and four children make do on far less than that

income a year. When I go back to my constituency in the evenings and during the day, we get discussing this. People are saying to me, my, those Liberals keep pushing and pushing and pushing for this. How can the province afford it? I am happy to say that is what they are doing.

The lesson in all of this, I think very clear, is that it is fair to have negotiation. It is fair to start off high and to work towards a common ground but, when a Member gets up and takes that side and pushes and pushes, then they also have to be prepared to accept the responsibility for the end consequences. I am very happy to tell my constituents that the Liberal Party across the way is advocating us moving towards those kinds of numbers.

Just yesterday, I had a call from a constituent of mine who has taken on a foster child in the last few days. He does not even know how much he is getting and does not care. He is doing it out of the goodness of his heart.- (Interjection)- No, he is a very poor man. The Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) may have lots of dollars. Most of my constituents do not, are people of very limited means.

I am very glad that the Party, the Opposition opposite is taking those positions because it allows me and my constituency to point them out on a continual basis, and I enjoy doing that very much.

Just on another issue to that effect that has given me some concern is the issue of in-vitro fertilization, in which we saw both Opposition Parties take a stand in trying to push the Government into overturning the desires of the board of the Health Sciences Centre, interfering in what is an internal hospital decision to fund a program that has run under a 10 percent success rate. Again, I do not think there is a Member of this House who does not feel for those parents. As a new parent, I certainly do, and I am sure my wife and I would be beside ourselves if we were not able to have children. But again, as the public servants that we are, as the representatives of the people, we have to act responsibly. So when the Members opposite come forward and say that this should be funded, my question to them is—and it the question I raise with my constituents every weekend and during the week—what programs would they close down at the Health Sciences Centre to fund that? Is it beds for heart patients? Is it beds in the nursery? Is it critical programs? What would the Liberal Party and the New Democrats close down to pay for that program?

* (1450)

I enjoy raising those issues with my constituents and they seem to be raising them as well with me and are quite concerned at the push to spend, spend, spend on one side without really thinking through the issues before one makes a statement.

It is into that context that we as a Legislature are now dealing with the Budget for this fiscal year. We have heard the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the New Democratic Party and Members opposite get up and rant and rave about the Budget. We understand that our Liberal friends across the way will

not be voting for it. It does not give me a great deal of concern because again we do not operate in a vacuum. They have to answer to the people of Manitoba just as we do.

If I may indulge the House, I was very pleased today in my local paper, the *Lac du Bonnet Leader*, as well as the *Winnipeg River Review*, to see an editorial—and I think there is a lot of insight into how the people of Manitoba are reacting to this Budget and how they view it. The editorial comment is entitled, "This Budget should help not hinder employment." There are some lessons to be learned in this, and I am sure other Members opposite will enjoy the editorial. The editorial begins, "To compare yesterday's provincial Budget to anything the former administration, the NDP, may have put forward would be a misconception. One glaring and major difference just for starters has been the elimination of the payroll tax for small businesses with payrolls of less than \$300,000.00. That step alone should go a long way to give small business the signal that for once Government will no longer penalize them for taking on new initiatives and creating more jobs. After all, why penalize the businesses that are creating most of the jobs."

In my constituency—I do not know where the jobs come from in the ridings of the Members opposite since their Leader loves to have expensive lunches I am sure with McCain's, perhaps only from big corporations who they cater to—but in my riding, other than Abitibi Price and Atomic Energy of Canada, most of the jobs are generated by small business. Though this has been a bone of contention for employers there since it was brought in, that it is a tax on jobs, I believe the Honourable Members opposite took that view in the election campaign and now they are not prepared to vote for it. It is in the Budget, they are not prepared to vote for it and I am certainly going to tell the small business community in my riding about that fact.

Just to carry on with this editorial, NDP Leader Gary Doer is quoted in daily newspapers as saying he believes the Budget will increase unemployment and provide no economic development. With this kind of thinking, it is no wonder that Manitoba's debt tripled under the NDP rule to a total of \$103 billion. That is a staggering \$9,550 for every man, woman and child in Manitoba. Provincial debt is a problem that we have to deal with. It is stifling the ability of the Province of Manitoba whichever Party sits in these benches to provide the services that Manitobans need and this Budget is dealing with it. Some would argue that the increase in revenue from transfer payments should have gone to half a dozen other things. I can tell you, my constituents at the Beausejour Fair this weekend and other places are telling me we have to come to grips with the debt and they are very glad we are.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mark Minenko, in the Chair.)

Further in this editorial it goes on to say, "Without any increases in personal taxation or corporate tax, the Progressive Conservatives have not cut any social programs, have increased education spending slightly and will also spend more on highways and agriculture." My riding is quite content with those initiatives; in fact, Mr. Speaker, very happy.

Then they go on to say in the editorial, "As with all Budgets, not everything is perfect, and it is no surprise to hear Liberal Leader Sharon Carstairs and NDP Leader Gary Doer pick the Budget apart from not reducing the deficit enough to not enough set aside for job creation."

"Looking at it from a realistic point of view," as the editorial goes on to say, "a viewpoint most politicians can't see because their political colours block the view, many government-funded job creation programs end up costing the tax paying public more to keep people working than it would to keep them on welfare and unemployment. Governments were bending over backwards to make their unemployment figures look good when they should have been making the climate more suitable for business who would then in turn create the jobs."

"If there is one criticism of the Budget, it would be that it is not tough enough, which again is no surprise given the minority position that the PCs are in. Like it or not, one day all Manitobans are going to have to accept reduced social programs, reduced Government services and perhaps increased taxation in order to reduce the debt. It would perhaps cramp our lifestyle for a few short years, but the end result would be instead of so much of our tax dollars going as interest on debt, it could then go on social programs."

The reality is -(Interjection)- and the Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose), yells at me across the House as he does to so many other other Members. He yells to us that we have should not perhaps deal with the debt. Mr. Speaker, if you look in the Budget, you see that in 1981-82, provincial debt servicing costs in Manitoba were 5.2 percent of our total Budget. They are now 12.5 percent. Anyone who has any understanding whatsoever of finances would know that as that increase in debt financing continues to go up, it means our ability to have hospital beds, to fund education, to build highways and roads is not going to be there. I am sure that is a reality that the previous administration realized. I think the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and others clearly realize that and tried to come to grips, but perhaps too late, because they were the ones who had put us in that position.

Here is a Budget that deals with those issues, that is dealing with debt, that is maintaining our social programs, that is using our increased transfer of payments, which are indeed a windfall, because if the Province of Ontario, and anyone familiar with the five-province formula for determining transfer payments would know that the economic activity in the Province of Ontario has been fueling ahead the average to the benefit of provinces like Manitoba, would know that is indeed a windfall. To see that money being used to reduce our deficit is indeed, I think, good planning on the part of the Government of Manitoba.

But the Members opposite who decided not to vote for this Budget, they do not agree with that. Perhaps they would like to give a major tax decrease to Manitobans. I happened to hear the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) on the radio in an interview last week, and she said, no, we could not do that as a province. So I am not quite sure what they would do if they were in Government.

I think if they happen to find themselves on this side of the House, they would very quickly realize, as they did not realize on the in-vitro fertilization or on the foster parents issue or on Churchill, that life is not simple black and white, it is not simple issues, that it is very complex and that any Government has before the plate many things on it and many problems and not just one.

I would hesitate to guess that if the Members opposite, if the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) were making a Budget on this side of the House, that it would indeed resemble ours very closely because the ability to do certain things in Government is limited. If he did not, if he launched—as he seemed to imply in the question last week—a major initiative to spend, to put more dollars in the hands of consumers, consumer spending, which is the implication of the question he asked, although his Leader in a radio broadcast said they would not do that and perhaps better coordination is in order, but if they did it, he would find as a Finance Minister, within a year or two, that the provincial debt servicing would not be 12.5 percent. It would be 18 percent or 20 percent, and it would steamroll until the Province of Manitoba was in fact bankrupt, till we had to close hospital beds, till we had to close schools, till we could not provide essential services to the people of Manitoba. So the reality of debt is such that it has to be paid back.

Mr. Speaker, how much time would I have remaining, Sir?

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member has two minutes.

* (1500)

Mr. Praznik: Thank you.

I would remind Members opposite in the Liberal Party, and perhaps I can do this having come out of that tradition politically, of the Doug Campbell years in office. Doug Campbell, who perhaps was one of the most frugal Premiers of Manitoba, realized the importance of debt servicing, the importance of not developing debt. Yet today, the Liberal Party in trying to be all things to all people, in trying to be the friend of parents wanting in-vitro fertilization, in trying to be the friend of the Foster Parents' Association, in trying to be the friends of Churchill, sets a pattern that not only is not realistic or responsible, but certainly gives this Honourable Member and his constituency a lot of fodder on the streets and in the coffee shops. I thank them for that, because it helps me move one step closer to my own re-election.

I thank you for this opportunity to speak on the Budget, and I look forward with great feeling towards the vote on Thursday, when I will be able to rise up and not shirk my responsibility

An Honourable Member: Wednesday.

Mr. Praznik: . . . on Wednesday, Mr. Speaker, and not put off my responsibilities, and vote for this Budget so that programs and spending can get under way in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I have not got a lot of friends in the Legislature politically right now, so I appreciate the applause from the Members opposite and the Liberals on this side of the House.—(Interjection)— Now hold it, hold it now.

It is a pleasure to participate in the Budget Debate following the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik). I wanted to respond to some issues that he had referenced. He was having a rather lengthy discussion in reference to the Port of Churchill, and I will not take a great deal of my speech here because I devoted a good part of my Throne Speech to that issue, but I did want to respond that I did feel that the debate in the House on Thursday last was a very constructive debate.

One of the things that I mentioned then was that the Government Members seemed to be supporters of Churchill but, at the same time, qualified that support. Almost every one of them without exception, as they stood up, had qualified support. They made excuses or reasons why they could not just go ahead and support the Port of Churchill, which I said and believe is necessary.

We heard the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) express his feelings here today, I think, in much the same way. He seemed to indicate that the Members on this side, the New Democratic Members at least and perhaps all Members, did not address the real issues which deal with large expenditures of money. I think that some of us did precisely that because we had indicated clearly that, during the time of our Government being in office in this province, we had committed some \$58 million of provincial money for the Port, which was unprecedented, to undertake a number of major projects and a number of major studies which would pave the way for further development such as the Rail Line Stabilization, which the C.N. says would cost \$105 million, or development of the articulated car, which they say will cost \$175 million. I think there is confusion on those issues as well, on those costs, because people tend to combine those two and say it costs \$280 million. I do not believe that is necessary. I believe that only one of those developments in necessary.

But we had indicated as a provincial jurisdiction that we were prepared to enter in, and indeed we had exemplified that with the \$58 million. So, the precedent is there, and there has to be some responsibility by the provincial jurisdiction.

At the same time, there has to be fairness in this country insofar as treatment by the federal Government, and Question Period today focussed on that. We see the Prime Minister of Canada talking in Quebec, coying up to the Premier of Quebec, Prime Minister as he would like to be called, saying that he will indeed make efforts to ensure that an aluminum smelter will occur in his area of the province, in Quebec, in his area of the country. Of course, we have had no such promises here in Manitoba.

We have seen a long list of those kinds of inequities, and I would like to deal with some of them later on in my remarks. The fact is we have to expect major

expenditures for economic and social development in this province, just like are undertaken in other areas where the political clout is much greater. We have even seen the billions of dollars now that are committed to the Hibernia oil fields. That will not be passed back on in terms of the actual cost of that oil, just like the rates to Churchill because of the capital expenditure, should not be charged back to the farmers, just like the costs of the St. Lawrence Seaway renovations and the building of it initially and the rail line and the twinning of the transcontinental railway in this country through the Rockies. Those costs are not passed back on directly. Capital costs investments in economic improvement projects in this country should not be treated differently in different areas of the country, and that is what we have to remember when we discuss capital costs as it relates to Churchill.

Let me speak on some other areas of concern that I have. I think the first thing I would like to say with regard to the Budget Debate is that it does give an opportunity to discuss the general economic performance of the province at the present time. It can give you an opportunity to reflect on the past performance of Governments and economic performance during their time in office.

I believe it is important for us today to reflect a bit for the record, for new Members as well in this House but particularly for the record, about why the New Democratic Government in this province lost the election on April 26. I think there are a lot of different opinions, and it is an interesting topic that I am sure Members on the Government side and Liberals as well as New Democrats would like to reflect on. Of course, as New Democrats, it is a matter of life and death when we reflect; on others, it is a matter of some interest, I am sure. We have more at stake.

I think it is important to do, because I believe that Members on this side of the House, the Liberals, Members on the opposite side, the Government side, the Conservatives, have often started to believe their own rhetoric and that of the news media during the campaign and before the campaign. I think that is unfortunate if indeed that is left on the record, if they actually believe the kinds of things that were focussed on and stated during that election and before.

I know even from listening to some of the new people in this Legislature, most of them Liberals but some Conservatives, I have found that there have been off-handed remarks about the NDP, disparaging remarks at times by Liberal colleagues, it seems to me a sense of superiority that they are exuding, certainly being experienced by some of the Liberals, a sort of temporary euphoria that they can do no wrong as Liberals in this House in their resurgence, a condescending feeling toward New Democrats and toward the work and record of our former Government. I think that is a feeling that is there. It is not by all Members, but there are a lot of them who do not fully appreciate what really happened and what was accomplished by the previous Government.

I noticed that particularly in the first week that we sat, and it may be disappearing to some extent as we continue to get to know each other in this House and

as opponents start to see that New Democrats are not withering on the vine but indeed are standing up and fighting for what we believe in, in this House and across this province. We are not a bunch of discredited NDPers, as they might say, ready to die. They wonder what drives us on. We were supposed to be down and out after the last election, on the verge of extinction in this province. How can we stand up in this House and offer advice on anything.

* (1510)

I mean, certainly we should have no credibility to be listened to because we messed things up so badly in this province that certainly no one should listen to New Democrats in this House. Well that is what the Liberals and Conservatives and the Chamber of Commerce and big business and the media said. I believe that a lot of Liberals and Conservatives actually believed it. They thought and many still do that we were, as I indicated, Members of a thoroughly inept and bumbling Government. I want to get all of those words out on the table, because I think those are the kinds of words that a lot of these Members used in the campaign and a lot of them actually believe. I am not afraid to use those words, even though of course they are absolutely untrue when used to describe the former New Democratic Government.

I kind of have a certain amount of resentment when the Members pop up smugly in their seats one after another, without a mandate I might add, because no political Party in this House received a mandate on April 26, but they stand up and speak of the new direction that people were seeking on April 26, a new direction for Manitoba. The people wanted a new economic plan in this province, and that is why the New Democrats lost the election.

