

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, March 5, 1990.

The House met at 8 p.m.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 99—THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 1989

Mr. Deputy Speaker (William Chornopyski): Resuming debate on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), second reading of Bill No. 99, The Appropriation Act, 1989 (Loi de 1989 portant affectation de crédits). The Honourable Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) has two minutes remaining.

The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is very pleasing to be able to have some chance to speak on the final closing of the budget in this Session. We, in the constituency of Selkirk, have had many issues to bring forward into this House on the budgeting process put forward by this Government.

I suppose one of the major issues that has come forward of tremendous impact on the community is the lack of support for victims in the area of Selkirk. The crisis abuse shelter in Selkirk, and representing the interlake area, has had some additional funding put forward and we do thank the Government for that amount put forward. But they are still having to take thousands of dollars, a major amount of their budget, to put into support services for those who are victims of rape or sexual assault. We were hoping to see some movement by this Government to release funds from the victims' assistance fund that would be allowed to be used by the Nova House, the victims' abuse shelter, in the constituency of Selkirk and representing all of Interlake in order that volunteers could be put to better use for Nova House and that professional people, those trained in supporting victims in this drastic crime, that they could be put in place in the shelter and for the community of the Interlake, as represented through the crisis house in Selkirk.

The crime of abuse is all too pervasive in our community at large, not just in Selkirk or the Interlake, or in Manitoba even, but throughout Canada, North America, and certainly the world. But we in Manitoba have had to face it on a daily basis sometimes throughout this year. We have had our crises in this year where we have seen the extremes of the unfortunate situation in Montreal where students were shot down because of some perverse idea that the victims as women were not acceptable to the person who caused the crime, who went in there in his deranged mind and was able to take the worst punishment possible of young lives and women who are functioning in a world where they thought they would be protected. We have that same type of violence happening within each home in many communities. The fact that one in four women will have been sexually assaulted in some

way, or physically assaulted, is beyond the comprehension, I am sure, of many of us here who are fortunate to live in very stable homes and have come from stable families.

I do not suppose in entering this profession that I was aware of the fact that so many people, particularly women and children, are not safe in their homes. That the most dangerous war zone we have is within what we would normally, as comfortable middle-class people, find the one shelter area; the abuse occurs within the homes. It goes across all society levels. We cannot say that it occurs more in the lower income or the under-educated. We cannot say that it occurs more in one community than the other. It may be reported more in one community than the other, but statistics show that it is cross-sectoral.

Therefore, these victims are our victims who we are responsible for because it may be happening in the house next door, maybe the children who sit beside our children in school who are trying to put their lives together and to keep some semblance of sanity in their own lives when they see their parent being abused, or indeed themselves or their siblings being abused. Abuse is pervasive and it is up to this Government and we in the Opposition to make sure that we do everything possible not only to prevent the abuse from occurring, but once it has occurred to make sure that the lives are as quickly as possible and as completely as possible brought back to a semblance of reality and to bring these people together.

I know the Minister and all Ministers here, as all Opposition Members, are behind the solution that must be found to supporting the safe homes for all Manitobans. That is why I am therefore very shocked to have the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) keep these funds which are due victims by law, which are set aside and due victims, that these funds are being kept from the shelters that could make use of the funds in a very progressive way, and could make these funds work and that could perhaps in some way—and we will never know how little or how much until it is accomplished—how these funds can be put forward to help those who have been abused, bring their lives back together again, encourage and in temperament and in belief that they are free people who have the right to be in a free society away from danger of abuse of the people they love dearly and the people who try to love them but somehow are not able to put it together.

* (2005)

At the same time I would like to speak on behalf of those who victimize their family members. These people as well need the help, all the help that society can give them. It is hard to have any belief at times that people who strike out at those who are most vulnerable and they are supposed to love the dearest can be given our forgiveness and understanding; that they too are the victims, as statistics show; that they too have been

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victimized somewhere in their lives; that they have seen life examples put forward to them that they now mimic and bring into their lifestyles. Somehow we have to break that cycle.

I commend the Government for having put out ads on it, that women and children and any family member does not have to put up with abuse, that it is a crime. That is a big step in coming forward and making it a crime that society can deal with and talk about. But it is only one-half of the step. If we have people coming forward saying, I am abused, and then we do nothing with them to help them, then we have let them down once again. How often will they come forward to believe in what we say if we are not there with a safety net when they make that large step to admit that they are in an abusive situation, to bring forward to society that which is probably one of the most hidden secrets that we keep, that our families are abusing us, whether it is children or parents, or seniors, that when they come forward we have to make sure that we have something there to help them?

Having a home of some 20 days where they may stay is a beginning, but that has been in place for several years now, and it is growing in support and that is well indicated by the numbers now using those homes. But we have nothing for them; we have no support system that deals with their anxieties, that brings them forward to get treatment, that deals with the children's long-lasting influences that has influenced their past or deals with what their ideas of the future will bring when they see that this is the normal that mom or dad, or whoever it may be—uncle, whoever—has had the right to take away all the dignity that they can possibly have been born with and taught to have in society, or assumed to have in society, and that someone who has taken away their dignity, which is our most precious gift, that that can be just thrown away as unimportant when they come into our shelters, a shelter that was put in place by Government, by the people, supported by the taxpayers, to say, we know you have been abused, we know a crime has been committed to you, and yet we do nothing when they come forward.

I cannot begin to understand the complexities of the anguish that these people come forward with, but I know they must be very confusing, that the complexities must be so entwined and hard to untangle, that it would take those with professional training to deal with, that it cannot be expected to be accomplished by volunteers, as dedicated as the volunteers may be, that these people who come forward have learned to hide so many expressions and feelings, have learned to hide from society everything that in their world is reality and to make a pretence out of living successfully. No volunteer, as well-intentioned as they can be, should be expected, nor can they be expected, to provide the professional training that it must require to untangle the emotions and the fears of these victims.

So it is with deep regret that I have, as of today, this Government before us, still keeping with their tight fist the funds from the victim abuse shelter that has, as I said before, been put in place by law to be given to victims of crime. These are indeed as much victims of

crime as anyone who is assaulted on the street, anyone who is robbed, or who is physically assaulted through an accident or is in any other type of crime. A crime is a crime.

* (2010)

We cannot designate which crime is more horrendous and if we were I would suggest that perhaps those crimes committed to us when we are in the most vulnerable state by those we give our faith to, those we love, are perhaps the hardest to understand, even more difficult to understand than a crime of theft, or someone under some other influence. I guess directly off of that is the fact that many people in these situations are abusers of substances, and often chemical dependency is a factor in many of the crimes.

We have seen the Alcohol Foundation of Manitoba seriously undermined in both the financial support and in the support of the Government for the services they render. I have had staff people from the AFM come to me and ask whether we could not intervene in some way to have the Government support the intentions of AFM, not just the actual functioning of the board system, but to support the intentions and to have further funding for the areas because the abuse in our communities is abhorrent. I think I would not be far wrong in saying that our high crime rate can be closely linked to the amount of substance abuse that we see in this province.

Therefore, when we have in our rural district just one AFM worker who has been so successful in supporting those who are trying to come off substance abuse, so effective in making people aware of the dangers of substance abuse, I know that these are monies well spent. So when we have this Government taking away money that can be supported for counselling of those who have been assaulted in a family situation, when we have this Government being less than supportive of the Alcohol Foundation of Manitoba and their drive towards making substance abuse a thing of the past, then I can say that this Government is not supporting it as well as it could be.

The funding is there in some instances, but the Government is not supporting those who are weak and vulnerable. We see that further when we go to the rural hospitals and find that, although mandated, in actuality there is not a rape crisis team available in rural Manitoba, certainly not in the Interlake. Even when you come into the city and go to the hospitals specializing with their teams of rape counselling, we see that this Government again has not faced up to the reality of what it is like out in rural Manitoba to have been abused and raped, to have been raped and be turned away from your hospital and to have to go shopping around in the City of Winnipeg, to find some hospital that will take you in, deal with the crime that has been taken against you, and give you the emotional and physical support so that you may gain justice when you come to court. It is just again indicating to me the lack of support and understanding for those victims of abuse.

The other issue I certainly deal with most on a daily basis in my constituency is the issue of Workers Compensation. This Government inherited a mess, a

nightmare, left by the former Government, and I certainly understand that the situation was such that they had to go in and take their time to restructure Workers Compensation. In some areas they have had some success, but I cannot accept that the numbers have not decreased for those trying to get their cheques from Workers Compensation, those who are duly assessed or being able to receive their funds because of their injury and yet cannot receive them, not because it is not warranted them, but because the system is still a mess and this Government has not been able to straighten it out as much as they pretend to be managers.

* (2015)

When we have in one day—and I have it quite often and my assistant deals with it quite often, as I say, one to three cases of Workers Compensation each day—but when we have had in one day nine cases come in, I am just so overwhelmed that that may exist. I cannot believe this Government has not been able to come forward and ask me in any way what can be done to improve the situation. Although the Minister of Workers Compensation (Mr. Connery) would like me to say that it is all the workers' fault at Workers Compensation, the staffing at Workers Compensation's fault—I have some trepidation of their attitudes they display, but I think their attitudes are a direct result of their overwork and undermanaged, the stress situation, lack of morale that exists at Workers Compensation.

Indeed I have had that impression supported by the words that are sometimes and with some frequency given to us over the phone by workers that we are dealing with—the workers as in staffing at Workers Compensation—asking us to get something done by this Government at cleaning up the horrendous mismanagement at Workers Compensation.

Files are regularly, weekly lost; not on new applicants all the time but people who have received one cheque for a week or two and then find, when they are waiting for their next cheque, that it is not forthcoming because the file has been lost, or the application somehow is held up with somebody suddenly realizing that, although five documents have said it is the left leg that is broken, one staff person has written down, right leg. Therefore, they have put the file aside to try to understand whether it was the left leg or the right leg. We have indeed had this case. One out of six documents indicated it was the other leg. This befuddled the staffperson so much that they kept the cheque away from the person and had this person again coming into our office in such stress that at times we have had to phone the top management of Workers Compensation and ask them to interrupt the non-proceedings and deal with this person. We have had several of these that we have feared for their mental health, that their stability is on questionable terms because of the stress Workers Compensation has put them under.

We have had several incidences of long outstanding claims that have been allowed to drag on, where papers have in the past been adjusted illegally and done so by staff where they cross out words and put new words in without the authority as in a signature or initializing

of the complainant, and then this documentation being taken forward through appeal and being upheld because, after all, the original signature was on there, the claimant's.

We have workers going in there who often are under-educated, and that is not to say that they are not of high level of intelligence, but under-educated, and certainly under-educated in the ability to understand bureaucracy and forms. Although there has been some movement in improving that, there is certainly a lack of understanding often of the people going in and filling out the forms as to the rights they have at being able to maintain their ability to sue for injury, or their rights of how they can put forward their injury in their own terms rather than having the adjudicator dictate what that adjudicator feels is the injury.

Those are not as often occurring as the lost files or the befuddlement of staff as to one slight discrepancy in a form, but they do exist. It is very disheartening to think that anyone is taken advantage of by their lack of education, or by their lack of knowledge of a system that those who seem to know the system can be the first in lines and those who do not know the system are left last in line. There seems to be no reflection upon the right of the seriousness of the injury or the right they have to collect Workers Compensation. Somehow I think this Government should be dealing with the management situation in trying to have the fairness put back in the system.

You cannot tell me when we have five files lost in one day that the management system works. So when you have a system where if you ask about a file and it is manually pulled from the line up of files and taken around the building and perhaps lost in another desk and eventually a week later put at the back of the pile and brought forward as it will, that this is a working system. In this day and age of computer systems, to manually have a file lost because of the style of system in place or a file put back for days on end because of the system in place is absolutely ridiculous. I hope this Government will take some care for the workers in this province and deal with the mismanagement at Workers Compensation.

* (2020)

I would like to direct one further issue to the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) as he sits here this evening. One that he is somewhat aware of and will become more aware of as I deal with it in this House and hopefully in discussion with the Minister—because I know he will want to resolve it as well—is the fact that we have abuse of the environment taking place in our West St. Paul area, where in a blackmailing situation a landowner has been able to threaten the residents and terrorize in many respects, because he is physically putting in place substances through goose feathers and the excrement and the noise and all that goes with it, environmental threat as well as a physical threat to the people involved.

It is with amusement, and even the residents in the area cannot believe that they are being threatened with 20,000 geese. We can chuckle over, and I know we are

only doing that on the surface because we all recognize the vulnerability we each have in having those types of ill-intentioned people take over our lives. But it is past the funny stage when these people are having their environment interrupted around them. I know we do not have a bill of rights for the environment. If we did, this would certainly be an interruption of those rights and privileges.

Further than that, we do have environmental problems with this farm where we have the excrement of the geese from the landowner running into the backyards because of the levels of the ground, where we have the river bank being pushed down and the geese excrement and feathers floating down the rivers. I have pictures of that to prove that this intolerable level of pollution is going on. We have in The Environment Act odours and noise as being part of environmental pollution. The Minister, as a farmer, well knows the associated odour that can come with 20,000 geese literally over your back fence. We definitely have people who are becoming physically ill because of their allergies to feathers and the down that is occurring, fluttering around their back yard and into their houses themselves.

I cannot believe, with The Environment Act that we are living with today and that has been passed by the previous Government and this Government has been working to learn how to use and to employ, that we cannot in some way understand and agree upon the fact that this farm is an environmental hazard to the area that he came in. He produced an industry after the residents were there. I mean, in this day and age where we are having development around farms, I do not have a lot of sympathy for people who build their houses around a farm and then complain about the odour. But when you have a residential area that has been there for 50 years, and you have a farm move in, not because they want to farm—the person will readily admit that—but that is even beside the point, not because they want to farm, but just to blackmail the community.

This Government has not in any way dealt with the issue. I would invite the Minister, if he would either himself, personally, or have a staffperson meet with the community and tell them why this abuse of the environment cannot be dealt with under the Clean Environment Act. I hope the Minister will come forward with his reason of why it cannot happen, and if there is no reason why it cannot happen, if he will send, as I said, either himself or send a staffperson to meet with the community and explain where this does not indicate an abuse of the environment, when the river is being polluted, when excrement is flowing down the ditches, when the stench is intolerable, and when people are physically ill because of the, if you will, the effluent of the industry, and where the noise is beyond a level that can be accepted by a residential area.

* (2025)

I do not understand why this cannot in some way fall under The Environment Act, and would ask the Minister if he could explain to me just why this is not an environmental hazard to the community, and why

it cannot be dealt with under the Act. If it cannot be, then I think we should revisit the Act and look at where it can be amended so that people have no right to come into your backyard and set up an industry that can have effluent run into your backyard, where you can be physically ill because of it being there, where you can have your mental stability under assault because of the noise, and where the odour can drive you out of your homes.

I know the Minister will have sympathy for the residents and hope he will have the courtesy of coming forward with the written or verbal explanation to those residents of why this industry cannot be dealt with under the Clean Environment Act. We have little time left this year to deal with the problems of the goose farm. Even though it has gone to court to challenge whether the farm has a right there, I would hope that this Minister would like to look into the reason why it can exist when we have a Clean Environment Act in place which indeed says no one can come in and abuse the environment and your community. Yet obviously that can happen because it has been allowed to happen in our community itself.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this budget has not dealt with the human needs in our constituency. We, certainly in the past, have had to deal with bridges being imposed upon us, and this Government has had to come up with some roadways. We also have still on the planning board the Selkirk Corridor. I have talked to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger), and I think there is some willingness to withdraw that concept from the table, although land is still being bought up by Government, where it is put up for sale, to make way for this corridor.