I want to just say, and there are Members who have said this on both sides of the House, that the results of that April 26 election proved how wrong those Members are. There was no new direction in this province on April 26. People gave no new direction. They went in every direction. You see, they went all over the place, and I believe that they were confused by the constant barrage of negative information about a Government that they trusted and thought was doing a pretty good job as late as one year ago, only one year ago.- (Interjection)- The reason we lost on April 26 was because we were in the middle of our term and because governing is a tough business. Tough decisions have to be made by Governments and they are usually made early in their term, early in their tenure so to speak. As it turned out, we had no tenure because we were done in by one of our own Members. When a Government has a one-seat majority, that is all it takes is one Member to cross you, to end that mandate, that four-year plan that Government may be working on.

I ask you to consider where the Mulroney Government would have been insofar as Manitoba is concerned if they were forced to call an election right after the CF-18, right at the time of the CF-18, the next month or so, fiasco in this province. Where would they have been? Would they have won a seat in this province? Perhaps

one or two, but very few. That would have been circumstances that dictated that situation. Of course, I would say there was a lot more to it too because I feel that they are bad Government, but the fact is circumstances would have dictated that they could have, at that time because of the timing, been almost wiped out in this province because of the CF-18 issue.

So we did not lose the election on April 26 because people wanted a new direction. We lost because it was mid-term, some necessary but unpopular decisions had just been made, and because we were sabotaged by one of our own Members and sabotaged by members of the media. I am sure the Member for Portage (Mr. Connerly) is finding that particularly pertinent to his own situation because now, in Government, he finds out that it is not all so nice as he talks about various things like jokes about pink slips and so on. I heard that the Member for Portage was going to be fired this weekend—oh, just joking!

The fact is that these kinds of things do make it difficult—the media, it complicates the life of politicians—but just remember a couple of things: Southam and Thomson control most of the newspapers in this country, and McLean-Hunter—not New Democrats certainly; Eaton's owns Baton Broadcasting, which has more shares in CTV than any other group; Izzy Asper, that well-known Liberal, runs a television station in this province, CKND, and owns the whole network; and many of the radio stations are controlled by the same people as well.

So one of the major reasons why, and I am doing, I think, a very objective analysis, the New Democratic Party lost the election on April 26 was because the media took a very negative slant towards us. Of course, they were urged on by some very influential people in this province.

But we did not have the luxury of an Izzy Asper like the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) had during the last campaign—a ready-made conduit to the people of this province, free-of-charge and no cost to the campaign, no cost against the media advertising budget; therefore, unlimited time. We did not have that kind of thing.

* (1520)

It is a wonder we, as New Democrats in this province, have ever come to Government at all or anywhere in Canada. It really is a testament, I believe, to the grassroots relevance of our policies and programs despite the negative media slant that takes place in this province and in other provinces towards the New Democrats. We will see that in an unprecedented way in the next federal election, you can bet on it, because of the big money that is going to be pouring in against New Democrats across this country because Ed Broadbent is truly a real threat for Government, to the Conservative and Liberal institutions in this country.

It is truly a testament to the relevance of our policies that we have continued to be elected in great numbers across this country and that people have been able to see through this negative slant and see the truth. In this past election, perhaps, they saw it a little less than most because of the extreme measures that the media took to discredit the NDP Government.

I am not here, as Members will know, to cry about the last election, but I believe it is essential to place that last election in perspective. I also believe it is necessary to review the record of the last Government in an objective way because history will show, and I believe this statement will carry over the years, that the Pawley Government was one of the most progressive, compassionate, and enlightened Governments that Manitoba has ever had. History will show that the Government was also well-managed. That one is really going to make you excited about that—that Government was well-managed.

Let us look at the economic indicators. I want to just look at a few major areas when we talk about comparing Government's records and I think this is important. It is not even information that I have taken from the Government. I have taken it from another source—one of those media people that I just talked about. As a matter of fact, this one is from the Free Press:

By contrast, Manitoba has performed above the national average throughout the NDP seven-year term. Annual population growth since 1981, Manitoba's population has risen 5.2 percent, the country's third strongest performance. Increase in real domestic product—this should make this particularly credible with the Members opposite because I have just said that I did not see a lot of positive stories and information in the media, but we found some because it is fact and you cannot hide the facts. You can slant the facts and you can give more attention to certain aspects than others but you cannot hide them if you have a conduit to make them available to the people.

Increase in real domestic product, Manitoba stood third among provinces over the last five years. And I think this is something that we should consider very carefully. Our real domestic product expanded by 4.9 percent with 4.4 percent in Canada as a whole.

Manitoba is now in its sixth consecutive year of economic growth. Increase in private investment, Manitoba's has gone up at an annual average rate of 8.8 percent between '83 and '87. That is the third highest increase in Canada.

Increase in public investment, Manitoba has climbed 56 percent between '83 and '87 above the national average of 28 percent and second only to Ontario.

The percentage change in personal income—the total personal income in Manitoba reached 18.1 billion in 1987, an increase of 7.3 percent which contrasts to the national average of 6.9 percent.

Manitoba's unemployment rate has been the lowest, or second-lowest in the country in that time.

Those are just some of the economic indicators. You can go through a lot of them and you will find in almost every case that Manitoba led the nation during the New Democratic Government's time in office. I say that is one yardstick or metrestick, if you want to go metric, that certainly indicates that our Government stacked up well and was well-managed.

I want to go on to some other areas. Let us take a look at the health and social services. During the time that the Pawley Government was in office in this

province, Pawley's annual spending averages, his Government averaged \$315 million more than during the Lyon Government's years on health and social spending.

The province's hearing conservation program identified 746 cases of hearing loss among preschoolers in 1986, an increase of 135 percent since the Government took over. About 38 percent more school-age children are having their hearing troubles identified and the adult diagnosis rate has more than quadrupled.

The Children's Dental Health Program is treating about 7,000 more children annually—a 59 percent increase in services.

Annual tuberculosis cases have dropped by 12 percent since the Pawley Government took office. Venereal disease is down 34 percent.

Infant mortality has dropped to 1 in 107 from 1 in 82.

At the Brandon Mental Health Centre the average stay for short-term patients is 49 days, down from 72 days in 1981. Meanwhile, Community Mental Health Services are reaching an additional 1,747 people.

In other social services, the real dollar welfare rates that the Lyon Government slashed were restored by the Pawley Government. In day care, the New Democratic Government added 6,623 more spaces by the end of 1986, an increase of 81 percent,—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Plohman: —and real annual spending on day care services increased by 171—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I would just like to remind the Member of Beauchesne's No. 328: "A Member may read extracts from documents, books or other publications as part of his speech, providing in doing so he does not infringe on any point of order. A speech should not, however, consist only of a single long quotation or a series of quotations joined together with a few original sentences." I would ask the Member to keep this in mind, please.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will, with respect, acknowledge your intervention, at the same referencing that I have patiently sat as a number of people have actually read their speeches, including many of the Liberal caucus in this House, but I certainly will abide by that ruling.

I want to indicate as well that the New Democratic Party was blamed for mismanagement. Before and during the last provincial election, those allegations were made by Tories in this province, they were made by Liberals, they were made by the Chamber of Commerce and they were made by the media. But let us look at some of the facts.

Let us look at who actually started Churchill Forest Industries in this province. The Government Members indicated time and time again that it was the New Democratic Party that was responsible for deficits. It

was actually the Conservatives who started Manfor in this province.

Who promoted loans to Flyer Industries in this province initially that led to the greater amount of dollars being poured into Flyer Industries over those years? It was indeed the Conservatives who launched the Manitoba Telephone System into their ill-fated adventure in Saudi Arabia. It was the Conservatives who started that project in 1981 when they first sent MTS employees to Saudi Arabia. Of course, I do not even know if the Liberals acknowledged that over the years, but certainly it is a fact that it was the Conservatives who started that. Who ran with the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation's decision to go into the costly and risky reinsurance business? It was the Conservatives who did that; it was the Conservatives who started that. The answer to all of those is the Conservatives. It was the Conservatives in 1986, who said that they would give 10 percent rebates to drivers in this province at a time when personal injury claims were beginning to skyrocket. That is the kind of planning that you see from those Members opposite.

Of course, the public will be able to reflect. The Members here should have an opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the Government during the time that we were in office. If we look during that period of time, we look at the pension improvements legislation that were brought in by our former colleague, the Minister of Labour at that time, now deceased, Mary Beth Dolin—tremendous improvements for part-time workers and in portability of pensions. They will reflect on labour legislation that made Manitoba the most peaceful province insofar as labour disputes anywhere in the country, save for Prince Edward Island. They will reflect on the impact of human rights legislation for minorities in this province; on the environmental legislation that was brought in by our Government; on family life education programs that were put in place; on the Jobs Fund, which had such a tremendous impact on the unemployment rate in this province through long-term assistance, long-term jobs for young people, such as Jobs in Training, Careerstart, Youth Business Start, and so on. They will reflect on those accomplishments.

They will reflect on the transportation agreements that we signed with the federal Government and the agreement on Churchill as accomplishments. They will reflect on our reforestation efforts in this province, to turn around the death of our forests that is taking place right across this country and throughout the world—a major effort, a major initiative by the New Democratic Government in this province. They will reflect on our Agri-Food Agreements with the special efforts on conservation of our water and soil. They will reflect on our beef program, to help beef producers who are hard pressed because of low prices; the hog program that was put in place; many improvements to the Manitoban Agricultural Credit Corporation to help farmers; The Water Rights Act which recognizes the importance of our water in this province. They will reflect on the development of our Hydro, Limestone and the major sales to Northern States Power that made that possible. Those are just some of the accomplishments. What about standing up for Manitoba?

The Filmon Government while they were in Opposition during the campaign, indicated that we were wrong-headed in our approach with regard to federal-provincial relations, that because of our antagonistic approach, bad things were happening to Manitoba—to put it in a nutshell. Well, let us look at what is happening now and we see this thing happening. The fact is that Members on the Government side probably, if they were to face the facts at the time, knew very well that it was political priorities that dictated, of course, the federal Government decisions that were going against Manitoba. We did not have the political clout—14 or 15 MPs as opposed to 75 or 80 or whatever it is in Quebec at the present time. So we only have one-fifth of the clout at most and I think much less than that in reality.

* (1530)

We had to stand up and fight for this province when decisions went against us. We see the Government now having to deal with those as well. We had the CF-18 decision which was patently unfair. A political decision that was stated by the federal politicians to be in the national interest—what they really meant to say was in Quebec's interest. Government purchases shares in Manitoba were down, federal Government purchases far below what our percentage should have been. We had to constantly fight to get the federal Government to live up to the agreements that were signed with the previous Liberal Government by our New Democratic Government, and that was a constant struggle. Now the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and others can see the kind of thing we were up against when it came to maintaining a grain season, shipping season at Churchill as they are faced with the stark reality that with a Conservative Government we are going to have no shipping season there at all in Churchill. They can see we stood for Manitoba when it came to highway funding because the dollars were going to Quebec, going to the North Shore of the St. Lawrence to Mulroney's riding. They were going to the Atlantic provinces, very little to western Canada, to Manitoba, and we made an issue of that and we will continue to do it.

I can tell you that those things have to be made emphatically and there has to be political pressure because no Government is going to listen. No Government is going to listen unless of course—there is only one possibility and that is with a federal election coming in the very near future, in an effort to try to buy back into the good graces of Manitobans that there will be some money that comes just at this time. Of course the Conservative Government hopefully will be able to deliver on some of that.

There is the issue of the aluminum smelter that we talked about just a few moments ago with the federal Prime Minister meeting with representatives in Quebec and saying he is going to do everything he can to get funding for assisting the development of a smelter in Quebec but nothing for Manitoba. That is the same kind of thing that happened with the CF-18. It is the same thing that is happening with Churchill. It is the same thing that has happened over and over again with Government purchases, with highway funding and so on.

We see the need to stand up for Manitoba as we did as the New Democratic Government in the issue of deregulation of our trucking because we have so much at stake in this province, we wanted to be sure that all areas were covered and all issues considered before that went ahead.

We fought against rail line abandonment during our time, for fairness in our treatment for Manitobans, just as Newfoundlanders will be receiving \$800 million in compensation because of the abandonment of railway services there. We feel that there should be some compensation for the Province of Manitoba when lines are abandoned and that there should be a humane and considerate approach and all possible alternatives to indeed develop the most efficient transportation system after considering all alternatives.

We fought for those kinds of principles in this province during the time we were in Government. We fought for a fair share of the Western Diversification Fund which is also very important and one that this Government will have to continue to struggle with.

We hope there will be change and we hope that they will stand up for Manitoba just as the New Democratic Government did in this province. I say that to a large extent for the benefit of Liberals in this House as well because I am very proud of what we accomplished during the time that we were in office. I do not think that message—if we failed was in getting that message out to the people and to the Liberals in this province so that they could understand the true efforts that were being put in place.

I want to move to some other area that I think is also important and it is primarily dealing with the deficit because it took a lot of money to do all of those things during the time we were in office. The fact is, as we have been accused of having skyrocketing deficits in this province, we merely have to look to the other provinces during the last number of years when revenue growth was not the same as it had been the previous years and as it is now. There was a slow down in revenue, a recession in this country. Deficits skyrocketed in all jurisdictions including the federal jurisdiction during the Trudeau and Mulroney eras in this country, \$300 billion of deficits accumulated by those Governments over the years. The Liberal deficit I would say, because of mismanagement nationally, soared to well over \$35 billion the last year that Trudeau was in Government and it has been brought down marginally by the Mulroney Government in the last couple of years but only by a much smaller percentage than the provincial Government's deficit brought down during the last couple of years under the New Democratic Government. We were much more successful in dealing with deficit management in this province than other jurisdictions were. Saskatchewan increased their deficit in 1986 by some three- or four-fold during the election year, from somewhat less than \$500 million to nearly \$2 billion during that time—an unthinkable increase, mass increase in spending and mismanagement. I think that is extremely unfortunate that people in this province are not able to look clearly at that kind of a comparison.

We should look at taxation as well because that is an important comparative element when dealing with

the success of a particular government. We were accused during the last election, and previous, of putting in place massive tax grabs that were substantially massive tax increases in many jurisdictions and particularly in the federal jurisdiction where the federal Government had increased taxation to low-income earners and all income earners, but less to high-income earners, to a much greater extent than the Province of Manitoba did during that same period of time. Yet that federal Government has not had to own up to that and take responsibility for that fact.

They will have to take that responsibility, but I do not believe to the same extent that the New Democratic Government was maligned in this province in the last election because they will not have the same degree of intensity from the media fighting against them as we had to fight during that time. That is a fact. The federal Government has increased taxes, personal income taxes, for families to a much greater extent than the Government of Manitoba did.

As a matter of fact, income earners under \$20,000 were the lowest taxed in the country under a New Democratic Government and fourth lowest at the level of \$40,000 income. That comes from the Saskatchewan Budget; that is not even our figures. They indicated that Manitoba was the lowest at \$20,000 and the fourth lowest at \$40,000.00. That indicates a progressive tax system. But we also realize that we had tremendous pressure because of the growing deficit that has been referenced by so many speakers in this House and therefore we had to increase our revenues in a responsible way.