In this age, where we need so many revisions of our roadway, to be purchasing land for future considerations of a roadway that is probably not needed, when you will have three four-lane highways within viewing distance of each other seems a little bit silly, and I am sure I am one of the few communities that is asking not to have money put in on roadways.- (interjection)-

Yes, it certainly is a little bit different, although we certainly understand about the progress that is going on with developing the amended plans for the No. 9 highway, which is necessary to be done because that indeed is treacherous in the present condition. I would encourage this Minister and Government to keep the community up to date as the offers have been made to myself, but keep the community up to date because there will be a lot of land needed to be purchased in order to widen the highway. No community likes to wake up one day and find surveyors' stakes on their front lawn. I would encourage the Government to stay with the community in developing the No. 9 and perhaps not give any further priority to developing yet another corridor to Selkirk when there are other monies that need to be given to the community.

I cannot let my comments go on the budget again for the constituency of Selkirk without speaking of both our new arena complex and our lack of funding by this Government for the Selkirk Landing project. There seems to be a heated dispute between the past

Government and the present Government, whether money was indeed set aside in the past Budget by the past Premier for the agreement for revitalization of Selkirk's downtown. Like many rural communities, we do need redevelopment downtown and I understand that we stand in line behind so many rural communities for that request. This Government has put forward the argument that, if they give Selkirk money, then every other community would require the same amount.

My argument to that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is always that very few communities are under the same service centre stress as the Town of Selkirk, and a little bit of help—and certainly the monies asked for the downtown development situation would be repaid on a short-term basis and actually earn tax dollars for the community—would have invigorated our community and allowed us to stand self-sufficient as ourselves in the community of Selkirk.

* (2030)

It is becoming almost too late for this Government to show its support for rural communities, especially rural communities in the commuter shed of the City of Winnipeg. Those that are vying for business with a community of 600,000; those who have to pay long-distance phone calls to achieve the same market area of Winnipeggers, who have free long-distance services to their communities; those who have to pay shipping rates to get the goods out to our community as compared to Winnipeggers, who have usually free-on-board at Winnipeg site.

The financial strain on our area is excessive because of the close proximity of the Town of Selkirk to the City of Winnipeg. I do believe there was merit in the past proposals which passed through the federal Government, and they saw merit then and were not supported by this provincial Government.

I would hope that the Government in the next budget would see fit to revisit how they can support revitalization of our rural community. Further to that, the Selkirk arena proposal where federal money has been given to the arena and some provincial money through Community Places has been made available, but not a commitment the residents feel that shows the support of this Government to recreation and tourist industry in our community.

I would ask this Government to revisit the funding proposal put forward by the Selkirk Arena Foundation, that they could revisit it and sit down and talk and discuss. I think that is right now what the volunteers are asking for, that this Government would come out and tour the site and sit down and discuss the proposals and help them with a working plan of finishing off the last section of the arena, and make it into a community centre that not only would be a recreational addition to our community, but would add an additional tourist centre to the Interlake area.

We cannot, as we have said in the past and tourist associations have continually said, just put grandiose projects in here and there, that we have to have a route of projects that will take people from one community to the next so that you do not have the two-hour drive

between tourist attractions, that you can have them out into their own community and brought to the next by word of mouth.

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to support our fishing industry as is seen in the Red River and in Lake Winnipeg, that we have to find a way that sports fishing and commercial fishing can be two industries that are acknowledged by this Government and given the same support as perhaps the hunting and trapping industries are given in the province, that our sports fishing industry in the Selkirk-Lockport area alone brings in, as reported by Government, \$10 million to the community. Yet we have very little done by this Government or indeed the past Government to understand the industry itself, and the effects that the habitat of the Red River and the pollution of the Red River will have on the fishing industry. We have to put up programs that will have the sports fishing and the commercial fishing work together, so that the stocks are not depleted, that they may co-exist in the same waterway.

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I cannot stress enough the need for the cleanup of the Red River. This Government has initiated a thought process on how that can take place, but we do not see a definitive time-framing of how it can and will take place. We have not seen this Government try to educate Manitobans as to the need of a clean Red River, as to the possibilities of disease that can be found in the Red River and that do exist in the Red River, and the possibility that at any given season, we may have an outbreak of dangerous diseases, as we did last year in gastroenteritis. That we must prevent, because we cannot allow our citizens to become ill, nor should we allow our tourist industry to run any risk of being depleted because we sustain a polluted Red River.

Selkirk does not depend upon the Red River for drinking water, contrary to many suspicions that are put out, and many jokes that are put out by Winnipeggers, not as an antagonistic way, but in their lack of understanding. Last year Selkirk depended totally on its well water and did not have to go to the Red River. Indeed, when the water from the City of Winnipeg reaches Selkirk, after going over the Lockport dams, it is certainly not as polluted as it is in the City of Winnipeg. The City of Winnipeg does pollute the Red River, there is no question of that. They are finally admitting to it. They are not the sole people to be held responsible for the cleanup.

It will be many decades before the river can be cleaned up, but it will take today the effort to begin, and part of that will be an understanding of what the pollution levels are in the Red River, and what can be done on a short-term as well as a long-term basis to change the pollution levels and to be made aware of how that can be done. When we have levels that are 150,000 times the acceptable levels of pollution existing within the City of Winnipeg, we are playing with a loaded gun, that anything can happen at any time, and we are only going by their prayers that nothing happens.

The fact that this is still being sustained by the City of Winnipeg is now within the provincial Government's jurisdiction, now that we have the Clean Environment

Act. I would be very willing to work with this Government in setting forward a stricter time frame and an awareness campaign as well with the residents of the city and the people of the province so that we can turn this around in our lifetime, so that some day our children are allowed and can easily and safely use the Red River for recreational purposes. The Red River has been posted in the past as dangerous and continues to be dangerous. This Government continues to allow that to happen, although I do understand that some slight movements have been made.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our constituency must see a better budget come out of this Government in the next Session and see some humanity and good management coming out of this Government in the next Session before I can ever agree that this Government has the right to manage all peoples in the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: At 5 p.m. the Honourable Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) had two minutes remaining. Is there leave that the matter remain standing in his name? Leave? The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Minnedosa): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations for tonight be amended as follows: Helwer for Burrell. For tomorrow morning, another change: Burrell for Helwer.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Agreed? Agreed. The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I too wish to join the debate on Bill 99 for a number of reasons for which I will go into if we are given a little bit of attention in this House.

The first piece of information I will take is a piece of paper that is handed to me here by the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman). Specifically, the headline on this piece of paper reads that inexperienced Liberals have egg on their faces. With respect to the reason I wish to speak, I will indicate inexperience can be laid at the feet of the Liberal Party. I think one of the things that we have to keep in mind though is that there is more than just inexperience that one can lay here, but what we really want to focus on is that it was not so much inexperience with the Liberals but there was a black mark put upon the faces of all the voters of Manitoba.

* (2040)

Now why would I say that? The answer is quite simple. We had here indicated that we were going into considerable length of debate and questioning on the Concurrence Motion, and the purpose of that particular thing was to carry on with the debate as we had started off in the Estimates process, because we did want to

spend a good deal of time in questioning of departments. Unfortunately, what we were faced with and what we are faced with in the House right now is that the Estimates process was defined and decided by convention between the Conservatives and the NDP in a previous Legislature, wherein the hours spent on Estimates was to be devoted to 240 hours.

The agreement was based on a two-Party House, and in a two-Party House where you have the Opposition questioning Government for 240 hours, you find that there is probably ample time to do the job. However, we do have now a three-Party House and as politics is played with one-upmanship and with trying something and seeing if you can actually make a political point, which was done several times, which not only has been done by Members on this side, but by Members on that side, with everybody essentially trying to put their best foot forward, and sometimes you will find that one Party or another will find itself left out of the particular game.

I can recall a previous occasion—this had to do with Private Members' Resolutions—inattentiveness on the part of the NDP suddenly found their Bills dropping to the bottom of the Order Paper and this was done because somebody on this side spoke up very quickly, and this did not happen again, because once bitten, twice shy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I will let people recognize the fact that not all aspects that occur in this Chamber will be repeated.

At any rate, the Estimates process which is part of the accountability process in this Chamber was shared essentially equally between the NDP and the Liberals, 120 hours apiece. You find that not only did questioners spend a good deal of time in the questioning process, but Ministers in their answering took sometimes even longer in the answering process, so actually in the give and take of question/answer, question/answer, it tended to be more like dissertation, dissertation, maybe a question, with a response of another dissertation, another dissertation and maybe an answer. Frequently that answer being rather nebulous, rather off topic, and the questioner would have to ask the question again.

But normally the preamble to the question was fairly lengthy, this being part of the process in here because both Opposition Parties either jockeying for position or to get a point across. The end loser of this though is the people of Manitoba.

There is a tremendously important principle here.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Niakwa (Mr. Herold Driedger) has the floor.

Mr. Herold Driedger: The inexperience I referenced shall not happen again. One of the few things I do wish to place upon the record is the implication this has for Manitobans. When I recall my first comment on the budget debate, and essentially Bill 99 is a revisitation of that, because the budget indicated to Manitobans the amount of money that the Government intended to spend on what we have here.

An Honourable Member: How much?

Mr. Herold Driedger: The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) asks me how much. The answer is in the neighbourhood of \$4.8 billion. Here we have in Bill 99 a request—the appropriation to actually make this fact, to allow this to happen. The part of the concurrence debate which we were going to question I will put onto the record right now because there are aspects of this that should be put out there for people to understand.

Now, one of the reasons why is that in addressing the budget, in addressing the spending patterns for the province, in addressing the spending priorities of the Government, some of the things that need to be addressed have to do with the implications of what is going to be happening to Manitoba. If you recall, just recently with the tabling of the federal budget, a tremendous impact would be passed on to Manitoba.

I believe that in the budget papers that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) read early on, he had indicated a downward movement in the deficit, a movement which would indicate that things under the Conservatives had appeared to be better. One of the things that he referenced himself was the fact that there were higher than expected mining revenues, higher than expected transfer payments, which ended up allowing the province to have a much better picture with respect to the amount of money it would be in a deficit situation with.

In the projections of that and if we take it, bear in mind that one of the things that I commented on early on in my own remarks on the budget was the fact that the Fiscal Stabilization Fund, which was set aside to be part of the last year's deficit, would, in effect if reported properly, have been listed as a \$48 million surplus, Mr. Acting Speaker. I felt that, if you were taking a look at a bar graph indicating what is happening under your tenure, you would notice that the deficit was moving down suddenly to a surplus situation and then, if all things being equal the way things are being projected and the way things are happening, we would find that you are falling back into a deficit situation. This hardly indicates control; this simply indicates the happenings of the unexpected revenues and how they impact upon the budgetary process.

In trying to create a controlled approach, in trying to create a measured impression, the Fiscal Stabilization Fund was created in order to demonstrate that the budget would move down in lock step and would also give the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) freedom to do some, take borrowing if you want, in the Fiscal Stabilization Fund to add to a projected possible deficit situation in the following year which would make the situation look much better.

In that respect, I think we now need to take a look. We have been told that now having the Fiscal Stabilization Fund in what is called a "savings account," in hindsight, I suppose one can say, yes, it is there. We can now use it because next year and the year after, there are going to be much higher deficits in this province. But that particular Fiscal Stabilization Fund was not introduced with the benefit of hindsight. It was

essentially simply a gimmick in order to facilitate an indication of what the budget deficit would look like, and that is not what is actually going to end up being the case. We are going to find a Finance Minister who is going to have to utilize those dollars simply to try to gain some measure of control over what will impact on this province quite dramatically.

Now the comment was placed earlier by several Members on this side that in this House what we have to do is in the best interests of the people of Manitoba and I believe that to be the case. One of the things that was recently done in the federal budget was the tabling of something that is going to have a fairly negative impact on Manitoba. In fact, Mr. Acting Speaker, the comment about the Wilson budget is simply that it is a budget which attacks the disadvantaged and which does not even try to avoid the recession presently threatening us.

In fairness, the two budgets that have been placed by the Conservatives in this 34th Legislature have put on a relatively moderate face. I do not think, if we bear in mind, that according to the indications of a fundraising letter which has been referenced in this Chamber from time to time, the phase one, phase two aspect—I think that if the Conservatives had had their majority early on, there would be quite a different kind of budgeting presented to the people of Manitoba. It is only because we have a minority House that the rather moderate budget has been presented, and a moderate agenda has been put before the people. We have to ask what would happen if the Conservatives were able to do what they wanted to do. Is that what is meant by the phase two, is that what is meant by the potential—if that is what is implied by this hidden agenda?

* (2050)

The Minister of Finance for Canada claims that he has the deficit under control, or that he will have the deficit under control. But I put it to you, Mr. Acting Speaker, that belt tightening and cutbacks in services that we have seen in the past, the high taxes that have been assessed upon Canadians—I believe 31 actual tax increases in the past six years federally—these have not succeeded in reducing the federal deficit. All they have served to do is to reduce the Canadian standard of living. It really has not improved the deficit situation at all. To what end, and for what purpose? The idea was to bring the deficit under control, but what is happening is that it is not.

There are other aspects at play here, and so the Minister of Finance for Canada cannot claim to have the deficit under control. He effectively states—although he does not reference this, but you have a doubling of the national debt since the Conservatives took office. That doubling of the national debt has much to do with the borrowings offshore, has much to do with high interest rates, has much to do with all manner of things that he says he has no control over. He states that in order to bring the deficit under control he will do a very small little thing. He will actually—he says there are going to be no tax increases, but all he has really done is passed an \$8 billion problem to the provinces,

and by moving the debt over to the provincial responsibility, what he actually does then, is indicate that Manitoba will have to deal with what he calls "its" share of the national debt.

I ask you, there are indications here, implications of what will come. If this has been done now, what will he do the year following, because the things that he is doing, which he says is going to bring the deficit under control, will not. They will not, because the deficit is still growing, and with interest rates as they are presently moving upward, he is going to find himself in the same situation the next year or the year after that.

I mean when you start taking a look at the kind of things that create confidence in the economy of a country, we take a look at foreign investment, we take a look at the total debt situation of a country. I ask you, would an investor who takes a look at Canada's books, will he not look further to see what other debts there are in the country? Will he not look further to see if there are other debts for which the taxpayer may not have to eventually take some responsibility in the repayment thereof?

The Minister, furthermore, in laying down the federal budget indicates that he claims that the deficit reduction is not at the expense of social programs, yet support for Medicare, for welfare and day care is cut. Support for social and co-op housing will be slashed from \$165 million over a five-year period, compounding the problems of the over 200,000 homeless in Canada right now, and to the many more who must commit over half of their incomes to rent.

To add insult to this injury, the Minister claims the budget is fair, yet regional development assistance is all but ended. This is in line with what U.S. calls to end the regional development programs; in other words, we have more of the free trade harmonization coming up in this situation. It is in this, and I ask myself, I mean, when the transfer payments were originally agreed to, when the original sharing of resources between the different regions of the country were agreed to, there was the implication that this would be in perpetuity because you have a much greater funding, or revenue raising power, in the federal Government than you do in the provinces.

Yet, we have seen that with the disproportionate development in this country, the disproportionate regional development with regional disparity, that regions are unable to actually do some of the development that they would like to. They end up having to look to the federal Government in order to have national standards in their programs, to have national standards for all people in the country. But really, one person should not suffer if he or she lives in one area of the country compared to another. We have other people in this country who have seen what happens when a federal Government makes a promise and then reneges on it. I believe the line is something like this: "As long as the sun shines and the rivers flow."

The treaties that the First People signed with the federal Government tend to be abrogated quite quickly when actually it came to what the implications of the

treaty agreements meant originally. We have today many of the court challenges with respect to these treaties now indicating that the federal Government would have been wise at the time to honour the treaties that it had made, rather than to try and make short shrift of the agreements it had made with the First People.