Under the Tory style tax reform that we are going to get, we are going to see some benefits to people between \$30,000 and \$50,000, making \$30,000 and \$50,000, about \$470 average tax cut, but under their style of tax reform people making over \$100,000 on average are going to benefit to the tune of some \$4,365.00. That is not fair. That is what the difference between the New Democratic Government and the Conservative Government in this country.

Fairness is what we are endeavouring to work towards as a goal. Fairness for all, not fairness just for the rich. I do not believe that the Conservatives in Ottawa understand equity for the people of this country at all. Yet we saw that same kind of approach perpetuated in the last election by both the Liberals and the Conservatives during the election when their priorities, as they outlined them, were to give back \$200,000 to corporations, big business in this province, instead of providing any tax relief because of the tremendous windfalls that were coming from the Federal Government on tax sharing arrangements this year, instead of giving it to the average working person.

Yet our Party, as we enunciated during the election, were prepared to put in place \$58 million in tax cuts for wage earners earning between \$20,000 and \$40,000.00. I say that is a fair approach, much fairer than was being advocated by the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) and by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) during the last election. Of course, we find some degree of hypocrisy in the actual approach by this Conservative Government in this Budget.

They said the Member for Morris (Mr. Manness), when he was campaigning, indicated, as reported in the media, that he was going to cut spending by some \$112 million during the election. We actually see a spending increase in this Budget. The fact is that once in Government they are putting on a different face completely and not carrying through with those promises that they had made at that time. But, because they have received the windfall, they have provided some benefits to businesses and corporations and none to the average worker in this province.

I cannot understand really why the Leader of the Opposition, the Liberals, cannot support this Budget. Unless it is because Filmon has not eliminated all the staff in the Premier's office that was promised by the Leader of the Opposition during the election. Maybe that is one of the reasons why the Liberals cannot support it. I believe that she made the statement that they would want a very bare-boned staff to support the Premier, perhaps one media aide. That was a naive promise and once the Liberals found out that could not be done, they changed their tune on that one. But Filmon has not introduced that. Maybe that is one of the reasons why the Liberals cannot support this Budget. Maybe they cannot support it because the Filmon Government has not put in place the charges for toothpaste and the mouthwash that the Liberal Leader talked about during the last election campaign. That should perhaps be considered, those non-essential items.

Well, maybe that is why the Liberals cannot support this Conservative Budget. Maybe it is because the 130 communicators have not been fired yet, including the Queen's Printer and the federal-provincial relation secretariat included there. Maybe that is the reason the Liberals cannot support the Budget. Or is it because the Filmon Government only eliminated a small portion of the payroll tax that the Liberals wanted to? Well, we are not sure that they want to eliminate it. They were going to eliminate all when the campaign started, but as things went along, assuming it was going to take three years and then they were not sure in which three years. They were not sure which three years they were referring to.

So things went from eliminating it completely to really not knowing when, over what of period of time, but when that was we do not know. Maybe that is why they are not supporting the Filmon Budget, or maybe it is because the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) did not deliver on his \$112 million slashing of programs that he had indicated he would do during the election.

I would say that the Liberals are all over the place on this Budget. They want it both ways, like the Member for Niakwa previously, who was in this House, had once indicated in Hansard that in Opposition you can have it both ways. You can have more spending; you can have cuts in other areas in programming and in taxation; and you can have the deficit cut all at once. That is what they are advocating it seems. They are wanting it both ways and really it is a politically opportunistic approach to take insofar as this Government is concerned as a minority Government. Because they want to, indeed, be on all sides of all of the issues.

We have seen major increases in social services and health care by the previous Government. We have seen that maintained to a certain extent by the Conservatives.

I believe that

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I believe that the Honourable Member's time has expired.

Mr. Plohan: Thank you. I just have one line if I could finish a little bit of that conclusion.

Some Honourable Members: Leave, leave.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there leave? (Agreed)

* (1540)

Mr. Plohan: I want to thank the Members for that brief leave and I just want to indicate that I believe that the electorate, during the next period of time, is going to follow the party and elect the party in the next election who shows some clear direction, not waffling on all issues or taking opportunistic positions, but the party that is able to show clear direction and lead. I do not think that we are getting it from the Conservatives at the present time. We are certainly not getting it from the Liberals in Opposition and I believe that they will see a clear direction from the New Democratic Party that will lead to a New Democratic Government after the next election.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): I ran in this election as a housewife and it took some nerve to do that because it is not traditional to run as a housewife, as a politician, because indeed that has not been a credible occupation for many, many years, if ever.

But I did not realize how well being a housewife and mother would serve me in this Legislature because today I can see that, as I have jokingly said in the past—and I hate to joke like the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery)—but I have always said that while in the House, if I am in doubt, I always think how I would treat a four-year-old and proceed likewise. I think that is what we are seeing here today.

We have two areas of thought. We have the four-year-old who comes and says, oh gee, Mom, I really wanted to do that. That is what I meant, and I really will do it maybe tomorrow. Then you have the other ones who say, I did not do that, it was not my fault. I think those are the alternatives that we are seeing. I want to take a totally new tactic and talk about the Budget.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Charles: We were elected, each and every one of us, to serve the people of Manitoba. The numbers determined in what position we served the people of Manitoba. Those opposite from me are serving as Government. We here in the Liberal Party are serving as the Official Opposition. That is my duty today, to stand up in opposition of this Budget, to present alternatives. Although we have been lectured so well

by the Government, I hope they have been listening to themselves because we have to cooperate. I hope the bottom line of every election that took place this term was the fact that we wanted to represent the people to the best of our abilities.

If the Conservative Government can do so, in history, I hope I am known as saying that so be it. They should represent it to the best of their abilities. But they also have to have respect for us. We have to be the Opposition to the best of our abilities, and that does not take the arrogant pompous attitude that they have been giving us in this Legislature.

We want to talk about the farmers. This is indeed a serious dilemma that we are in with the drought. Farmers probably never have been given due shares for various reasons. Certainly, the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) knows well, I have a background in the farming community. He is kind enough to want to take my children out to that community to see their grandparents there.

We have been given drought assistance. Now unfortunately, we should not have had to have drought assistance. It would be nice not to have the drought but, furthermore, we have to look at why some people were not included in the Crop Insurance Program. I spoke to a farmer this weekend who said that it is really not worth it to get in this program. So maybe the lesson we should take out of this drought—those were his words—is the fact that we have to look again at the Crop Insurance Program and see why some people do not opt in when indeed it ends up costing the province when they do not opt in, in the needed terms. This is a suggestion I hope you guys will consider, and women—guys generic.

I think we already today have talked about the farm students. I hope the Government will also look at the need, as we have discussed today, for farm students being able to get into university this year. It has been discussed today how they are being judged on the amount their parents own, not the amount of cash their parents may have at hand. Certainly if we do not educate those in the rural areas, we cannot expect them to want to return or to better themselves or go on to be the most productive people they can be. That is our goal certainly of every youth who is born in this province and in Canada.

We look at small business. They were given a nice tax holiday or at least it sounds like it, but indeed most small businesses do not make a lot of money their first year, so this is a cost to the Government of about \$1 million. Coming from a small community, I can support tax holidays for small businesses. But I also wonder, coming from a community where there are many mentally retarded children or many handicapped children or many students, why those taxpayers did not get some sort of a tax holiday as well. This could have easily come before deductions and would have been an even basis to give these taxes across the province both to the business and to the people because, if we do not believe in the people, we will not have the business.

We have to look at our urban residents. We find no funds and perhaps this will come up in Estimates, as

the saying often goes by the Government, towards diversification of the City of Winnipeg. I would hope that we will be able to, in this modern age of communications, diversify the departments or at least look at the concept of such. If we do not limit the growth of the City of Winnipeg vis-a-vis the growth in rural Manitoba, we are going to become a very centralized province, even more so than we are, where we will have the have and the have-nots or indeed where it will cost us even more to support those so-called have-nots outside the perimeter highways.

We see for the urban residents great support for The Forks project. Now I cannot speak against The Forks project. Certainly I want tourism here and it sounds like a marvellous project, but coming from the Town of Selkirk where we ourselves have a Selkirk landing project we would like to promote and no funds seem to be going towards it, I wonder why in the City of Winnipeg they get it but rural centres do not.

They rolled back the payroll tax to a deductible of \$300,000 and I suggest by rolling it back only \$200,000 and planning a long-term strategy which they have promised, that perhaps we could make some savings the first year and redistribute the money into some rural areas.

For the rural areas, let us look at the Budget for that. There is no increase in rural economic development grants. Now I hope there are some further plans that will come out in these marvellous Estimates that we keep hearing about, that I will be able to interpret that they have other means to supporting rural economic development outside the city limits. I will fully expect that we will be hearing about those.

I also remind people that although we have economics outside the Perimeter Highway, we also have added telephone costs, added freight rates, added highway costs, and we have to find some ways of dealing with these aspects or at least making this long-term plan so that businesses outside can deal in an equitable basis. I think the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) will recognize that those particularly close to Winnipeg such as the Town of Selkirk, Lockport and such like, although they can benefit from the population in the City of Winnipeg are not being given funds to benefit from it and yet are paying for the costs of living outside of the city limits.

We have to also look at the northern residents. There is not one cent increase in northern health which was described in the Budget paper as being the primary care disease prevention and health promotion in difficult access areas. I hope this will not mean that this Government does not care about northern health for our residents.

In particular, I have to look at Native women being the critic for Status of Women. The majority, according to a paper just sent around by the Aboriginal Women's organization, have less than a Grade 9 education. They have an unemployment rate four times the Manitoba average and yet we do not see any increase in northern training and employment agency funds. Are these women going to gain any respect by this Government? Are we going to see any attitude that says hey you are

important, we have to do something with you, because the years you lose in not being productive in our society or not feeling productive in our society are the years that Manitoba lose. We want to see Affirmative Action and, in particular again, the aboriginal women who are probably the worst done by many times when it comes to action that is taken by the Government.

As for other areas in women, we have to look at pay equity. There seems to be no plans to increase the scope of the mandate of pay equity. We question why schools cannot look into this as a couple are opting in on a voluntary basis so obviously they want to perform and we are not saying that you have the mandate and you have our support to go forth. We have to look at—and you see I am as easy as the next as looking into non-sexist terminology, but indeed we cannot send out papers confirming our viewpoint that we should continue sexist terminology. We have to look at the Law Reform Commission because there are so many laws out there that create inequalities for women and men.

We have to look at the environment. I spoke in my reply to the Speech from the Throne that we have to set an example here in this House for the environment, and I will still say that we should make an agreement in this House—through Government Services I would hope or expect—to do away with styrofoam cups. We could make a commitment to the Province of Manitoba by collecting our aluminum cans. We could make a commitment to the Province of Manitoba by collecting our newspapers. I am sure every caucus has a similar stack of papers. It is our commitment that we can show to the people that will start them thinking that the recycling process is part of our future. I have had many people come up to me who have been down to Ontario and say, "Gee, I see these towns where they put out recyclable boxes at garbage, why are we not doing it?" Indeed, 80 percent or more of our landfill sites are filled with recyclable material, and we have to look at that in the future, and I think we start today in this House.

* (1550)

I would also want to point out, because I am the Member for Selkirk, that we must look toward the Winnipeg sludge beds in West St. Paul. Indeed, sludge beds have to go somewhere, but the amount of water that is in those sludge beds creates an environment that is not comfortable or very cosmetic for the people who have to live around it.

Then I go into health care. We are going to be in a rural crisis next year and maybe—but hopefully not—the year after if this drought continues. We already are known in Canada as the worst as to mental health. In May, we had a suicide a day in this province and I do not know how many of you support that, but I doubt that any of us do. That begs the question, "So what are we going to do about it?"

I was sad to see that the mental health directorate had next to no increase in the Budget. This mental health directorate is mandated to provide alternative care services in the community and that means our rural Manitoba areas, because in the larger centres

the efforts are there. If not available, at least they exist in some form.

Then there was the minimal increase in child and adolescent mental health services. Again, I have known too many children who have not been able to continue their life, and we waste too much of our future in seeing those sad cases come to light. On Friday last, we saw in the Winnipeg Sun two articles on people who had tried to attempt suicide. If they attempt it, they may try it again. We have got to make sure that we stop this, that we hopefully prevent it, but when it comes to that term we have some way of dealing with them.

We see that there is a decrease in the Budget for community health services on the regional level. Now community health is a bit of a new terminology as far as I have heard in the last few years. Community health was not a concept that we can help ourselves and help each other in promoting good health. It was always dealt with. You got sick, then you went to the doctor and they made you well and you get back out to the community. Indeed, in this modern world, we recognize that community is there to support you and that support will hopefully prevent further causes.

We have to look at the women's shelter, the need for an abuse centre, for safe houses for our women and children. Now there are various attitudes about these shelters. Certainly, the more help you provide people the more they demand it, because people feel safer to come forward with their needs, but I often think of the children that are involved with these family situations. They are going to perpetuate it—that is a known fact—if we do not stop it. And again, how many person years, if you will, do we lose by allowing this to continue?

The Selkirk Wife Abuse Centre services all of the Interlake and many parts of the eastern side of Lake Winnipeg. They are up. In the first 10 months of their existence they had 1,056 bed nights, in the last four months since the election, they have already had 581 bed nights, and yet this does not receive one cent from the provincial Government for support. I have tried to bring it to the Minister of Community Services' (Mrs. Oleson) attention that they are still being funded on an office basis. They have a house, they have the need of house supplies, they have the need of staffing, and yet they still have not heard from the Minister as to the support they can expect to receive.

I have to look at the Selkirk Mental Health Centre because, indeed, that is part of my riding and that is a major part of the support for mental health services. I brought up on Friday the fact that they had a 7 percent vacancy staff year rate imposed upon them, and I was told to get my facts correct. The facts are they have a staff year vacancy rate mandated for them. Clerical staff have been told to cut back or maintain a 7 percent vacancy rate in staff years. As one person said to me over the weekend, that means a lot because the saying goes in the hospital: If it is not in the records, it did not happen. So we can assume very easily from there that the services provided by the health system are not going to be adequate if the records are not up to date. So I do have my facts right. I hope the Minister has had time this weekend to get his facts correct.

The School of Psychiatric Nursing has not as yet come up to a top level for staffing and I do hope that the Minister, as indicated on Friday that we will continue the school, will do so.

I want to also talk about the foster parents plan. We had a very long dissertation on the cost of foster parenting, and I want to not comment about it but give one example. I had a close friend, a neighbour, who took in a foster child. Through various programs and problems that they had with this foster child, he managed to go through school without learning to read or write. He did not have all the social services he needed to perform as an honest human being. He has many sociological problems and, indeed, has robbed many houses, our own included. He has been in and out of jail, I do not know how many times. The cost of providing adequate appropriate care, I would suggest, to that young child would have saved us and the correctional system. If we have to put cramps in our lifestyle to provide good funding for foster parents and for children, then I will be cramped, thank you very much.