If we take a look at what has happened with the federal Government now with the national programs, with the beginning of the cut, of the change from national programs offering national standards to the implication of simply national objectives, as indicated in the Meech Lake Accord, to this cutback, to this capping, to this actual reduction in regional development, a question I ask is in the words of the poet: "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

In this instance, I think, we have turned it around. If we already have this cutback now, can the fruits of growth occur later on? No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they cannot, because the moment you start reducing the development, the moment you start reducing the funding as you have done here, you start losing the ability to create a viable economy in some of the other weaker regions, the desperate regions—I will change that word—to the more unequal regions of the country.

We know that with what the federal Government has done, the provincial deficit will go up. We know that also with respect to the global economy that the rolling depressions that we have seen in the past 10 or 15 years are going to continue. We have seen in the historical relationship between the different parts of the economy that were high-priced that, shall we say, suffered inflationary pressures, if you go back in history, in the mid-'60s to the early '70s when real labour costs in the country were driven up and driven up and driven up, it seemed that no matter which way you turned around suddenly the income of the wage earner went up by leaps and bounds. I saw that myself in my teaching career from having started at a very, very low \$2,800 per year, with the expectation of my own particular dreaming at the time that some day I would like to earn \$4,500, I felt that doubling my income, this would really be great. To suddenly finding that this is not only just doubled, it is quadrupled and maybe even more than that, in what you get as a beginning teacher—

An Honourable Member: Oh, you have done well here.

* (2100)

Mr. Herold Driedger: The Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) says I have done well. It is not just I who have done well, almost all working people did well. This was a period of time when labour could ask and almost was given, because at that time we had virtual full employment, because labour was in high demand, because labour was scarce in comparison to the requirements of the economy, it could buy what individuals could be hired for.

Now, this did not stay that way because as labour costs became higher and higher and higher in your economy, we find that some of the labour-saving devices which have been introduced tend to become competitive. We have the miniaturization, we have

robotics. We have all kinds of things introduced to try and cut the cost of labour. So labour, as it went along, found out that suddenly it was no longer having the same demand power, if you want, for income because as the economy changed, the new cycle occurred, we found that our whole economy has rested on the concept of cheap energy, which we of course realize now has suddenly gone out of sight.

With the oil crisis in the early '70s, we find that the energy costs, having gone up so high, suddenly a totally different aspect comes into your economy. We find that industries are hard-pressed to stay competitive because the energy costs are so high and in order to try what at that time was pointed out as to be a tremendous energy shortage coming up, we find that in the interest of driving, of creating energy self-sufficiency, the cost of energy, the fact of what the market thought it could bear, the prices the market thought that energy would eventually achieve, drove us—and I say us collectively—to seek the discovery of gas and oil sources in some of the most hard-to-reach places. There are even still on the books projects to drill holes through the Arctic ice-cap to try and find oil, which will only be productive at \$100 a barrel.

We know today where the price of energy actually is, because as you overprice the commodity the other aspects come into play. We found energy-saving devices being introduced. We found all kinds of cutbacks being introduced which we find coming into the economy, which then lowered the prices of energy to where we are today and this is the thing that brings us right back to why we have to be concerned about the budgetary plan of this particular province. The current area that suffered inflation in the global economy was scarce capital. People who had been trained to think that costs would go on forever; deficit financing could go on forever; we could borrow to try and make money, because the asset that you acquired through the purchase with borrowed money would increase in value much faster than the interest rate that you paid upon that asset.

We see what happened in the last few years, particularly with respect to the leveraged buyouts and the junk bonds that were floated to try and finance some of these massive takeovers, where you have individuals like Mr. Campeau of the Campeau Corporation putting himself into debt that probably exceeds the national budget of some countries, simply to acquire a grocery chain, all of this based upon the idea that the consumer was prepared to pay forever, that interest rates would keep on going up, that he would be able to cover the cost of his acquisitions, because his assumptions were based upon the fact that nothing would come down; it would continue to go up.

We are at the point now where we see what happens with these high interest rates and I wonder where things will end up. We find right now that the interest rates that we pay on our deficits are a tremendous portion of that deficit, on the total debt. We find that the costs go up and we are going to have to some day come to grips with them.

If interest rates come down, as the federal Finance Minister has predicted, then perhaps the budget can

be cut back and perhaps we can weather the storm. But the way things are presently going, we are going to find that we have sold too many of our scarce resources, that we have committed too many of our scarce resources to be able to utilize these to produce the kind of income necessary to support the lifestyle to which we have grown accustomed.

That brings me back, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the question: what about the hidden agenda in phase 2 of this particular Government. I notice if we consider the fact that the deficit will go up, as predicted we are entering a recessionary period, and if it is a very rough recession, we are going to come right smack dab to face up to again the fact that in the past the means whereby the Government or Governments have tried to reduce the deficit through belt-tightening, and cutbacks in services and higher taxes too, but these have not succeeded in reducing the deficit. It seems we have to come to grips with a long-term plan and perhaps look to other aspects of how to bring our spending in Government under control.

I recall a conversation I had not so long ago with a constituent who utilizes the example of a household on deficit financing. We almost all of us have experienced borrowing money to acquire an asset. Particularly for us here, most of that has been the mortgage to buy a house or the loan to acquire a car, although I think when we borrow money to buy a car, an asset that does not appreciate, we probably are not really using deficit financing appropriately, but nevertheless we tend to do that.

We find amongst our population people who will use one, two, and three Visa cards, not because they feel that there is an advantage to this, but rather because they do not see the implication of what they do when they use one card up to the top of its credit limit and the other card up to the top of its credit limit and they will go to a different bank, the same card up to the top of its credit limit. Suddenly they are in a real cash strap situation. They cannot even stay ahead of the interest payments that they have to pay and they essentially have to declare bankruptcy or seek some other form of assistance whereby they can cover the cost of the debt that they have put themselves into.

So the constituent asked, how come at home when we are forced to live within our means, why Government does not live within its means. That brings me then to the one aspect of the Government spending—I did actually place it into the record when we talked on the Budget many, many months ago—and that is Government accountability.

When I speak about accountability, I do not necessarily refer to the accountability of the people in this Chamber because we are held accountable, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We are held accountable for the things we say; we are held accountable for the actions we take; we are held accountable for the decisions we make; we are held accountable by the voters. Because we do, we tend normally to make the decisions we feel reflect that accountability.

However, Government in and of itself does not consist only of us in this Chamber; it does not consist only of

the people here who make the decisions or the Cabinet which implements the policies and comes to the Chamber to have these policies ratified. There are aspects to Government which are actually involved in the spending of the dollars, the actual implementation of the programs that are authorized by the people in this Chamber and that is where we have the implications for Manitobans, and that is the area where we want to ask questions and should have had the opportunity to ask questions which—and I confess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, inexperience on this side missed that opportunity, but that will happen that once, never again.

I ask, for instance, there were aspects in the Estimates process which, because as I indicated early on in my remarks, because of the competition in asking questions and the fact that a Minister who is being quizzed by two people who are trying to pin him or her down may feel that, well, I can do as good as you, and stands up and speaks for a fairly long period of time in giving an answer, we found that the Estimates process was not used as well as it might have. But there were questions that we could have asked. There were questions, for instance, and I take a look in The Appropriation Act for 1989.

I tell you we could go to, for example, the Energy and Mines line where we have a budget request for Administration and Finance of some million and a half dollars. I take a look at the detailed Supplementary Estimates, and I take a look at how the department attempts to structure itself in order to facilitate the implementation of the programs and the actual spending of the particular dollars.

* (2110)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I look at different articles and look at different aspects. For example, if we take a look at the Department of Culture and Heritage, they have an Assistant Deputy Minister to run a department of 112 people. We take a look at the Department of Natural Resources, and I see that there are two major sections: one called essentially, Resources, Land Surveys and Mapping, which has an Assistant Deputy Minister; the other one, with Regional Services, Parks, Forestry, Fisheries and Wildlife, has an Assistant Deputy Minister. I go to the Department of Family Services; we have Assistant Deputy Ministers for four different particular sections of that department. I did not find the actual numbers of people employed, but I could very easily. Take a look also at the Department of Highways where 99 people in one section of the department have an ADM, another section has an ADM, third section, fourth section—all have Assistant Deputy Ministers.