I have to also speak about the seniors because Selkirk is a retirement centre. We have \$200,000 set aside and I hope to hear the plan for that as well in Estimates. It does not seem like it, but I will take it as a beginning. However, I have to look at the fact that the 55-plus program has seen no real increase and I would suggest that the number of 55-plus people is increasing.

There is no increase in hearing care for our seniors. There is no increase in support for rural residential homes. The ambulance support is not there and I know in fact that people go without food in order to pay their bills for ambulance. The Pharmacare deductible is up and they receive no tax breaks in their 2 percent surcharge. In this time of rural stress, our seniors are going to feel it as much as our youth and I would hope that somewhere hidden in this Budget is the support that is not obvious to those who read it.

I must also speak on housing, although I recognize that I have a conflict of interest, but I will speak only with my background as to the town of Selkirk as a past councillor for the town of Selkirk. Knowing that Selkirk has the highest per capita of low income housing in all of Manitoba, we still have 350 people on our waiting list for housing in the town. Many of these are from outside the town of Selkirk because indeed there is little or no housing in towns such as Libau, Stonewall and those other places.

I must also speak about Middlechurch Home where they are coping as best they can to provide adequate services for their residents.

Because everyone else wants to read articles, I would like to point out that in the Argus newspaper, it listed the areas of the Gimli and Lakeside constituencies that will be receiving grants. We have the East Selkirk Recreation Association; we have the Winnipeg Beach Municipal Recreation Centre; we have Bill Mill Memorial Park; we have Balmoral Community Hall; we have the Gimli Yacht Club; we have the Teulon Golf and Country Club; we have the Gimli and District Rec Centre; we have Community Places Grants for Clarkleigh; we have

the Curling Club in Marquette; we have a playground pavement in Stony Mountain; we have a Golf and Country Club in Warren. Those are areas that have been at least considered and he was not sure whether they were given the support.

And then we have the Middlechurch Home that is looking for support for its senior citizens and ill residents. They do not seem to have any funds available, and I wonder, if we are going to take these tough times and if we are going to put cramps in our lifestyles, maybe the golf and country clubs should be cramped a little bit more than our senior citizens in a residential home.

* (1600)

I wanted to outline these areas of concern because we have to realize that we were elected for a change. Members of the N.D. Party point out various reasons why they were defeated and we have to look at various reasons why we were elected. But I think we can all agree that what the people were looking for was a change, and maybe as much of a change in intestinal fortitude as anything else. Indeed, it costs a lot to produce programs but, if we must invest in our people, we have to have business going certainly, but we have to allow that there are up-front costs and long-term savings in social programs. If we do not point out to the people in an organized manner that we support them, that we want to save the young child so that indeed, when he grows up, we do not have him in our correctional system; that we want to point out to the ill that we want to make them better so that indeed they can get up from that hospital bed and look after themselves; that there are services we must provide that will save us money by spending money now.

That is what is realized by the people out there. I totally agree with the Government when they say there are hard times and people in some areas are willing to put up with some hard times, because indeed they are if they see a long-term plan. The Government will make fun of us as an Opposition, because perhaps they see that as their role, making fun of the Opposition. But we are here as a democracy and, without an Opposition, we would not have it.

So I hope you take the words of all of us on this side of the House as directions. Some you will agree with. Some you perhaps will not, but do not mock the process. I hope that there is a tone of cooperation we will set, and then I will feel much better as a mother and as an MLA at saying to the people that we are doing our best and we are doing it as a cooperative effort. As it is said, they will decide whether we are true to that or not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Helmut Pankratz (La Verendrye): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a privilege for me to rise and be able to participate in the Budget Debate. But before I start on the Budget, I would like to congratulate a certain area in my community, namely the East Braintree, the Glen and the McMunn communities, which had their homecoming this weekend. They had, I think, about 300 people attend from all over. Basically, some were from England, from Australia, from the USA, and right across Canada.

I would like to congratulate the organizers of the festivities that took place, because what they were doing was they were celebrating a homecoming for their pioneers which originally were about 53 which settled in the area in 1910. They were primarily from Romania. They worked on the railway, and they worked on the Winnipeg water line. I want to give the people of the day a lot of credit for the foresight that they displayed at that time because that Winnipeg waterway, that Winnipeg aqueduct, is still the main source of water for the City of Winnipeg, and over half of the people are living in the City of Winnipeg. I think that is incredible, at that point in time when that was designed and constructed, that the people of the day had such a foresight.

I feel that these organizers, and there were some that I wanted to mention specifically, like Esther Feilberg and Dave Allen, who organized the homecoming. I wanted to mention them in my speech, because my congratulations go out to them.

I did not have the opportunity to speak on the Port of Churchill, and I felt I wanted to also take this opportunity to put a few comments on the record in regard to the Port of Churchill. I have had the opportunity to be there to visit the Port a couple of times and, if you had asked me 10 years ago, I definitely was a full supporter of the Port of Churchill. But after having realized some of the hardship and some of the disadvantages to the Port, I do have to indicate that I have, I guess, basically made a 180 on that.

The Port of Churchill today, I had the opportunity to go down by rail and, if any of you want an experience on the rail line, you should go up to the Port of Churchill by rail. Once you have hit Gillam, beyond that point that train will never reach more than 20, 25 miles an hour, and it is wobbling in every direction.

So No. 1, I think there are a lot of questions that have to be answered. We are selling 2 percent of our grain through the Port of Churchill. Sure, I think for the economical reasons for Churchill, we should do whatever we can to assist Churchill to be a viable port, but there are some long-term questions that have to be answered. Just like this community I was mentioning before for this homecoming—those 53 families, and today I do not think there are in total more than 15 families living in there. Well, why? The school that was built in that community in 1917, today there is no more school. So times change and so will the Port of Churchill have to change. Changes will have to take place.

When we landed in the Port of Churchill one time by airplane, I noticed that their runway was well over a mile long. Well, why was that runway there? Because, after the Second World War, they were using the Port of Churchill to have these reconnaissance planes in the air, for these B-52 bombers. They were constantly in flight, surveilling the North. In case there would be an attack on Canada or the United States, these planes were ready to strike at whoever the Opposition would be of the day. That is what the original Port of Churchill was built for at that time, that runway.

The exporting of the grain—I had an opportunity to tour the port. My goodness, that is equipment that has

been built in the 1940s. There has been no updating in it. I think that is another thing to be seriously looked at. For instance, the railway cars. Our hopper cars of today, you cannot use them on that line. You could use them, but you could only load up, maybe fill them to a quarter capacity and then when you get to Churchill, you cannot unload them. The dumping facilities in Churchill are 1940's style, with the old boxcar, where you tilt the whole boxcar one way and then tilt it back the other way, and that is how you unload boxcars.

So basically, the only market that you have in Churchill is to haul barley and that is because of the wheat, and you can get the maximum into a boxcar—or basically maybe boats. For 2 percent of our market to ship through the Port of Churchill—and I would like to ask the Members for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), Churchill (Mr. Cowan), and the Members that spoke out so strongly for the Port of Churchill—you know they should have maybe supported the agriculture part of the province a little more also, then there would be something to even ship. Today when we were arguing in regard to support programs for agriculture, the past two years I have spent in this House, that was the last on the NDP agenda, to support agriculture in any way, shape, or form. The viability of that port depends totally on agriculture—totally. Today, I do not think that the agriculture sector should have to bear the brunt of the cost to keep up an obsolete port, an obsolete rail line. It is incredible.

Then there is one thing that I thought I would have to mention. What are we doing to our ecology? Every fall the polar bears are lining up in that port. I am just wondering whether possibly we are not intruding on the polar bears. I think we have an obligation to these. I sometimes think that maybe with Greenpeace, we should write a letter to Greenpeace and maybe they would take on the cause. Anyhow, I think that is enough said for the Port of Churchill.

I am going to divert a little bit from my speech which I was going to make because the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), he spoke why they had lost the election. I also want to make reference to that because that is what he was talking about and I think I want to answer some of his concerns and questions.

I am sure we have received—actually it was released exactly on the day of our election on April 26—Dominion Bond Rating Service. I am going to read a few inserts from it. When I go through that, I think we will realize in a big hurry why the previous Government lost the election.

It states, it cannot reduce interest costs for the Province of Manitoba because it exceeds \$500 million and are climbing in community budget deficit growth. This is the interest cost just on our deficit—just on our deficit. While I am talking on the deficit that we are having in the Province of Manitoba, I want to relate something to all Members in this House. I think most of us here in this House—a lot of them maybe—know exactly what \$1 million, but I think some of them do not even know how much a million dollars is. I really believe very few people know how much a billion is. This Province of Manitoba today owes in total very close to \$12 billion in debt. Now, if you take a thousand

\$1,000 bills and lay them flat on the table or wherever, to make \$1 million, you need a thousand \$1,000 bills and you will have a stack about eight inches high. I think this is some way where all Members in this House maybe can relate as to what our debt in the Province of Manitoba is today. So \$1 million is a thousand \$1,000 bills, about eight inches high.

* (1610)

To make \$1 billion, you do that again times a thousand. Now you have eight inches, now you have eight thousand inches of \$1,000 bills laying flat. Now you are at 666 feet. That is \$1 billion. The Province of Manitoba owes about 12 such stacks of flat \$1,000 bills. I think sometimes we should remember what the Province of Manitoba actually is owing, because we have got to put it into something where we can relate to. Now when you take that 666 feet for \$1 billion of flat \$1,000 bills and you do that times 12, you have one-and-a-half miles up in the air of flat \$1,000 bills. That is the present debt of the Province of Manitoba. I think it is something, maybe just food for thought as to the amount of debt. Maybe we can relate to that then when we are now only paying the interest on—not the interest. Like, there are certain corporations like Hydro, Telephone and certain corporations which are not in the general debt. When we talk about \$500 million annual debt-servicing costs, that is just the general account which amounts to, as already has been indicated, 12.5 percent of our gross income.

I want to carry on with this Dominion Bond rating, because I think that will give us a pretty good indication. I was not actually going to speak on that much, but I think this is something that we all must realize what it states in here. It states in this: "There are various other problems which are also affecting the province: (1) Poor control exists over Crown corporations and several have attained sizeable losses due to poor control and management."

The Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) was just stating what the reasons were. It states it right in here. This was released exactly the day of the election. I wonder how many Members would be sitting there in the NDP today if this would have been released a few days prior to the 26th. Then it goes on to say: "Restructuring likely will have to be made and some Crown corporations will probably be sold." Then we have the, "Unfunded pension liabilities amounting to \$1.1 billion, and these will ultimately have to be funded. This is a very large liability for a province with a population base of only one million people . . . unrealized foreign exchange losses again amounted to over \$1 billion in borrowing."

I can remember the Member for Rossmere—he is not with us anymore—but he was the Minister of Finance and he was talking about what kind of a good deal he had made when he went across and borrowed the Japanese yen, money from Japan. Today, I am told that some of that money is costing us well over 20 percent interest. That is what happens when our finances are going out of control.

The other problem actually which we are faced with is that our deficit since 1982 has more than tripled,

and I think that is something that the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) should realize. You know, we can all think maybe that the public will not become aware of what we are doing or how we are running our affairs, wherever they are, but eventually the public sees what is happening. This is what happened in the Province of Manitoba. The public realized the Government of the Day was totally mismanaging the financial affairs. They were just having to pay more and more and more and they just could not put up with that anymore.

This goes on to state all kinds of areas of different taxation problems and what the Government of the Day did and how they mismanaged. It is something that I think that the Member should take note of, and then he would realize. If he would read the actual papers that are available, he would realize why they are not in Government anymore.

I would then like to go on and give credit actually to the person who was on the Government side of the day, and he saw the mismanagement and everything that was taking place at the time, and he voted against his own Government. I think that says an awful lot when a Member within your own Party decides to defect, or whatever you want to call it, and decides to let his better judgment prevail.—(Interjection)—That is right, do what is morally right, and that is true enough.

In Hansard, many of the Opposition Members would like to know, Hansard from last year, February 12, when he made the speech when he was seconding the Throne Speech, and when he made some comments which I will put on the record. It says: "When it comes to MTX, did we lose that money one night when somebody tripped over in the desert and spilled out \$27 million under the sand? Of course not! It's been happening and developing over the years. There have been enough things said. The Auditor has made enough reference to it that somebody ought to be out there with a fire extinguisher saying, we cannot have this brush fire. It doesn't reflect well on the competence of the government." This is what his own Member indicated.

We can go on with quite a few other things, how he indicated —(Interjection)— yes, and then we have, yes that is right. Like my Honourable Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) indicates, we have the Premier of the day who had this mismanagement in Government for six-and-a-half years, which tripled the deficit three times over. That Member now has the gall to run in the new riding of Selkirk. Unbelievable! From one mismanagement, he wants to pull us into another mismanagement. I think this is incredible, and I just cannot understand how people will accept anything of that nature. I think the people of Selkirk will realize and, if not, I think we have maybe an obligation to make sure that the record will show how this province was mismanaged under his leadership. Hopefully, the people in Selkirk will realize where he pulled the Province of Manitoba, and they will realize that there are better Members available and decide otherwise.

He goes on to say, this Member for St. Vital, he goes on to say: "We've been doing well in this province, but are we doing well on borrowed money?"—on borrowed money, he says. "The day of reckoning will

come, whether it's next year or the year after." For that reason, I must give our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) credit. He is taking, yes, a mild approach, but he is rectifying a problem.

We have to turn this ship around. This is like the Titanic. We are on the Titanic and we were heading in one direction, and we know where the Titanic landed at. So that is how we were with the previous Government. Now we are seeing the iceberg and the people of Manitoba saw the iceberg, and I think we are in the right direction. We are turning it around and, like the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has indicated, I think we will be able to with a few more Budgets, if the Opposition will be kind enough and tolerant enough with us, this Government of the Day will be able to turn this ship around. I think, within a few years, we will be able to have fiscal responsibility, and we will be able to manage this province without a deficit. I think that is what we are all looking for.

I can remember the Leader of Opposition today, stating two years ago when I got into this House, a new Member, and she says, you know—she sometimes thought that maybe some of our Members were too critical over the Government of the Day. She did not realize in what bad shape we were in, just as I did not. She says, if they are doing a good thing, we have to give them credit for it. I would wish that what she indicated then to me—I would like to pass it on to all of you Members there—that you realize that too and do that as well. If the Government of the Day, like now, comes out with a nice Budget, a good Budget, a Budget that the people of the Province of Manitoba are proud of and can live with and we can turn this around, I think you need to applaud it. I think you need to give the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) credit that he knows he has the support in this House. Actually, I think we do not sometimes recognize accomplishments in time. Sometimes, in a case like this, the Minister of Finance has worked very hard with endless nights of preparing this Budget. I think it would be something in our favour if we all would personally go and shake his hand, congratulate him and say that we are supporting you and we are willing to give you a couple years more and hopefully we will be able to turn this province around.

* (1620)

As we all know, in order to turn a province around like this, it is not something that can be done overnight. We need to get business on stream—not that business wants to move out. We need to get business that they come in.

In my riding alone, I have some businesses that I am sure most of you people are all aware of, such as the Loewen Windows firm that employs 650 people. Primarily, their windows are shipped out of the province. We all know what a payroll tax does to a firm of that nature when you tax it beyond being competitive in Saskatchewan, Alberta, B.C. or Ontario, wherever they want to ship the product to.

Then we have Schmidtke Millwork Ltd. employing about 70 people. I just got the Carillon News the other

day and in there it states how they got a job in Toronto and it is worth about \$800,000 putting in cabinets in a hotel. I think this is a type of industry we need in the Province of Manitoba, but we need a lot more. We need to foster this kind of business because that is bringing money into the province and that money will naturally devolve within the province and we will all become richer and wiser from that.

We have Reimer Overhead Doors Ltd. employing 20 people. They are shipping their doors right across the western provinces.

With the anti-business climate that was in place, there is no way that some of these businesses could survive. So for that reason, I must say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am really happy for it that we have been given an opportunity to turn this disastrous ship around and hopefully we will get the support of all Members in this House because I think, as you all know, when the Budget Speech was on, most Members, only very few really spoke critically about it because we had to go into a special debate in regard to Churchill and so forth and because you have to allow the eight days for the Budget Debate, but basically there was very little fault that anybody could find with it.

I must especially address my comments to the Member of the Opposition Party. I think she spoke maybe 10 or 15 minutes on it. What can you find fault with that? She supported us with most of the issues that we were running for in our election.—(Interjection)—I would wish that more of you Members would speak in regard to the Budget and put your actual facts on the line because I think that is what we have done.

I must give our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) a lot of credit for his Budget. I think he has done a fine job. We have all kinds of comments made from the business communities applauding the Tory Budget. I think this should speak to all Members of this House.

For instance, I will just put on the record Garth Wright, a Manitoba spokesman for the 80,000 members of the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses. "The incentive for small business will lead to more jobs if you will help out this small business sector which is responsible for creating 75 percent of the new jobs and you are going to do something to combat unemployment," says Wright, who represents 3,200 small and medium size businesses in the Province of Manitoba." That is what we need. This is what I am saying.

It will take time. That is why I think we should try to give the small businesses in the Province of Manitoba the assurance that we are all united in this House of a Budget like the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has come down with, not that they now already sense, oh, oh, there is again all kinds of slippage in the House and a lot of these Members, for political reasons, cannot approve it. I think, like the Opposition Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) indicated to me two years ago, if it is a good thing, we should all join hands and support it. I think that is what kind of a Budget we have and I am looking forward to her talking a little bit more positive in regard to our Budget that the Minister of Finance has brought down.

I find it very disturbing when I hear the Leader of the Second Opposition Party. I will call one No. 1 and one maybe No. 2. Maybe that is the way we will get out of our confusion in this House. Maybe that is how we should do it, or A or B or something of that nature.

For instance, when he was in Government, how on earth can a man like that or can a Member like that—Honourable Member, pardon me, Mr. Deputy Speaker—Honourable Member like that get up in this House and be critical over a Budget with a 196 million deficit this year versus their 350 million for last and over 500 million the previous year, and us going down into a deficit position like we are today. It is just unbelievable to even be able to sit here and just listen to a man like that, how he can come up and talk in that nature.

I thought our local Carillon News put it very well in regards to what our Member for Morris (Mr. Manness), the Finance Minister, and I think everybody should get an opportunity to read this. I will not try to read this into the record but, if anybody would want a copy of it, I think it was put very nicely in here by Tim Plett, and I think he says it exactly the way it is. It is a good Budget and he is giving us credit for it. I think, like most people, they realize that Manitoba is on the right track with support in the House. If the business climate can also sense that support, I think we can go a long way to reducing it.

The Free Press had an article on August 11, and it says, "Fooling nobody." That headline just sort of struck me. I think that is one that most of us should take to heart, because you will not fool the general public in the long run. We had financial disaster for 17 out of the past 20 years. We can see where that brought this province to, as far as our financial chaos is concerned. Here it states how this accounting firm: "Stevenson, Kellogg, Ernst and Whinney has revealed that the Pawley Government failed to follow accepted accounting procedures . . . led to the provincial debt being understated by about \$1 billion." We will see one thing after another from these Members, and they are defending it.

The Member of the Second Opposition, No. 2 Opposition Party here, he denounces the Budget as a disaster for the province. "NDP Leader, Gary Doer, says yesterday, 'the Tory Budget will ruin Manitoba's economy'"—ruin Manitoba's economy, how is it possible?—"but refused to rule out his caucus' support for it when it comes to a vote next week. 'We believe this Government has sown the seed of disaster in Manitoba in a very subtle way,' Doer says shortly after condemning the Progressive Conservative minority Government in his reply to the Budget. He says, 'Relying on tax breaks for business to spark employment in the province won't work.'"

Well, chasing them out of the province will not work. Overtaxing them so that they cannot employ people will not work. One person one time said to me, he says, you know if you want to start a small business in Manitoba, you know what you do? You buy a big business and then, within a couple of years, you will only have a small business. And I have to agree with him really to some degree. That is how the past taxation structure was set up. I think we have seen here today

the Premier of our Party, the Premier of the province has indicated in his Throne Speech. He said that our intention in the legislative agenda is to pursue plans set out during the election campaign. We had a plan, and we are going to follow that. The Premier said, priorities will be given to measures toward putting the province's financial house back in order. I think we all must agree with that statement. We cannot disagree. Restoring accountability in the province's Crown corporations, that is another point. We have seen how the mismanagement is. Mr. Speaker, we have seen how the Auditor's report states how they have not accounted for everything in that nature.

I think we are at a stage where we must support the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) for a good Budget that he has come down with. I think, within a couple of years, we will realize that we will be able to generate a lot more income for the Province of Manitoba, create a lot more business and allow us to be competitive with other provinces. Then it says: ". . . improving the climate for economic development"—exactly, that is exactly what we want to do, that is exactly what we stand for; "protecting and enhancing social services," by all means. We must protect our social services, by all means. What is worth more than health? Those of us who are fortunate not to be sick, to be able to walk around from day to day and live a healthy normal life, we owe it to the people less fortunate. We must never forget that these people—some of them for whatever reasons are less fortunate than we are—but that we do not forget them and we must make sure that we are looking after them financially. At the same time we must put in place that financial machine that can pay for these services. We cannot do it by paying interest. We all realize in our own house, our own operation, whatever we are doing in that regard.

I would like to touch on one thing. The Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) also indicated, I think, something about MTX. If I recall correctly 1982, the present NDP Government of the Day operated for a year-and-a-half without a mandate even, were setting up two companies in Saudi Arabia until they got the MTX incorporated, that through the MTX they could legally have these two companies in Saudi Arabia. If they want to, in any way shape or form, put any blame of MTX onto the previous P.C. Government they are totally mistaken. The records show who established the MTX company, and who also established the two foreign companies in Saudi Arabia.

* (1630)

I would wish that if any new Members opposite would like to do a little research it is all available. I think we would all be wiser if we would know where that money comes from. That \$27 million that MTX had to pay out, lost in Saudi Arabia, that has just been added to our deficit. At the time we were told there was a fund there—and that is two years ago when I was sitting opposite. I was told in this House that there was a fund available which would come out of the MTX. You know which fund that is? That is that bottom-line pit which the previous Government used and just put us deeper and deeper into debt. It was just borrowing more money from anybody who was willing to lend and that is basically where the \$27 million came from.

While I am on MTX, I would just like to make one comment or two in regard to MTS. The MTS has also not paid \$1, as far as the Government is concerned, of their share into the pension plan for all the employees of MTS. That today amounts to \$207 million. If you add that up to what the province has on it with its staff, we are seeing a situation where there is an unfunded liability basically of well over \$1 billion just in this pension fund money. I believe this has to be addressed; MTS has to address it.

I think the Province of Manitoba has to address it because we cannot allow future generations to have to pay for our mismanagement or our lavish spending of the day for today. I believe that should—if we want to do proper management we have to get that into place. These are things that the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) did not mention. I wish he would have mentioned some of these things, how the mismanagement of his Government—I think if he still does not realize it, maybe the next election he will realize it because the people of Manitoba—you are not going to fool the people of Manitoba. They are there and they have been watching the Government closely and they realize that the past Government, the Pawley Government, the Member now that wants to run for Selkirk after he has put the Province of Manitoba into such disarray.

With that Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will end my comments with regard to the speech on the Budget, but I do want to wish the Member for Morris, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) well. I think he has come down with a good Budget. I think it is one that we all should support and we should show our support in this House. Because if we show our support in this House, that will filter out to the businesses that want to locate here in this province. They will realize that the House is united in trying to bring down the deficit. They are holding on and turning the ship around. Thank you very much.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to have this opportunity to speak in this Budget Debate. Before I do that I would like to acknowledge, with thanks, the comments that have been made by some of the veterans in this House, specifically the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger), the dean, the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey), they have all given us a lot of words of wisdom. They told us that maybe we would regard them as being worth what we paid for them, but in actual fact I think most of those words of wisdom were worth quite a bit more to me than what I paid for them.

What bothers me a little bit, though, is that after hearing all those words of wisdom, I find that there is a great deal of inconsistency. Firstly, the Budget—and I think most people will acknowledge it—is a reasonable facsimile of the previous one. It could be referred to as the second coming of Kostyra in many respects.

We did not find what we anticipated from the Tory Government because the Tories normally increase taxes, but they did not do it. The Tories normally cut expenditures, but they did not do it. The Tories normally

set some priorities, but they did not do it. Now we are told by the Minister that the Tories will act like Tories next time, but when you have an opportunity that you have missed that opportunity may never occur. They will have an opportunity again to act like Tories, but it may be in the next century.

I am concerned because I am a self-acknowledged right-wing Liberal and I think my caucus Members will agree to that. I was looking forward to seeing a Tory Budget that would be relatively tough, but we did not get a Tory Budget that was relatively tough. They take great pleasure in the fact that they had a windfall. They used a little bit of it to reduce the deficit, the rest they sprinkled around like sugar on a bowl of corn flakes and some flakes got a little bit of sugar and some did not. So they did not take a tough stand, but they are anticipating that they will take a tough stand next time. Well, next time it might be too late. They have got to take the bit in their teeth now and make the appropriate measures right away.

The question then becomes why did not they do it now? You know what the answer is. It is a matter of power versus principle. If they would have had five more Members on that side of the House, are they going to stand up and tell me the Budget would have been the same? Utter nonsense. It would not have been the same. It would have been a typical Tory tough Budget had they had the majority over there. Instead, they have taken the easy way out. They have decided well, we would like to have a little power; we will forget about our principle temporarily; maybe there will be another opportunity at a later date to get in here and get some action.

This bothers me a great deal because I was naive. I have only spent 30 years in the ivory tower and they tell me that is an area that is not realistic, you are not in the real world. Now I find that this place is just about the same in terms of not being in the real world. I think that where I was is far more realistic than what we are faced with here today. I think that you will find in the ivory tower there is an adherence to principle above all else. I am not quite so sure about the situation in here.

I am also concerned about what I would regard as the cynical attitude that people have toward the Legislature and toward politicians. I am not surprised that it continues. What we have seen here first of all is the fact that there is no attempt to adhere to principle. In campaign speeches everybody has a principle. In here, when you have got the power but you have not got the majority, you forget about the principle and figure out how you are going to retain power for a little longer.

The other place that it is very cynical is in Question Period. Now, we have been here for a few weeks listening to Question Period, and I want to mention right off the bat that there are some who I felt have done an excellent job in attempting to respond to questions, but the—

An Honourable Members: What about the ask fors?

Mr. Laurie Evans: The ask fors—they are certainly not without some criticism due them as well.

The situation is simply this: that you have three typical answers that you can expect when you ask a question. The first of those is to point your fingers at the NDP and say they have been in here for six or seven years, they made all the mess. Now my response to the Opposition on a situation like that is if you have been sitting here on you-know-what for six-and-a-half years, you should be ready to do something when you get the opportunity unless the numbness has moved right to the top. So there should be some activity. I can tell you that if opportunity comes to us, we will be ready to move. We will bring in a Liberal Budget that will not be mistaken for the third reincarnation of Kostyra. You will know what it is. It will be a Liberal Budget.

The other thing that you get when you ask a question in this House is we will tell you when the Budget comes down. The Budgets have come down. Now the answer is, well, that is better responded to in the Estimates, or the third possibility is that we will take it under notice which means we really do not have the answer today. We will give it to you in a week or two. Now surely to goodness, there is a responsibility to have those answers as quick as you can.

An Honourable Member: I will have it for you in a day or two.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Have it in a day or two? Okay. Sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The third one, and that is the one that bothers me the most, is when a question is deflected by attempting to go back and fumble through your briefing papers to find out what you can find that is relevant or irrelevant that can be thrown back at the questioner, in many respects actually questioning their integrity or their ability to be realistic in what they are doing.

* (1640)

This is leading to the level of cynicism that is present in this House, and is the one that is out in the country and out in the campaign trail. It is not surprising because we are propagating that every day. I claim to have probably as much responsibility as that as anyone else but I am hoping, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can see that turned around.

I want to dwell a little bit on agriculture because I told the Member following me that I will not be too long, so I am going to talk a little bit about agriculture. It reminds of the old story when the hungry farmer went into the local restaurant. He worked hard all day. He ordered himself a steak medium rare. He finished his steak and then, a little while later, the waiter came up and said, how did you find the meat, sir. He said, it was simple, I just turned over the potato and there it was. This is the type of thing that we are running into with agriculture, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because when you open up this little document, where does agriculture show up? Does anyone know where agriculture is in this little document?

I will tell you where it is. It is on the bottom line and it comes under "Justice, Administration and Other"—

justice, administration and other. That is where agriculture falls in, under "Other." I just want to pass on to my own Leader when she becomes Premier of this province, which she will undoubtedly do, I would hope to be part of that. But if I am part of it, I want to point out right now that agriculture will not come under "Other." If I am not part of it, even if I am deceased, I will haunt her the rest of her life if agriculture does not get a line of its own.

Here we have a situation where a multitude of speakers on the other side have got up. They have said agricultural is the backbone of Manitoba's economy and they are nodding their heads. What a backbone! The little bit of budget that you presented for agriculture is not even enough to give you a little bit of support. It is probably best if we described it as a splint. What is it? Do you know what the budget for agriculture is? It is a lousy 2 percent, a lousy 2 percent.