I ask myself if this is actually not a wise method of handling a certain kind of administration of a department, but when I take a look at Energy and Mines I see we have two departments there too: one a department of Energy and one a department of Minerals. Now, the Assistant Deputy Minister for energy has a department of about 53 people under him administering this particular department. I take a look at the Minerals section, and I find there has been a change in the structure. I wonder if the reporting

structure reflects a change in policy or a change in how this is going to happen to all Government departments, or if this is indicative of a different situation.

That is the question I do not have the answer to, and we should have had an answer to when I would have placed the question in Concurrence. I will be asking the Minister privately how come this particular section of the department seems to reflect an organizational pattern that is not quite the same as other departments? Because it does not reflect that similarity to other departments, I ask: is this reflective of the hidden agenda? Is this part of Phase II, or is this something else entirely? We have an Assistant Deputy Minister who has nobody reporting to him in this particular chart. Why? As I said, I asked why.

Referring on furthermore to another section within Bill 99, The Appropriation Act, I look at the Department of Northern Affairs and find here too aspects which, if we had a little bit more time, would have involved a little bit more questioning, a little bit more detailed elicitation of information, and we might have found out what intentions of the Government actually were.

Now two things come to mind in this particular department, local government development, which has a fairly hefty price tag of almost \$8.5 million. I know what this department does. I know what the mandate of the Assistant Deputy Minister in this area is. In conversations with him, I have discovered that he intends to suggest changes to the Act, changes to the organizational structure, so that this will eventually become something more, perhaps brought more into the modern age. This is something that—I should not use the word modern age—that is brought more up to date because this particular Act was introduced and not amended very recently at all.

It really needs some updating to revisit current realities because we have noticed that with respect to creation of Local Government Districts, with the creation of local communities with community councils, that the criteria necessary for this to be happening do not necessarily occur in an understandable fashion. People should know what they are expected to do before they can become a community and this is something that needs to be looked at in the Act itself. I believe that the Assistant Deputy Minister is going to be coming forward with some of that, but it would be nice to have been able to question the Minister directly on this and get this information.

Another aspect within this particular budgetary appropriation is the Native Affairs Secretariat, a fairly hefty price tag too, a little bit over \$2 million that is appropriated for this budget here. I know that in Estimates questioning, I did ask the Minister what the department was expected to do, what its role was, and what status the review of this particular section of his department where the review was because the Government actually had a review done of it and an audit, a recommendation of what should be done with that department.

I do not see anything happening that says that any of the recommendations have been implemented, and

any of the recommendations have either been considered. The department is sitting there, and on direct questioning, I asked what role this particular department played in the Urban Affairs Strategy. I found that in essence, it is not being used to promote the Government position but rather it is sitting and waiting to react to some kind of a "consults" before it will be coming forward. Granted, the consultant is necessary to produce the aboriginal position, urban Indian position, the urban Native position, but somebody in Government must be doing something as well to see where this particular Government is coming from and where they are going.

It is aspects of these that we did not get a chance to ask, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is something that I think the people of Manitoba will have to regret because this is something that is part of the accountability process that I would like to see increased and expanded upon in this Chamber. I know that I also mentioned when I spoke originally in the Budget Debate on the need for accountability, the strengthening of the third aspect of the accountability process, which is the Public Accounts Committee, which is something that we are still working at, and I think that some day we will actually achieve that improvement that will lead to the third stage of the accountability cycle being something of which we people in this Legislature can be really proud.

Because, if the budget indicates the broad direction in which the Government wishes to go and the Estimates debate permits detailed expressions of how the Government intends to implement its budgetary proposals, there has to be one aspect within this entire cycle where we say, all right, this is what you authorized us to do; this is how we did it, and find out whether or not that was done efficiently.

How much more time do I have, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member's time has expired. The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): I welcome the opportunity to participate in the debate on this very important piece of legislation that we have before us, wherein it grants the Government some \$4.3 billion in order for it to continue its agenda.

On many occasions previous, Members, certainly from the Liberal Party, have expressed some concern about this phase 2 of this Government's agenda; and then what exactly is this phase 2? In preparing for this budget-like address, I reviewed my comments from last June yet, and I certainly would welcome the participation of the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) in this particular debate of mine on this legislation, as he did well some several months ago when I was participating in debate on the budget speech.

Last week, as Members know, I was off in Toronto, waiting for a visa to come through to go on to Ukraine to participate as part of a parliamentary delegation to participate in the elections in Ukraine and to act as an observer and to watch and to see what exactly was

going on there. This election, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we know, was held yesterday.

* (2120)

On Wednesday night I returned and Thursday participated once again in the debates in this Legislature. And what did I read in the paper? There was some interesting maneuvering on Monday evening. I was indeed a little concerned because here I was, preparing for a trip to Ukraine to observe the election process there, to at least partially ensure that it would be a free and democratic election held there, and what do I have here is the NDP agreeing with the Government to move quickly through Concurrence Motion and, presumably by that, denying themselves the ability to participate in any further debate on the spending of this Government, thereby succinctly agreeing with this Government's phase 1 and probably phase 2 of their agenda.

That I find very incredible, for a group of people that rise in their seats and speak out for participation and the importance of getting people involved in the electoral process, the NDP rose in this House and seemingly holus-bolus agreed with the rest of this Government's agenda. Well, I am certainly concerned for the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), when during the Estimates process that he participated in, on the Department of Industry, Trade, and Tourism, where we only reviewed less than half of that department.

Do they then agree with this Government's holus-bolus agreement with their financial programs? Do they agree, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the Health Industry Development Initiatives, and did not want to ask any questions on the trade of this Government? Did not they want to ask any questions on the Business Resource Centre; did not they want to ask, and were not the NDP interested in, this Government's policy on research and development? No, they were not. They voted to close the Concurrence Motion down quickly, (Ukrainian spoken) (one, two, three, he's gone).

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is wrong; that is wrong. They have no interest in the research and development in this province by their action, not really. It is obvious. Why then did their Members, and the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) rise and support the Government and, (Ukrainian spoken) (one, two, three), and the Concurrence Motion went right through? Do they agree with it, are they not interested in spending more time on research and development? Obviously they are unconcerned about this area. We certainly saw their sorry performance over the last six and a half years, before this Government took over, and certainly seeing what the results of that vote were, last Monday night, in the holus-bolus fashion they approached this whole matter, there is indeed some concern, and Manitobans will indeed be advised of their particular activities.

Were they uninterested? I am especially concerned because I know the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) is indeed a reasonable Member of that caucus. Were they uninterested in discussing the Canada-Manitoba Economic Regional Development

Planning Agreement? Were they uninterested in that? Were they uninterested in debating and discussing this Government's agenda for tourism? We will never know. But, yes, we do, because they chose not to continue with the concurrence. Incredible, incredible, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

What about the whole issue of tourism marketing? We know indeed what that particular Government, the socialist Government for six and a half years did with respect to tourism, and my honourable colleague from St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) has outlined the problems and concerns that we indeed have had in previous years, and in the last couple of years as well. Are we indeed moving from that 10th place, Mr. Deputy Speaker, or are we mired, is this Government mired with the support of the previous Government on the same ideas? Are they bankrupt of any ideas, are they indeed satisfied?

I would consider the holus-bolus movement of the NDP through concurrence as indeed concurrence with this Government's tourism development policies. Were they uninterested in asking questions? I just cannot understand why the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), indeed a long time Member, an Honourable Member of this Chamber, who is concerned, and I have certainly had many discussions with him, indeed concerned about the lack of some of the policies of this Government and the shortcomings of some of the economic development policies of this Government, that he was uninterested in asking further questions of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst). I just do not believe it; I find it just incredible.

How many other sections went unquestioned because the NDP did not care? They were not interested in research and development. How many other departments were they not interested in getting information on? It is incredible, and they feel that, oh, they were so smug, undoubtedly. I can see indeed the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) and other Members from their benches, just prancing about and saying, oh boy, we showed the Liberals something. No, they showed Manitobans something. They showed that they were uninterested in pursuing this Government's policies and questioning them on them. That is of concern.

Let us go through some more sections in the Tourism section, Rural Resource Attractions and Facilities. They were uninterested in asking any questions on those—incredible—Winnipeg attractions, and on we go. Even just looking to the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, how many sections went unquestioned? Because the NDP chose that we will move through things, (Ukrainian spoken) (one, two, three) and off they go. I am not quite sure what jet they are on, but undoubtedly they may well be soon joining many of the people who have unfortunately had to leave this province because of their policies and the Tory policies with respect to economic development in this province.

An Honourable Member: Shameful.

Mr. Minenko: Shameful indeed, as the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) points out again.

Industry Productivity Enhancement—did the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) take no interest

in pursuing this area, this important area for Manitoba's economic development? Well, undoubtedly, he did, and a sorry state. I go on and on, because when we look to what the Government is asking as part of Bill No. 99, how many other departments? Let us look to the Industry and Trade department, for \$37.9 million, they were uninterested, and unprepared—maybe that is his point, perhaps they were unprepared to continue questioning this Government. Maybe they were embarrassed to ask this Government questions that had to be asked because they were embarrassed because they were supporting them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon, on a point of order.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): The Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) continues to attempt to confuse the record. I have the Hansard of February 26, Monday evening, and I want to put on the record for the Member for Seven Oaks' edification, that when the motion was put it was agreed to by all Members of the Chamber, and in fact there were a couple of Liberals in here on this very important day, to attend to the Concurrence Motion. They agreed with it, like all of the other Members in the Chamber. So let not the Member for Seven Oaks suggest that somehow he did not support Concurrence when other Members did.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Inkster, on the same point of order.

* (2130)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): On the same point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) will check Votes and Proceedings, 133, he will have an awfully tough time demonstrating where, in fact, he suggests that the Liberal Party voted for concurrence. Had we known the NDP were going to vote against concurrence, as they are giving us that impression now, we would have called for yeas and nays, but we had anticipated you would support concurrence, so we did not ask for Yeas and Nays.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Neither the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) or the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) have a point of order. It is a dispute of the facts; it is not a point of order. The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks has the floor.

Mr. Minenko: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to continue the debate on this particular Bill No. 99 and look to some of the provisions that are included in the Industry, Trade and Tourism spending—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Order. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

Mr. Storie: On another point of order, the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) raises the matter of the official Votes and Proceedings, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was referring to Hansard, February 26th, in which the Chairmān of Committee asks: "Is it the will of the committee that I report the motion?" Agreed, it says, in the report.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member does not have a point of order—Seven Oaks has the floor.

Mr. Minenko: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I find it very interesting having sat in the - (interjection)- of the points of order raised by the previous Member for the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) who perhaps could be called the previous Member after the next election. If he were to review some of the comments on a number of occasions of his House Leader, he would certainly agree that he was well aware that that was not necessarily a point of order. Perhaps I could, after the debate this evening or another opportunity, point out to the Member for Flin Flon his House Leader's comments about various points of orders that are constantly raised in debate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we certainly see that the Phase 1 seems to be over of this Tory Government's agenda, and they seem to be going into a Phase 2. Now what exactly is Phase 2 we are certainly not aware of, but I would certainly seem to suggest that perhaps the NDP are, seeing that they were prepared to go through the Concurrence Motion relatively quickly.

Let us look further to the record—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Dauphin, on a point of order.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think the record should show that the Concurrence Motion required pursuant to Rule 65.1(1) was considered in the Committee of Supply, reported through the House and concurred in. That is the only reference in Votes and Proceedings, so clearly the Liberal Party, as well as the New Democrats and Conservatives concurred in that motion, and that is what the record shows. The Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) should not try to misrepresent the facts because of his embarrassment about the issue—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. Order, please. Order. I would remind the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) that we are on second reading of Bill 99 and the Concurrence Motion has been dealt with.

Mr. Minenko: When we look to the amount of money that the Government wants as part of this particular Bill, we indeed certainly are concerned when we look to their campaign promises in the '88 election. I am glad the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is here. He could perhaps look at their record over the last two years and see if indeed they will be able to deal with some of the skepticism that is out there about politicians not living necessarily up to what they are saying.

When we look to the rural economic development policy of this Government—it certainly seems that the Tories -(interjection)- certainly last Thursday were uninterested in participating in the discussion about the cancellation of visas and some of the anticipated results of what may happen in Ukraine. And I will indeed be passing that on to some of their supporters who feel that the Tories are in the forefront.

When we look to the Government's specific record and some of their campaign promises, what do we find? Indeed, it is very much like Swiss cheese; it has big holes. In fact, if there could be some way of expressing it so there is less cheese and more air, then we would find exactly that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This Government proposed in their '88 campaign, presumably based on six and a half years in Opposition where they had an opportunity of developing some alternative pledges to the people of Manitoba, as to what they would do if they were in Government, for certainly we needed an alternative to what was happening before in this province. I am glad indeed the people chose part of that alternative to be the Liberal Party.

They set out quite a comprehensive plan for rural development in this province. It is indeed like that Swiss cheese I mentioned; it is full of holes. When I asked the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) when he was planning to put some sort of program in place, and when can we see something concrete, he said: Wait for the next budget. Who knows when that may be? It has only been 23 months now that this Tory Government has been in place and yet we still have no rural development initiatives and comprehensive policy. If the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) were to review the comments from Estimates of the Minister of Rural Development, he will find that. I have discussed this on a few occasions before. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we find that whole area that has to be addressed, that should have been started to be addressed shortly after this Government took office. They pledged themselves to be the managers.

They always talked about the previous administration as one which could not manage any sort of Jimmy Carter stand, and what do we see now? We find a Government initiative that is announced last May, the Business Start Program, and where do we see it now? When we look to -(interjection)- The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says, we have started it. So if I were to call up tomorrow morning, Mr. Minister of Finance, I could go down to the offices and fill out the application form to indeed participate in this Business Start Program? I will be checking first thing in the morning,

to see if the program is indeed in place, because I have received calls on this particular program from so many people from inside the City of Winnipeg and outside the City of Winnipeg, that it is indeed an embarrassing moment for this Government to get up here, and get up in '88 as part of their campaign literature, and talk about being managers.

How many Jimmy Carter stands could they manage, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We are finding that we have grave concerns about how they are doing that. They cannot even get this program into place, something that was announced last May, something they had undoubtedly been discussing in Cabinet in caucus some months before.

So that is management? I ask you, is that the kind of management that could operate a business efficiently? The Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), indeed very well acquainted in the operation of businesses, could a business be operated on those sorts of things, getting involved in how long it takes for them to move into place? Well, I do not know, the people of Manitoba have certainly been concerned very much about this one specific program. How many programs in other departments have had the same sort of activity, very progressive, as the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) likes to say about his aggressive policies? If that is what you call aggressive policies, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would be a little concerned about what they would call an average, run-of-the-mill kind of initiative and policies.

So what do we have? Indeed, over the last two years, we have great concerns and problems and difficulties in agriculture, the food industry, the food-processing industries in Manitoba. There was talk again by this Government of off-farm income and off-farm initiatives. I certainly know that those are very important aspects to put into place. When I was representing various clients where they were indeed full-time farmers, they had to find off-farm income and then they had problems with the Tax Department. I am sure the Energy and Mines Minister (Mr. Neufeld) can appreciate the problems that are often encountered there. Were they operating indeed a farm, or was it a hobby farm, or were they in fact employed and simply doing farming as a sideline?

* (2140)

I would suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in fact the people who have been called up in front of Revenue Canada have had, unfortunately, to hire lawyers and counsels to argue their position. Certainly, what has the Government been doing in that aspect? Have they made any presentations? Have they been looking at ways they can deal with that particular problem? I think that is a problem that has to be addressed, and I look forward to the Rural Development Minister (Mr. Penner) and working in that area to see if we can work something out so that we can enter into discussions with his federal Tory counterparts in Revenue, so that we can try to see if something can be worked out in that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Rural Development, on a point of order.