Now this year, I have got some sympathy. I wonder, because when you look across on the Government benches, you can point to a number of Members and say, each one of them could have made a very logical Minister of Agriculture. In fact, I believe we have two who have been Ministers of Agriculture.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Laurie Evans: Now admittedly, you have to go back a bit into antiquity to find when they were, but I did not expect to get a great deal of support for agriculture from the NDP Government because I always viewed those as being not particularly sympathetic to agriculture. I had a lot of respect for the gentleman to my left here when he was Minister of Agriculture. I think Mr. Uskiw, when he was Minister of Agriculture, all had sincerity and they were anxious to do the best that they could for agriculture. But I had to assume from the inability that they had to get a significant budget for agriculture that they probably did not have any clout in their own caucus.

But now I have to question how much clout all these potential Ministers of Agriculture had in their own caucus because they are still looking at essentially 2 percent. You can argue and you can use the figures that they increased it by 50 percent or they increased it by 30 percent, but let us be fair about it. If you take the \$18 million or whatever it was that was allocated for the drought fund, and take the amount of increase that is allocated for the doubtful debts of the MACC and the extra million that is there for the debt, then you are looking at \$87 million. Last year, you had \$86 million. The amount that is allocated to agriculture is virtually the same.

Hopefully, Mr. Speaker, if the opportunity—and I underline the word "if"—comes for them to present another Budget, hopefully, we will not be faced with a drought at that time, and that additional money that is in agriculture this time to service the drought will be there to service agriculture because, I want to point out—and I am sure the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) is aware of this—(Interjection)—I lost him, I lost him, but I will get him back. I want to point out to the Minister of Agriculture, and he knows this but he may

not have had as much to do with some of the members of his department as I have, that in that Ministry of Agriculture you have one excellent department, a top-notch department right from the top to the very bottom. You have a group of dedicated employees that work above and beyond the call of duty in their service to Manitoba agriculture. I have dealt with many of them over the years. There is an excellent group there, and the only recommendation that I would make to the present Government is keep the politics out of it. Let that Ministry of Agriculture operate to service agriculture the way it knows it can.

But there are quite a few things that I can mention, and I am only going to mention a few of them this afternoon. We will be bringing them up in the Estimates undoubtedly, but there are quite a few areas that I do not think have been adequately addressed in this Budget. One of them relates to the situation with the drought. If I read the figures correctly, the Greenfeed and the Livestock Program, in themselves, are going to take approximately two-thirds of the money that has been allocated for drought.

If you travel through southern Manitoba, and I know the Member for Rhineland (Mr. Penner) has mentioned this to me, you have a serious increase in the number of black fields that are out there. I am pleased to say that the Ministry of Agriculture has put out bulletins and recommendations as to how to handle this, but I am not sure that we are going to control the soil erosion without some infusion of money, either for the assistance with the chemicals or the assistance to cover green cover or whatever. So that certainly is one area that we have to look at.

Some other areas that are very concerning to me are, this year for example, we probably have the worst success ratio with the utilization of herbicides that we have ever seen. We have a pilot program where they are looking at the complaints from the farmer, as compared with the chemical company. I think there needs to be something done with that to put it on some sort of a permanent basis and, hopefully, make it more effective.

In addition to that—and one of the Ministers says that you have got federal policies. This is always one of the problems with agriculture. You have got dual responsibility and that means that one can always say, well it is the other one's job. There tends to be a lot of it falls between the slats there.

Another thing that has cropped up this year with the weed problem is that we now have weeds that are becoming clearly resistant to the traditional herbicides that are used. There is not a great deal of research going on into that.

That leads me into the other area that bothers me perhaps as much as anything else with this agricultural budget, and that is the retention of essentially the same amount of support for agricultural research. There is a little bit more put in there for a very specific purpose but, in actuality, the funding for research has stayed at \$875,500, and that is just a pittance. The reason it is just a pittance is because what you see now in Manitoba is a gradual erosion of the research program of Agriculture Canada.

We have, in Manitoba this year, lost our senior corn breeder. We have lost our senior barley breeder. These positions are not being replaced. We do not have a viable meaningful forage program in Manitoba. It is hopeless, and we can argue that is a federal Government responsibility, but we know how much clout the Manitoba Government has with the feds. Some of them, you cannot get them because the line is busy; others come into town and will not talk to you. So I think we have to assume that we have got some of their responsibility. It is very easy to pass if off and say it is up to somebody else to pick up these loose ends, but they are not picking them up. I want to be on record as telling all Members opposite that the agricultural research program in Manitoba is going down the tubes, and somebody has got to pick it up and do something with it.— (Interjection)- I beg your pardon? —(Interjection)- Well, I would like to think that a part of it is, but they may feel that it is an advantage to have me out of there.

The Member brings up a very good point, because I think that there are situations—and perhaps the American one is, where the President can only stay in for eight years, maybe something that we should copy here so that we have a good turnover of new blood. That is the same type of thing that I think should occur at the universities is get some of the old deadwood out of there, and get some turnaround, but this is getting—

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Why would you be so hard on Sharon?

* (1650)

Mr. Laurie Evans: She has not been around that long yet. We will be tough on her when the time comes.

Mr. Speaker, all fooling aside here, I want it recorded that the agricultural situation in this province needs a lot of help. I would be the last one to say spend, spend, spend. I think that it is critical that we start to establish the priorities, and I am hoping that when we are looking at priorities the next time around, somebody will try to get their hand under that agriculture budget and get it up where it should be, knowing full well that in order to do that something else has to come down a little bit. That one is not in the right place; that one needs some help.

The other thing that I want to touch on very briefly, because I think that there has been some misconceptions, and that is this whole business of free trade. While it is a little bit out of the bounds of the Budget, I think that it is very important to have on the record the fact that recently the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, which is the overall umbrella for all commodity groups in agriculture, has come out pretty negative when it comes to free trade.

I am not going to read a lot of this but I want to point out a couple of the things. The CFA takes the position that Bill C-190, the implementing legislation for the Free Trade Agreement, poses a threat to many sectors of Canadian agriculture. Regardless of who it is, there is no doubt in my mind and many other people

that the whole concept of supply and management has to be looked after.

You may be satisfied on that side when Mr. Mulroney or Mr. John Crosbie, who admits that he has never read the document, says that supply and management is safe, but that does not satisfy me that it is safe.

I am sure Members opposite have also looked at some of the documents that are coming out of the United States already that say that the first thing they will be doing when the agreement is signed is to put pressure on to get rid of the restrictions in terms of the movement of commodities into Canada.

With supply and management, I do not have to tell you, gentlemen and ladies, that with supply management, any minor modification of the quota of material moving into Canada can disrupt supply and management very, very quickly. While you may contend that this is strictly an Ontario and Quebec document, there is enough evidence in various places such as the Co-operator, the Western Producer and others where they are indicating that supply and management is not safe. I would take a long hard look at the CFA document before I went out and started thumping the tub and said that I was 100 percent behind free trade, because as far as I am concerned, with the free trade, supply and management will be a dead duck.

The Wheat Board is mentioned in this article, but the article, the critical things there are the free trade on supply and management.— (Interjection)- We are not going to get into Meech Lake. I hope there will be an opportunity at another time to debate Meech Lake and there will be, but I want to go on record as saying that there should be some serious concerns as far as free trade is concerned within the supply and management area. I would be quite happy to discuss that and listen to arguments from all sides.

I have read an awful lot of this material on free trade and this is the one area that worries me the most, and that is the safety factor as far as supply and management is concerned. I have had farmers come to me and they say, "What should I do? I am in poultry or I am in dairy or I am in eggs." My response to them is, "If you can find somebody that wants to take those off your hands at the price that you think is appropriate, sell it because the safeguards are not there." Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I rise as a very proud Manitoban today to support a document which this province has desperately needed for the past six years, and I say that with the greatest of sincerity. The people of Manitoba have been crying out for the legislators of this province to pay attention to what their needs and their desires are.

Let me first of all start out by giving my friends opposite what really it is all about when it comes to being elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, to be put in charge of and have the responsibility for the trust of the taxpayers' money. There is one principle, whether you are a New Democrat or whether you are a Liberal or whether you are a Conservative, but I would

hope, when it comes to the vote on the Budget, that there is one principle that each and every one of us—and I say this very sincerely—pay attention to. That is, No. 1, to leave as much money as possible in the taxpayer's pocket so they can spend it as he or she wishes. That, I believe, is the principle that each and every one of us should subscribe to, because they earn their money. They work very hard for it. They should be given the first right and responsibility to spend it, because they know better than any one of us how they want that money directed.

We may come here with all the greatest of ideas and philosophies, but I tell you, when you start moving away from that principle, then we have all got trouble. And we have moved away from that principle in the past six years, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately.

Let me first of all, as well, indicate to you that I believe that the Liberal Party, particularly the Liberal Party, have an opportunity just three months after being elected—imagine, just three months after being elected—have the opportunity to go on record of doing something absolutely right on behalf of the people of Manitoba. I mean, absolutely right, and I will justify it as I speak as to why I believe we should get the support from you people who campaigned hard to get to the Legislative Assembly.

I think you have the chance to do something right and support this important document.—(Interjection)—That is right, and maintain your credibility. I should not be telling you that, you see. I should not be telling you that because, in fact, it may strengthen your position four years down the road when we go to the people again. You see, that is the thing that I should not be doing. But I will gamble that, in four years, you will do enough things that maybe will have the people change their mind.—(Interjection)—Well, that is usually what we get mandates to carry on with here and I would think that, the way things are going, if they pay attention to some of the things that are said—we do not have all the answers. We have been expecting some of them to come from you but, so far, we are waiting and we have to keep proceeding and governing.—(Interjection)—I will be. This is a very positive, up-beat, high-road speech.

Let us look at some of the principles that we brought into this Budget. I want to say as well, at the very beginning, a compliment to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) who is the Chairman of Treasury Board, to my colleagues who sat on Treasury Board, and to the staff of Treasury Board who have put in days and nights to get this document, this Assembly sitting so that, within the law of legislation, within the laws of the Province of Manitoba, we could have spending authority approved. We were operating in Manitoba without approved spending authority. It was essential that we come to this Legislature and have a vote on the spending of public money. That was one of the things that we were determined to do, and I today compliment the staff of Treasury Board who went above and beyond the call of duty, the work that they did, as did each and every member of the staff of a lot of the departments, and my colleagues who put in endless hours to get this document approved.

A big criticism from the Opposition is that we did not change it enough, that it does not look like enough. I tell you and I tell all my colleagues and those new Members in Government that, if Governments make major, major changes, the ripples that it causes throughout society, I can tell you, can be very, very tremendous. So you have to move cautiously.—(Interjection)—No, you have to move cautiously. You cannot go in and make major, major changes. You have to change the direction, as my colleague from La Verendrye said, of the ship but you do not turn the wheel around immediately and upset everybody off the deck. You have to do it very cautiously. I would say that is what we have done.

* (1700)

We have said we are going to do it responsibly. We have not done everything correctly. My goodness sakes, we are only human beings, but we have tried. I think again there are five major points that I want to make that have been identified in the Budget, and that was that we all want—and you cannot vote against this, I do not see how you can justify voting against—to meet the challenges facing us in health care. My colleague, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), is doing a tremendous job in meeting the needs or trying to meet the needs of health care.

Education, my goodness sakes, look at some of the things that are happening in education in a positive note with the increase in funding to private schools.—(Interjection)—The Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) says, exactly the same. Well then, all the more reason he should support it.—(Interjection)—except the private schools. Again, all the more reason why it should be supported.

We all said during the election campaign, essential services have to be looked after and, if you vote against this Budget, you are voting against the maintenance and the preservation of social services. Now the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), I believe it is, says, come on. She stands and criticizes us for not having enough money in social services five minutes after her Leader stands and says, what have we done to cut personal income tax. You cannot have it both ways, my friends.

You can try and you can sit there—I am talking about being responsible. You can sit there and say, we want personal income tax cut, we want to maintain social services. How do you do both in relative terms? Let us keep it all in relative terms. You can do it, you can criticize us and raise heck about not spending enough in social care, but you cannot do it both at the same time. You cannot lower personal income tax. In fact, I am very proud that, in three months, we were able not to increase personal income tax because look at the trend that we are on—tremendous increasing.

An Honourable Member: How about your CPR?

Mr. Downey: Well you can use the CPR argument if you like. I will not be strayed from my speech by the CPR, because we all know that old story in Saskatchewan that, when your crop fails and everything else fails, you run out on the nearest hill and you say,

goldarn CPR. You see, you can always blame the CPR, and that can be your scapegoat.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, let us deal with one of the other major things that we have to do to preserve our social and health care. That is to encourage job creation and capital investment. They are things that generate the income for us to provide the services that we need. What are we doing?

The first thing we are doing, and it was a commitment by the Liberal Party, although there was some confusion as to how they were going to do it, but was to remove the payroll tax, a major impact on the creation of jobs. How can you vote against that? Now you may argue about how you do it, whether it is going to be not until January or whether it is going to be done in a large enough scale or in any way. The whole system of how you are doing it can be argued, but the principle is that we want to remove the burden of taxes off those people who are prepared to put the risk capital into creation of jobs for our people, people who will pay 7 percent taxes on the things they purchase. Those people we need to generate the income for this province to provide the services, a principle it is pretty hard to vote against. I would tell you that I would be very surprised if you would want to go to the people saying that you are against what we are doing because of the way in which you want to do it. The principle again is what we would be doing.

Agriculture, and I am pleased my colleague or my friend and new Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) who is the Agriculture critic—you know it is unfortunate, because every Member is remembered for some of the first things they say when they come to the Legislative Assembly. I am afraid he made a very tragic slip in one of the things he said, and he will wear it for a long time.

How could you destroy the principle of insurance by saying that you are going to provide for the farm community, those people who are not included in the insurance program, retroactive insurance? The whole principle of providing insurance would be gone. Do you know what that costs the province if that were to take place? Probably \$100 million. Now he wants that done at the same time his Leader wants the reduction of personal income tax. I hope somebody is taking a tally of the numbers of dollars that we are spending on one hand, but yet cutting taxes on the other. I think it is an extremely important principle to remember. You cannot make insurance retroactive because, if you wanted to make crop insurance retroactive, everybody that had their car wrecked or their house burned down would want retroactive insurance. Let us be responsible in the comments that are made, because that is why you are elected to come to this place, is to help—I said it in my Throne Speech and I say it again today.

We were elected. The North elected the NDP, the city elected the Liberals and the country elected the Progressive Conservatives, and our mandate is to make it work, not to come in here and fight and kibbitz over small little things. Let us deal with some policy principle issues. That is why I would hope—now, if they want to gamble on the Budget vote, if they want to gamble in going to the people, I think it would be politically

foolhardy but that is their decision. All I am trying to do is point out some positive reasons why I think it is important to support this Budget.

Let us talk about—and I know reference has been made. The agricultural industry of course needed the support that my colleagues were quite prepared to give it in the drought relief. There was not a drought when you had your Budget on the table. There was not \$1 Mr. Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) in the Budget for drought relief. We in fact put in a substantial amount of money, which not only bolsters the real income of the people of the country but it gives them the feeling that somebody really cares about them. When you are in desperate situations and losing your crop, you need that kind of support from the Government of the Day. So I think it was extremely important to show that we had money available, that we were in fact very supportive of some of the difficulties they were having.

Let us not forget one of the most important things—and I say this with the greatest of sincerity to the Liberal Party again—that if you vote against this Budget, you are voting against a reduction of education taxes of 25 percent off of every person who pays farm land. You would not want to vote against that. I am sure the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), having the 4-H and the rural background and the love from her farm families, that she would vote against the relief—and I tell you this did not come up yesterday. This is historic, the request for relief of education taxes off of farm land. This just did not come about.

The NDP said they started it. They started it maybe, but it was such a convoluted way of trying to get at the real problem that they lost all the political schmaltz (sic) that were in it. I am serious. They really went about it again in a socialist tinkering fashion, which did not do the farm community that much good and it did not do them any good. I guess I should not be that critical of that, but we are all here to spend the taxpayer's money the best way we can to the best benefit of everyone. I say this again. Think very hard about voting against a 25 percent reduction in education taxes off of farm land, because it has been a principle of the Union of Municipalities, every elected official had been pressing for for years and years and years.

Another major principle that this Budget contains—and I want each and every one of you to think very deeply about voting against this. What really is the basis for our difficulties today? If you are in a situation of running your home, running a business, what are the main concerns? What do we think about as being one of the main drawers of the energies off of you? At the end of every month or every year you have to sit down and pay the bank the interest. I mean, if you did not have to pay the banker, you would have a little more money for those essential things or those non-essential things. Well, Mr. Speaker, this Budget brought down by the Member for Morris and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) contains that principle of reduction of that big black cloud of debt over our head so that we can reduce the interest charges, a basic principle.

The Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) again, because he was agoing the other way—you see, their guide

mark was that, if they could be under a \$500 million annual deficit, that was tremendous. They clapped each other on the backs and they thought they had accomplished something. What is wrong with targetting it, going to zero in our deficit? There is nothing wrong with going to zero. In fact, again it points out here on Page No. 9 in our Budget the devastating impact that debt charges are having on the people of Manitoba.

Please—and I say this with the greatest of sincerity—please do not vote against bringing common sense back to Government as you would do to your own business. Let us get the overall debt under control. Let us quit feeding those vulture bankers in Zurich, New York, as the former administration found that they were—

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): And they always yell against the big corporations and they feed the biggest of them all.

Mr. Downey: But you know they did it innocently! They did it as innocently as possible because they really thought, in doing so, they were delivering the health and education and all those essential services to the people of Manitoba. That was what their real desire was.

An Honourable Member: Their intentions were good.

Mr. Downey: Their intentions were good.

An Honourable Member: You got us out of the recession and you are going to get us back into it.

Mr. Downey: If adding to the people of Manitoba a debt of \$5 billion on their taxes is getting us out of a recession, God help us with the direction we were going. They got us into debt to the depths that it will take us years to get out.

The point is again—and I say this with the greatest of sincerity to my Liberal friends—do not vote against removing some of the debt over the heads of the people of Manitoba and cutting some of these interest charges. It is an extremely important principle which I would actually ask you to support when the vote comes up. Those are serious principles—

Mr. Albert Driedger: He is pleading nicely. Listen to Jimmy.

* (1710)

Mr. Downey: I have not been in Government for a long time, so that is why you have not seen me so nice for a long time.

Can I say, Mr. Speaker, as well, to improve the management and the accountability of Government departments -(Interjection)- You know I heard the Members opposite all through the election campaign, the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), after she realized that she had voted the wrong way to have MTS, I believe it was, go before committee at one particular Session, somebody whispered in her ear that

she had better get onside with the Conservatives and about two days later she immediately supported us to have the MTX come before the committee. Read your Hansards because I think the Liberal Leader would be very pleased to have you point that out to her.

Can I say as well in Crown corporations—and, oh, again the critic for ManOil fell into it and I have to help him out a little bit because let us tell him really what has happened in his Government's position dealing with ManOil because I think it is important when we are dealing with Crown corporations. Here was the reason for the establishment of it. Here is Mr. Parasiuk who said, when he introduced the program, this is the Minister's message: "Therefore, we believe that . . . to obtain optimal returns for the citizens of Manitoba—that is why ManOil was set up—we need an active Crown company to supplement the regulatory role that Governments traditionally play."

Here is another one of the objectives: "To act as a catalyst in the development of Manitoba's petroleum resources." Mr. Speaker, I will tell you what happens to create activity in the oil business. Just give them the kind of tax breaks or the economic climate and they will do the work for you. You do not need to get into it.

"To achieve profitability and financial self-sufficiency within a reasonable length of time." Those are the key words: reasonable length of time. It was on the way. Let me tell you where it was on the way to.

The Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) will go to his deathbed talking as a socialist even though he tried to run for the Conservatives and came from a Liberal background.

Can I tell you a little bit now—oh yes, and here is the other important one: "To operate without any special privileges." We are operating without any special privileges. What did we see happen? Well, we see happening with the Crown corporation known as ManOil, we see the Crown corporation that we just tabled the report with a \$1.2 million loss, operating deficit.

Here is another figure that has to be brought to the House. We have invested something like \$12.8 million. The interest alone on that \$12.8 million, the interest charges to the people of Manitoba are something like \$2.7 million. We now have invested, as taxpayers, in our operating losses and the interest on the investment, we have a loss of \$3.9 million. What is happening? And it is still going down. It is still losing.

What was the responsible thing to do? This is proven. This is not figures that I have. I have to say as well, and I do not mind telling the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that I believe that we have had twenty-five people show an interest in the purchase of assets or the company. Twenty-five private companies interested in buying ManOil.- (Interjection)- you bet it is worth something, and that is the time to sell it. That is the time to sell it my friend because I am an auctioneer and I get right along with it if you want now and what do you want to bid for? But we will not do that.

Seriously, but I again go back to my Liberal friends and say here is what the Honourable Leader of

Opposition said sometime in April, April 15, I believe it was, or about that time, speaking to the Chamber of Commerce, 160, and I understand they were very attentive in listening to what she had to say. This was not dealing particularly with ManOil, but let me read the quotes. Mrs. Carstairs told the receptive crowd that any Crown corporation not fulfilling the public mandate would be privatized. Well, it is not fulfilling the mandate that was set out, so we would assume that would be one she would be talking about. But she made a particular comment as well. She said she would move the public mandate and would be moved to be privatized. That is what we are doing. She said she would move to sell Manfor Limited and AE McKenzie Limited immediately. Well, I am not going to get hung up about the McKenzie Seeds because we realize the sensitivities of that. I am not trying to make any points dealing with McKenzie at this particular time.

Let us deal with ManOil. We are on a responsible path. We are going to remove it from the backs of the taxpayers and we have lots of people interested. As my colleague said, it is worth something. Mr. Speaker, that is when we sell something, when it is worth something. When it is worth nothing, like the bus company, it costs us \$3 million to get rid of it. Yes, Mr. Speaker, it costs us \$3 million to get rid of it. So I think we are on the responsible path and I will stick up for them.

An Honourable Member: It takes guts to give away \$3 million.

Mr. Downey: It does not take guts, it takes taxpayers' money that is hard earned. You see that is money that they earned. It does not fall out of the sky.

Mr. Speaker, let me say as well that Crown corporations should work in the interest of the people of Manitoba. Telephones are the worst.

An Honourable Member: Hydro.

Mr. Downey: That is right—hydro—have to work in the best interests of the people of Manitoba. It will never change. Hydro will never change as far as the feelings of Manitobans toward it, other than that it is going to cost a lot of money to keep it going. We have to deal with it responsibly and openly and let us get all the information out that has been part of the problem of the previous administration. Let us lay it all before the people of Manitoba and let them judge.

I think it is important as well, Mr. Speaker, and that is dealing with the whole question of administration costs being increased as was reported, which in fact was clearly stated today by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) in Question Period that that was not correct. I noted that from across the Chamber a couple of days ago the Leader of the Party and the Meech Lake specialist over there were asking me, not from their feet, but indicating to me as to why the Northern Affairs administration had gone up. I would like it asked publicly, Mr. Speaker. I am wondering why they have not asked. It is a very explainable thing and we will deal with it in Estimates or if they want to ask in Question

Period. But overall, administration costs have not gone up. Some of the things came along where our hands were tied, particularly dealing with the cost of the wages of the people who worked for Government. We had to accept that. We had no choice.

We are sitting as Treasury Board—certain things came to us that had to be paid, had to be dealt with. One of them was the agreement that the former administration had signed with MGEA. Twenty-four million dollars that we had no choice. It was there. If you ever, and I am sure if you wait long enough as Members of the Legislature, may—and I say may in twenty years or so, maybe in twenty years—get the opportunity to govern. We will give it that long a time. I will not make any closer prediction than that. That was something we could deal with in no way but to accept it by agreement. The only way you could have changed it was to come to the Legislative Assembly and change the rules. We are not that kind of Government; we had to accept it.

What about the agreement with the doctors? What about the agreement with the nurses? Remember when this took place again? This did not take place when the Assembly was sitting or when there was a duly-elected Government, this took place in a writ period. A writ period. A time, Mr. Speaker, when there really is not—well, there really is not the time for any agreements or major initiatives to be settled during a writ period. However, it took place and we were the recipients of that agreement. So there were a lot of things that were in the mill, a lot of expectations that we really could not change. I do not think—and I say this seriously to the Liberal Party—if they had been given the opportunity to sit as Treasury Board, to sit as Members of Treasury Bench, to cut some of the things that they think should have been cut, or they are telling us should be cut, like personal income tax, and you weigh what you are going to do with your social programs, it would have been absolutely impossible. I say that seriously.

* (1720)

I sat in Opposition for six years, lots of things looked pretty easy from those benches. But I tell you when you get to the handling of the affairs, it is a very difficult job because you are dealing with people's lives. Did I ever vote for a Budget when I was in Opposition? I never had the chance to vote for a good Budget like the one we are being asked to vote on today. You see, that was a very easy question to answer, because it was always tax increases, always tax increases and higher expenditures and higher deficits. We have finally, finally, and I say this to the Leader of the Liberal Party, it is a chance for her to gain some credibility within the public at large by supporting this document. I say that seriously. It is not time to play games with the people of Manitoba; it is time to be serious. We can do all our political posturing that we like but when it comes right down to doing what is right, this Budget is the right thing to vote for and I would highly recommend it as I have gone through the points that I have in explaining the reasons why I think that you should.

I have two or three other points -(Interjection)- well, my Opposition speaks. You see, I am a little inhibited

here from the movement, but I will tell you this kind of inhibition I can handle. I do not mind being inhibited at the -(Interjection)- inhibition, oh, that must come from a teacher.

Anyway, let us deal again -(Interjection)- I can give you a little bit of that in a minute if you want. I would just like to deal a little more specifically with some of the specific economic development. What is that red light flashing, does that mean stop and go? Oh, two minutes, okay.

An Honourable Member: You are coming with too many notes.

Mr. Downey: Actually, I am getting lots of help. There are some Members who cannot speak in here unless other people heckle them.

Let me conclude my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by saying again, reiterating the principle of leaving taxpayers' money in taxpayers' pockets so they know how best to spend them, let us agree to that principle. Let us, as well, agree that the transfer for the reduction of the deficit—now, I really have to get going for these last few minutes.

Let me talk a little bit more about the overall principle of reduction of debt off the backs of people. I said it was a \$196 million, our principle is to remove the debt off the people so that there are less interest charges, so we can use that money for other health and social things. Again, I want to reiterate that.

Mr. Speaker, one would now have to spend a bit of time and I have talked briefly about the Crown corporations, but let me talk a little more about specifically the Northern Affairs Department and the responsibilities that I have. Mr. Speaker, he says, let us talk about untendered contracts. Again, we have been in Government for three months. One of our commitments was to take a quick look at the mess the former administration had made of our economy, what we currently had to deal with, and where we wanted to go in the future. You see, that is what we did the report for. We wanted to get at it, because as you know, as the Member of the Opposition knows, that until you have a complete picture, then it is pretty hard to take responsible action. What did the Department of Finance say about the work we had done? Supportive of them. Did the Auditor criticize us for it? No, the Auditor said get on with the job, it has to be done.

That is what was said about how we went about it, and they are competent, credible people. I do not think we need to waste a lot of time about the criticism of the Opposition, about how we got it.- (Interjection)-well, I do not want to get into the whole question of patronage because I think that we could not hold a candle to the New Democratic Party and their patronage. Look at how it got into the whole system. I will tell you, the Liberals invented patronage in this country and I think when you look at the history - (Interjection)- what the devil, she talks about Brian Mulroney. Brian Mulroney tried to—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order.

Mr. Downey: —improve on it. He tried to improve on it. The Liberals invented it and he tried to improve on it.

Anyway, I do not want to be detracted from my work that I want to do with northern Manitoba. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I just want to touch on it for a few minutes because when you look at what has happened over the past few years in northern Manitoba and I say this particularly about those communities that are affected by Hydro, I say that they have in fact been devastated by some of the activities that have been done by Hydro. And again, the people of this Manitoba stand up and say that Ed Schreyer was the greatest guy they ever saw or ever helped the people of northern Manitoba—it was Ed Schreyer and Cass-Beggs that ruined five communities in northern Manitoba by development of the Jenpeg Hydro station, destroyed Cross Lake in the flow impact that it has.

An Honourable Member: For pure politics.

Mr. Downey: That is right, for pure politics—devastated those communities. So do not let the Member tell me that the NDP are the best thing for northern Manitoba. I can name numerous things that have happened in the North under the New Democratic Party that devastated their community. The people are living on welfare. They are crying out for jobs. They are crying out for infrastructure. They are crying out for that opportunity that the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) had, and each Member across the way had as a young person in this country. I can tell you that it is our Government that has been committed to the improvement of those communities. It is our Government that lived up to a commitment to support the Assembly of Chiefs.

Yes, I do not mind standing here today—and the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) snickers about it. I was asked the other day, or the Assembly said they wanted to hear the Premier. Well, the Premier was tied up and was unable to be there because he had a lot of other things he was doing, not because he put down the importance of the northern communities or the chiefs, but he felt that I was capable of carrying the message forward.

I feel very strongly that the relationship that we are developing with the Native community is one which is going to be a good one, and one which is going to demonstrate to them that the right things will be done. He snickers, Mr. Speaker, because they wanted the Premier—and I indicated before that Assembly of Chiefs, I said it is unfortunate, but you will have to have the message that I am going to give. There is a bad news, good news message. The bad news is they had to listen to the speech before they got the good news where I announced the funding of \$325,000 for them, but when I said to the chiefs, if they did not want to stay and listen, that they could leave. One chief left. That is better than the record that the Member for Concordia has when he went to speak to the northern chiefs—they had all left, the whole crowd. There was not one person left to hear him at one o'clock. They had left. That is the feeling that they have towards the New Democratic Party. That is right. He got there at

one o'clock and all the Assembly had gone. I do not feel bad in losing one chief, he lost them all. I will put my record beside his at anytime.