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): On a point of order, the Honourable Member indicates that this Government has not done anything as far as rural development is concerned. I would suggest that the issue he is currently identifying is a federal issue with the federal Tax Department and that he should research his information before he starts putting anything on the record. I would suggest to the Honourable Member that the assessment reform legislation—the increased funding that we provided to rural communities and a whole host of other initiatives that we have taken since we have been in Government to increase the ability of rural people to survive is well documented and can be put on record if we so desire. So I would—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks has the floor.

Mr. Minenko: If the Minister was a little bit more careful in listening, he would have understood that I have set this out as a federal issue. But certainly I would think that this would be something that the Ministers responsible, whether it be Finance, whether it be Rural Development, whether it be Industry and Trade, whether it be Family Services, as was the problem of the older worker retraining issue about who was on first and who was responsible. One of those Ministers should as part of the process—I am sure the Minister of Rural Development, who is chuckling from his seat, could possibly look into this, have his department take a look and mention this and see if something can be worked out, so that people who have been forced to move into off-farm income and have been called up on the rug in front of Revenue Canada, and I am sure you can get some further research from the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), who undoubtedly has had clients in this predicament, to see if they can work something out with their Tory cousins.

Perhaps I should bring in some sort of telephone in here and make the call for the Minister himself because certainly the Premier (Mr. Filmon) seems not to be able to make that sort of connection. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many areas in rural development that still need to be addressed, and it is unfortunate it is going to take over two years before they are indeed addressed.

How much despair—(interjection)—I am not suggesting, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says that we could fix it all in two years. But I am saying that they spent six and a half years in Opposition and you mean these policies that you Honourable Members drafted, you did not feel they were good enough, you did not want to put them in place?

We went through some more of their literature during the campaign and some of their promises that they were making to Manitobans. They were talking about enhanced training for older workers, so I asked the question of the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach)—I thought, well, training, that seems to make sense that he should be in charge of all types of training, so I asked him that perhaps he mistakenly, as he mentioned later, passed me on to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson), and he said later that he should have mentioned the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond).

But what kind of programs is the Minister of Labour providing us with information about? A federal program that they have a 30 percent participation in. Is this the kind of way that they are directing retraining for older workers in the province? Is that the kind of program that will provide retraining, or is it simply financial assistance for people over the age of 55 who have unfortunately lost their jobs, and lost many of their jobs under the previous administration who seem not to be interested in this issue, who certainly did not seem to care.

Many of those workers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are in my constituency. Many of them have come to me and said, Mark, I am 58, I am 61, I have been out of work for two years. I would like to find employment, but I cannot. I would perhaps like to learn something new, but there is nothing available.

These are the kinds of issues that were outlined in the '88 campaign promises of this Tory administration and have yet to be fulfilled. Their friends in the NDP were not interested in continuing questioning on this. It is indeed unfortunate for all those people who thought that, with the Tory administration in place, they indeed would have a bit of a change, that perhaps some of the things they mentioned in their campaign promises in March and April of 1988 would be reflected in Government policy.

When you look at the many of the things they suggested, strengthen the role of communities in developing regional economic policies, well, there is all kinds of ways of doing that. I would suggest that one of the ways was for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst), who had one of his staffpeople involved in some research in central plains on a food-processing industry study, be somewhat familiar with what that study was doing.

I thought, okay, well, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) has a representative on the steering committee for that particular group looking in some initiatives for the Portage la Prairie area. So I asked the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Minister, you got one of your staffpeople on this steering committee. Can you tell me something about this program? Can you tell me when you are planning to have it finished? It seems to have it nicely set out as to when each phase of the project is supposed to be completed.

He suggested, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I should speak to the Industry and Trade Minister (Mr. Ernst). So I bided my time and I thought, all right, let us indeed look to the Industry, Trade and Tourism Department.

A couple of months later, I posed the same questions to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism. I asked him, Mr. Minister, can you tell me something about this study that is being done? Can you indeed tell me how your department is involved in the study, seeing you have one of your directors as part of the steering committee? I was indeed very surprised when the Honourable Member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst) looks to me and says, I am unfamiliar with this program and what they are doing.

When I probed him further again, he seemed to be uninterested in finding out what this research project was all about. I would certainly think that a good manager would be interested in finding out what is happening in some of the RDCs, especially when a provincial Government contributes money to their operation, as I am sure that the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) knows full well. But I was incredibly disappointed when the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) indicated in the negative.

* (2150)

So where were we going in this province? The NDP are obviously uninterested. (Ukrainian spoken) (one, two, three) they wanted a rushed-through concurrence, no more questions of this Government. Were they expecting there were still some skeletons? Were there still some things that they were involved in? Were they concerned that some of the other departments that we were going to be going into, something would be coming out that would reflect on them? Who knows? Who knows?

An Honourable Member: Who knows is right. Who knows?

Mr. Minenko: Well, who knows, as the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) cries out from his seat. Who knows indeed when any of the Tory campaign promises from '88 are going to be fulfilled? Who knows if we are indeed going to see a rural economic development strategy in the next budget and throne speech? Who knows? I hope somebody knows, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I hope somebody knows, because we have some grave concerns. Maybe they are friends. No, from the NDP? The Gary and Gary show. Maybe some of their advisers know. Who knows, Mr. Deputy Speaker? And who knows when we will ever see it.

Finally, I would like to deal with the federal budgets that we have seen, not just this year, but the last year as well and again, when this Government talked about being good managers, we can appreciate the NDP could not use that particular phrase and we all saw what has happened to this province as a result of what they were running. I would have thought that again a good manager would look through a federal Tory budget, would be interested in opening up the tome of doom and gloom for the Province of Manitoba, would be interested in finding out how some of these aspects will be impacting on Manitobans.

The Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson), does she have in place some means of addressing the cancellations in the vets program, the assistance to

our vets? Will they fall through the cracks in her department? Is that the kind of good management that Manitobans expected from the fine Tory campaign promises of 1988?

Well, earlier in this Session I asked three Ministers of this Government about the printing assistance program, a program funded for quite a number of years, and I believe begun under a Liberal administration, to assist Canadian magazines, newspapers, ethnic, artistic magazines and newspapers, providing this sort of service, providing the information to their subscribers at a second-class rate of postage, thereby saving the operations—I am sure the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), as a chartered accountant, undoubtedly had clients who have used and been able to participate in this program, providing assistance to the many publishers and printers in Manitoba of many fine ethnic newspapers and magazines and fine subject magazines, be they art, be they science and others.

When I looked in the last year's budget, I saw that there were going to be cutbacks, and this was a few weeks perhaps after the budget, and I would have thought that the various departments would have had a chance to analyze it and I certainly hope that the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) has actually read this budget speech to see how some of the sections in here will impact on her department and the services that her department will have to provide to Manitobans.

So I asked the Minister of Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Mitchelson) if she was aware of this particular cutback and because the danger of this was that, it not only impacted on the first year, but it laid out and set out a series of cutbacks for a period of five years, for a period that is going to continue way past this federal Tory administration, as it will indeed past this provincial Tory administration. The Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson), who I would have thought would have been very interested in the impact of these cutbacks on the ethnic and artistic newspapers and magazines of this province, took this under advisement, and some weeks later provided me the

same sort of answer that I received from the federal departments as to the reason why they were doing this.

I asked a question of the Rural Development Minister as to the impact on some the newspapers in our rural community, and I believe I am still waiting for an answer. I asked the Minister of Industry and Trade (Mr. Ernst) who has as part of his department a sectoral division, and one of the sectoral divisions is the printing and publishing industry, what impact does the federal cutbacks of this program have on the publishing and printing industry in Manitoba? He took that matter under advisement. That is the kind of management we can look forward to under this Tory administration.

We are very concerned, because I am still waiting for a reply from the Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism and that was only one month fewer than his Business Start Program. I have many concerns in the operation of this administration, and I am sure that Members following will be able to buttress my arguments from the perspective of other departments.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have two committee changes. I move, seconded by the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) for Springfield (Mr. Roch); Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor).

I move, seconded by the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations be amended as follows: The Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) for the Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans).

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

The hour being 10 p.m., according to the Rules, this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).