Getting back to the important issues of northern Manitoba. We have got some basic resources: the mining industry, the forestry, the fishing.

An Honourable Member: Why didn't you name the Chief? Was it Joe Guy Wood?

Mr. Downey: No, no. Unfortunately, he has a bit of a medical problem.

But I say we have the basic resources for the people of the North to work with. We have got the will, I am sure, of the leadership of the North to create economic job opportunities. We have to create the climate for those people to create those jobs and to look after their well-being.

But, I again say, Governments—in New Democratic terms, in talking about the New Democrats—have done more to delay the advancement of the northern communities, have done more to devastate them, particularly when it comes to the hydro development, in those communities like Cross Lake and those areas that have now lost their fishing industry, that have now lost their water supplies. It was the great Ed Schreyer and Cass-Beggs who caused such a tremendous amount of problems for those people. So let us let the record speak loud and clear for it.

What do we need to do? We need to identify opportunities for young people and we are going to do that. There is another group in our society in northern Manitoba that really are looking for an opportunity to expand in economic terms and become fully involved, and that is the women of the North. I believe very strongly that they are looking for opportunities to create, to be a part of the whole economic society and to play a greater role. I tell you, as I said at the Assembly of Chiefs the other day, that my office through the Secretariat will do everything it can to expand those opportunities, enhance those opportunities, and those ways in which the young people and the women want to go. I believe fully in that, and my office will do everything it can to enhance them.

* (1730)

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, without the cooperation of this House, without the cooperation of the Liberal Party, without the cooperation of the New Democratic Party, we are not going to be able to do those things in future Budgets that we want to do unless we have support.

So I again remind Members of the Opposition, if you are in any way thinking of voting against this Budget, you are voting against what my colleague has worked very hard, what Treasury Bench and the MLAs from the Government, have worked very hard to accomplish in, again, a very short period of time.

There are some basic principles built into this that we need to develop this province. I would say it would

be a very disastrous move on the part of the Liberal Party to try to get short-term gain, because the long-term pain of the people you represent will follow. I say that with the greatest of sincerity.

We will take your ideas. Let us assess them. In fact, we have been trying to build some of them in. That is what we are pointing out. As far as the Crown corporations

An Honourable Member: As far as the streamlining—

Mr. Downey: That is right, the streamlining. We are trying with the greatest of sincerity, in a non-political way, to do what is right because it is essential that we do. We have got some difficult decisions to make.

If this drought continues over the next year or two, you will see an impact on our economy that is something that none of us will want to see, but will have to collectively work to resolve. We talk about Churchill, of which there have been some excellent speeches and the feelings towards it. It is a symptom of what is going on out there in Manitoba. Each and every person involved in small, big or whatever business will see the impact if this drought continues. It is not raining. It has not started to rain yet and, without snowfall, it will be hydro that will be impacted. It will be water supplies for small and large communities. It is going to be something that—I am not one to be a pessimist, but let us at least be cautious optimists at this particular time when we are dealing with the situation.

Again, Mr. Speaker, as I said in my opening remarks, it is an opportunity for the Liberal Party to support a good Budget for the people of Manitoba. It has been six years. The people of Manitoba have been crying out for six years to see a Budget brought in that did not take more money out of their pockets, in fact, has every bit of intention of leaving some money in their pockets. It is a principle we have all got to work towards because, if we do not, we will continue to see the loss, or we will see the loss of many of our social programs.

I should touch on free trade for a minute because I think it is extremely important. Again, I think - (Interjection)- well, the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) helped me out, he helped me out. He talks about the Wheat Board Advisory Committee. Does he know exactly how the vote went? What are there, 10 on the Wheat Board Advisory Committee?

An Honourable Member: Should be 11.

Mr. Downey: There are 11 on the Wheat Board Advisory Committee. I believe one of them might not have been at the meeting. So I am correct. Four voted to support free trade, and six voted against free trade. Those six, I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, those six were mainly Farmers' Union people, elected farmers by the Farmers' Union.

Again I plead, I encourage Members opposite to support one of the most positive documents that this Legislative Assembly has seen in six years. Thank you.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St-Boniface): M. le président, je vous remercie. Avant de commencer j'aimerais faire une

correction que j'ai manquée lors de mon premier discours; c'est de remercier celles qui me sont les plus chères, et qui ont travaillé très fort lors de ma campagne, c'est ma femme et mes trois enfants. Je voudrais les reconnaître aujourd'hui. Merci.

M. le président, permettez-moi de partager avec vous certaines inquiétudes de ma circonscription de St-Boniface. D'abord, l'éducation. Vous n'êtes pas sans savoir que l'éducation est la première priorité. Le futur de notre province dépend de la qualité de l'éducation que nous donnons aujourd'hui à nos étudiants et étudiantes. Pour que cette éducation soit de haute qualité, il faut parler de standards, de financement, et de qualité d'éducation. Il faut qu'on préconise un examen complet du système d'éducation au Manitoba. Nous croyons que cet examen devrait inclure le financement, un fardeau qui est actuellement injustement placé sur le dos des propriétaires. Aussi, cet examen devrait inclure le curriculum, le rendement des étudiants, les droits des parents, la permanence des professeurs, et le moral de notre personnel enseignant.

En ce qui a trait à l'enseignement technique et supérieur, là aussi, nous avons des préoccupations. Toujours afin d'améliorer la qualité de l'éducation, il faut des mesures concrètes. Il faut qu'on préconise l'augmentation du financement au taux de l'inflation. À toutes les universités, la qualité de l'éducation a baissé, parce que le gouvernement n'a pas assuré sa part équitable des coûts de l'éducation.

Il faut recommander un retour fédéral-provincial du financement de l'éducation post-secondaire, afin que les argentés dépensés en éducation le soient de la façon la plus efficace possible, et avec responsabilité fiscale. Il faut rendre les administrateurs redevables pour les sommes alouées.

Service de garde à l'enfance. Les parents franco-manitobains qui cherchent un service de garde pour leurs enfants sont actuellement dans une situation très difficile. Il y a un manque de garderies francophones en milieu urbain, ainsi qu'en milieu rural. Et la pénurie de travailleuses et de travailleurs des services à l'enfance empêche l'ouverture de nouvelles garderies.

Il n'y a pas de programmes en français pour former de nouveaux travailleurs, et de nouvelles travailleuses. Le ministère de l'Éducation n'a pas répondu à la demande du Collège communautaire de St-Boniface pour établir un tel programme.

Le financement pour le domaine pré-scolaire doit être repriorisé, non seulement pour les Francophones, mais pour toutes les garderies.

M. le président, dans les dernières années, les femmes franco-manitobaines ont exprimé le besoin de programmes bien adaptés à leur réalité pour prévenir la violence faite aux femmes et aux enfants. Aider les femmes à atteindre l'autonomie financière, soutenir les femmes dans diverses situations familiales, et aider les femmes à prendre contrôle de leur propre santé, encourager l'expression des points de vue des femmes, proposer les vues des femmes, et de mettre sur pied un centre de ressources pour femmes francophones,

afin de leur assurer l'accès aux programmes dont profitent déjà nos concitoyennes anglophones.

M. le président, étant donné que le tourisme est une industrie très importante à l'économie du Manitoba, laissez-moi vous donner un aperçu de l'orientation du Festival du Voyageur.

M. le président, comme vous le savez, le Festival du Voyageur célèbre cette année son 20^{ième} anniversaire en février 1989. Et, comme dans les années passées, veut toujours améliorer sa programmation. Basé sur l'époque des voyageurs, le Festival peut être caractérisé comme une célébration hivernale avec l'esprit de joie de vivre que nous ont légué les premiers explorateurs de l'ouest canadien. Il faut aussi noter dans son évolution, le Festival cherche à impliquer les cultures qui font partie de cette époque, telles que les autochtones, afin de mieux apprécier les relations culturels et commerciales qui existaient à la fin du 19^{ième} siècle. Ce développement pour eux, a un jour évolué à l'intégration d'autres groupes culturels qui étaient aussi impliqués dans l'exploration de l'ouest canadien.

* (1740)

Dans un premier temps, il est important de reconnaître que la fête d'hiver détient le statut de la fête d'hiver officielle de la ville de Winnipeg. Il cherche toujours à être une destination touristique et culturelle pour les Manitobains et les gens à l'extérieur de la province. De base, la fête développe trois grands programmes, des programmes à base culturelle, des programmes à base historique, ainsi que des programmes de loisirs qui cherchent à faire mieux apprécier les bons côtés de l'hiver Manitobain. Afin de mieux comprendre l'envergure de la fête, il faut apprécier l'impact communautaire et économique qui découle de la grande variété d'activités qui ressortent des programmes culturels, patrimoniaux, et des loisirs. Plus de 80 organismes communautaires, une centaine de commanditaires, ainsi que l'implication des divers paliers gouvernementaux, sont à la base d'une programmation qui rejoint près de 400,000 personnes annuellement. Cette programmation, toujours grandissante, s'étend au côté est de la rivière Rouge, soit St-Boniface, et qui étendra cette année sur le terrain des Fourches en plus d'installer plus de 24 kilomètres sur la rivière Rouge, avec les courses de chiens attelés et plusieurs autres aspects d'hiver. La programmation rejoint tous les groupes d'âge, des prématernelles jusqu'aux aînés, afin d'assurer que l'esprit des voyageurs soit transmis à tout le public qui visite le Festival. Le Festival, en plus d'organiser la fête d'hiver, est souvent demandé par plusieurs groupes qui veulent s'impliquer dans la programmation pour l'activité d'hiver. Le Festival participe donc, dans plusieurs comités, qui veulent mieux utiliser les forces de nos hivers. L'on réitère l'importance du Festival du Voyageur comme un organisme dévoué à célébrer nos hivers et à faire de Winnipeg un centre de destination touristique et culturelle de qualité internationale et qui sera une des fiertés du Manitoba.

* (1750)

En terminant, j'ai apprécié les remarques et les recommandations de l'honorable Ministre des Affaires

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du Nord (M. Downey), mais personnellement, après avoir regardé le budget, j'apprécie qu'ils veulent descendre le déficit de la province, mais j'ai toujours mes doutes avec un gouvernement conservateur. On n'a qu'à regarder notre province voisine, la Saskatchewan. Il y a six ans lorsque qu'il prenait le gouvernement, il le prenait avec un budget balancé. Six ans plus tard, le déficit est aussi grand que celui du Manitoba.

Alors, en terminant je dis merci et puis je suis là avec coopération pour travailler avec tous les 57 membres de la Législature. Merci.

(Translation)

Mr. Speaker, I thank you. Before beginning, I would like to make a correction that I missed during my first speech. I would like to thank those who worked very hard for me during my campaign, my wife and my three children. I would like to acknowledge their work today, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to share with you some concerns for my constituents in St. Boniface; first of all, education. You no doubt are aware that education is a primary concern. The future of our province depends on the quality of education that we give to young people today. In order for this education to be of high quality, we must speak of standards, financing and quality education. We must promote an overall examination of the education system in Manitoba, and it should include financing, a burden which is currently unjustly placed on the shoulders of homeowners. This review should also include curriculum, achievement of students, parents' rights, tenure, and the morale of teaching staff.

With regard to technical and post-secondary education, here we also have concerns. In order to improve education, we need concrete measures. We must promote an increase in financing to correspond with the rate of inflation. At all universities, the quality of education has decreased because the Government has not given its fair share to the cost of education. We must recommend a return to federal-provincial financing of post-secondary education to ensure that monies spent in education are used in the most effective manner possible, and with fiscal responsibility. Administrators must be held accountable for the money they spend.

With regard to day care, Franco-Manitoban parents who are looking for day care for their children are currently in a very difficult situation. There is a lack of Francophone day care centres, both in rural and urban areas, and the lack of day care workers is preventing the opening of new day care centres. There are no programs in French for the training of new child care workers. The Department of Education has not answered the request of the Collège communautaire de St-Boniface, to establish such a program. Financing for the preschool area should also be reprioritized, not only for Francophones but for all day care centres.

Mr. Speaker, during the last few years, Francophone women have expressed their need for programs adapted to their situation to prevent both wife abuse

and child abuse. Women must be supported in various home situations and helped in taking control of their own health. We must encourage expression of viewpoints of these women and promote their well-being by establishing a resource centre for Francophone women in order to ensure that they have access to the same programs which their Anglophone counterparts enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, given that tourism is an industry which is very important to Manitoba's economy, I would like to provide an overview of the orientation of the Festival du Voyageur. Mr. Speaker, as you know, the Festival du Voyageur is celebrating its 20th anniversary in February of 1989, and as in the past, is hoping to improve its programming, based on the times of the voyageur. The Festival is characterized as a winter festival with its spirit of "joie de vivre." These were the first explorers in the Canadian west.

We must also point out that in its evolution, the Festival is attempting to involve the culture that was predominant at this time, such as that of the North American Indian, in order that we might be better able to appreciate the trade relations that existed at the end of the 19th century. This development could one day evolve to include other cultural groups who were also involved in the development of the west.

Initially, it is important to recognize that this winter festival has the status of official winter festival of the City of Winnipeg, and is constantly attempting to become a tourist destination for people outside of the Province of Manitoba.

The festival is developing three major programs based on culture, history and recreational programs which will help Manitobans better appreciate the winter season.

In order to better understand the importance of the festival, we must understand its economic impact and the variety of activities that are offered. More than 80 community organizations and 100 sponsors, as well as various levels of Government, ensure entertainment for more than 400,000 people annually. This programming continues to increase to the east of the Red River and will this year include the Forks, as well as including 24 kilometres of area in which dog sled races will be held. The programming is aimed at all age groups, from preschoolers to senior citizens, in order to ensure that the spirit of the voyageurs is communicated to all who visit the festival.

The festival, in addition to organizing the winter festivities, also involves other groups in winter activities. The festival, therefore, participates in a number of committees which want to promote our winter season. I repeat that the Festival du Voyageur is a very important organization and is attempting to make Winnipeg a tourist destination, a quality tourist destination, which will be a point of pride for all Manitobans.

To conclude, I appreciate the remarks and recommendations of the Honourable Minister for Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey). However, personally, after having perused the Budget, I do not believe that enough has been done to decrease the deficit. We have seen our neighbouring province, Saskatchewan, six years

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ago when the Conservatives came to power. They came in with a balanced Budget, and six years later, the deficit is as high as that in Manitoba.

Therefore, to conclude, I would like to say thank you, and I look forward to working with the 57 Members in cooperation during this Session of the Legislature. Thank you.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a will—I wonder if there is a will in the House to call it six o'clock.

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 6 p.m., in accordance with the Rules, I am leaving the Chair and will return at 8 p.m. This matter will stand in the name of the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak).